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THE

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WITH

THE AUTHOR'S

LAST CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME V.

OF

SCOTT'S WORKS,

BEING VOL. IV. OF THE WAVERLEY NOVELS.

ST. RONAN'S WELL,
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INTRODUCTION TO ST. RONAN'S WELL.

THE novel which follows is upon a plan different from any other that the author has ever written, although it is perhaps the most legitimate which relates to this kind of light literature.

It is intended, in a word—*celebrare domestica facta*—to give an imitation of the shifting manners of our own time, and paint scenes, the originals of which are daily passing round us, so that a minute's observation may compare the copies with the originals. It must be confessed that this style of composition was adopted by the author rather from the tempting circumstance of its offering some novelty in his compositions, and avoiding worn-out characters and positions, than from the hope of rivalling the many formidable competitors who have already won deserved honours in this department. The ladies, in particular, gifted by nature with keen powers of observation and light satire, have been so distinguished by these works of late, that, reckoning from the authoress of Evelina to her of Marriage, a catalogue might be made, including the brilliant and talented names of Edgeworth, Austin, Charlotte Smith, and others, whose success seems to have appropriated this province of the novel as exclusively their own. It was therefore with a sense of temerity that the author intruded upon a species of composition which had been of late practised with such distinguished success. This consciousness was lost, however, under the necessity of seeking for novelty, without which, it was much to be apprehended, such repeated incursions on his part would nauseate the long indulgent public at the last.

The scene chosen for the author's little drama of modern life was a mineral spring, such as are to be found in both divisions of Britain, and which are supplied with the usual materials for redeeming health, or driving away care. The invalid often finds relief from his complaints, less from the healing virtues of the Spa itself, than because his system of ordinary life undergoes an entire change, in his being removed from his leger and account-books—from his legal folios and progresses of title-deeds—from his counters and shelves,—from whatever else forms the main source of his constant anxiety at home, destroys his appetite, mars the custom of his exercise, deranges the digestive powers, and clogs up the springs of life. Thither, too, comes *the* sauntcrer, anxious to get rid of that wearisome attendant *ennui*, and thither come both males and females, who, upon a different principle, desire to make themselves double.

The society of such places is regulated, by their very nature, upon a scheme much more indulgent than that which rules the world of fashion, and the narrow circles of rank in the metropolis. The titles of rank, birth, and fortune, are received at a watering-place without any very strict investigation, as adequate to the purpose for which they are preferred; and as the situation infers a certain degree of intimacy and sociability for the time, so to whatever heights it may have been carried, it is not understood to imply any duration beyond the length of the season. No intimacy can be supposed more close for the time, and more transitory in its endurance, than that which is attached to a watering-place acquaintance. The novelist, therefore, who fixes upon such a scene for his tale, endeavours to display a species of society, where the strongest contrast of humorous characters and manners may be brought to bear on and illustrate each other with less violation of probability, than could be supposed to attend the same miscellaneous assemblage in any other situation.

In such scenes, too, are frequently mingled characters, not merely ridiculous, but dangerous and hateful. The unprincipled gamester, the heartless fortune-hunter, all those who eke out their means of subsistence by pandering to the vices and follies of the rich and gay, who drive, by their various arts, foibles into crimes, and imprudence into acts of ruinous madness, are to be found where their victims naturally resort, with the same certainty that eagles are gathered together at the place of slaughter. By this the author takes a great advantage for the management of his story, particularly in its darker and more melancholy passages. The impostor, the gambler, all who live more upon the skirts of society, or, like vermin, thrive by its corruptions, are to be found at such retreats, when they easily, and as a matter of course, mingle with those dupes, who might otherwise have escaped their snares. But besides those characters who are actually dangerous to society, a well-frequented watering-place generally exhibits for the amusement of the company, and the perplexity and amazement of the more inexperienced, a sprinkling of persons called by the newspapers eccentric characters—individuals, namely, who, either from some real derangement of their understanding, or, much more frequently, from an excess of vanity, are ambitious of distinguishing themselves by some striking peculiarity in dress or address, conversation or manners, and perhaps in all. These affectations are usually adopted, like Drawcansir's extravagances, to show *they dare*; and I must needs say, those who profess them are more frequently to be found among the English, than among the natives of either of the other two divisions of the united kingdoms. The reason probably is, that the consciousness of wealth, and a sturdy feeling of independence, which generally pervade the English nation, are, in a few individuals, perverted into absurdity, or at least peculiarity. The witty Irishman, on the contrary, adapts his general behaviour to that of the best society, or that which he thinks such; nor is it any part of the shrewd Scot's national character unnecessarily to draw upon himself public attention. These rules, however, are not without their exceptions; for we find men of every country playing the eccentric at these independent resorts of the gay and the wealthy, where every one enjoys the license of doing what is good in his own eyes.

It scarce needed these obvious remarks to justify a novelist's choice of a watering-place as the scene of a fictitious narrative. Unquestionably, it affords every variety of character, mixed together in a manner which cannot, without a breach of probability, be supposed to exist elsewhere; neither can it be denied that in the concourse which such miscellaneous collections of persons afford, events extremely different from those of the quiet routine of ordinary life may, and often do, take place.

It is not, however, sufficient that a mine be in itself rich and easily accessible; it is necessary that the engineer who explores it should himself, in mining phrase, have an accurate knowledge of the *country*, and possess the skill necessary to work it to advantage. In this respect, the author of St. Ronan's Well could not be termed fortunate. His habits of life had not led him much, of late years at least, into its general or bustling scenes, nor had he mingled often in the society which enables the observer to "shoot folly as it flies." The consequence perhaps was, that the characters wanted that force and precision which can only be given by a writer who is familiarly acquainted with his subject. The author, however, had the satisfaction to chronicle his testimony against the practice of gambling, a vice which the devil has contrived to render all his own, since it is deprived of whatever pleads an apology for other vices, and is founded entirely on the cold-blooded calculation of the most exclusive selfishness. The character of the traveller, meddling, self-important, and what the ladies call fussing, but yet generous and benevolent in his purposes, was partly taken from nature. The story, being entirely modern, cannot require much explanation, after what has been here given, either in the shape of notes, or a more prolix introduction.

It may be remarked, that the English critics, in many instances, though none of great influence, pursued St. Ronan's Well with hue and cry, many of the fraternity giving it as their opinion that the author had exhausted himself, or, as the technical phrase expresses it, written himself out; and as an unusual treat of success too often provokes many persons to mark and exaggerate a slip when it does occur, the author was publicly accused, in prose and verse, of having committed a literary suicide in this unhappy attempt. The voices, therefore, were, for a time, against Saint Ronan's on the southern side of the Tweed.

In the author's own country, it was otherwise. Many of the characters were recognised as genuine Scottish portraits, and the good fortune which had hitherto attended the productions of the Author of Waverley, did not desert, notwithstanding the ominous vaticinations of its censurers, this new attempt, although out of his ordinary style.

1st February, 1832.

ST. RONAN'S WELL.

CHAPTER I.

AN OLD-WORLD LANDLADY.

But to make up my tale,
She breweth good ale,
And therefore maketh sale.

SKELTON.

ALTHOUGH few, if any, of the countries of Europe, have increased so rapidly in wealth and cultivation as Scotland during the last half century, Sultan Mahmoud's owls might nevertheless have found in Caledonia, at any term within that flourishing period, their dowery of ruined villages. Accident or local advantages have, in many instances, transferred the inhabitants of ancient hamlets, from the situations which their predecessors chose with more respect to security than convenience, to those in which their increasing industry and commerce could more easily expand itself; and hence places which stand distinguished in Scottish history, and which figure in David M'Pherson's excellent historical map, can now only be discerned from the wild moor by the verdure which clothes their site, or at best, by a few scattered ruins, resembling pinfolds, which mark the spot of their former existence.

The little village of St. Ronan's, though it had not yet fallen into the state of entire oblivion we have described, was, about twenty years since, fast verging towards it. The situation had something in it so romantic, that it provoked the pencil of every passing tourist; and we will endeavour therefore, to describe it in language which can scarcely be less intelligible than some of their sketches, avoiding, however for reasons which seem to us of weight, to give any more exact indication of the site, than that it is on the southern side of the Forth, and not above thirty miles distant from the English frontier.

A river of considerable magnitude pours its streams through a narrow vale, varying in breadth from two miles to a fourth of that distance, and which, being composed of rich alluvial soil, is, and has long been, enclosed, tolerably well inhabited, and cultivated with all the skill of Scottish agriculture. Either side of this valley is bounded by a chain of hills, which, on the right in particular, may be almost termed mountains. Little brooks arising in these ridges, and finding their way to the river, offer each its own little vale to the industry of the cultivator. Some of them bear fine large trees, which have as yet escaped the axe, and upon the sides of most there are scattered patches and fringes of natural copsewood, above and around which the banks of the stream arise, somewhat desolate in the colder months, but in summer glowing with dark purple heath, or with the golden lustre of the broom and gorse. This is a sort of scenery peculiar to those countries, which abound, like Scotland, in hills and in streams, and where the traveller is ever and anon discovering in some intricate and unexpected recess, a simple and silvan beauty, which pleases him the more, that it seems to be peculiarly his own property as the first discoverer.

In one of these recesses, and so near its opening as to command the prospect of the river, the broader valley, and the opposite chain of hills, stood, and, unless neglect and desertion have completed their work, still stands, the ancient and decayed village of St. Ronan's. The site was singularly picturesque, as the straggling street of the village ran up a very steep hill, on the side of which were clustered, as it were, upon little terraces, the cottages which composed the place, seeming, as in the Swiss towns on the Alps, to rise above each other towards the ruins of an old castle, which continued to occupy the crest of the eminence, and the strength of which had doubtless led the neighbourhood to assemble under its walls for protection. It must, indeed, have been a place of formidable defence, for, on the side opposite to the town, its walls rose straight up from the verge of a tremendous and rocky precipice, whose base was washed by Saint Ronan's burn, as the brook was entitled. On the southern side, where the declivity was less precipitous, the ground had been carefully levelled into successive terraces, which ascended to the summit of the hill, and were, or rather had been, connected by staircases of stone, rudely ornamented. In peaceful periods these terraces had been occupied by the gardens of the castle, and in times of siege they added to its security, for each commanded the one immediately below it, so that they could be separately and successively defended, and all were exposed to the fire from the place itself—a massive square tower of the largest size, surrounded, as usual, by lower buildings, and a high embattled wall. On the northern side arose a considerable mountain, of which the descent that lay between the eminence on which the Castle was situated seemed a detached portion, and which had been improved and deepened by three successive huge trenches. Another very deep trench was drawn in front of the main entrance from the east, where the principal gateway formed the termination of the street, which, as we have noticed, ascended from the village, and this last defence completed the fortifications of the tower.

In the ancient gardens of the Castle, and upon all sides of it excepting the western, which was precipitous, large old trees had found root, mantling the rock and the ancient and ruinous walls with their dusky verdure, and increasing the effect of the shattered pile which towered up from the centre.

Seated on the threshold of this ancient pile, where the "proud porter" had in former days "rear'd himself,"* a stranger had a complete and commanding view of the decayed village, the houses of which, to a fanciful imagination, might seem as if they had been suddenly arrested in hurrying down the precipitous hill, and fixed as if by magic in the whimsical arrangement which they now presented. It was like a sudden pause in one of Amphion's country-dances, when the huts which were to form the future Thebes were jigging it to his lute. But, with such an observer, the melancholy excited by the desolate appearance of the village soon overcame all the lighter frolics of the imagination. Originally constructed on the humble plan used in the building of Scotch cottages about a century ago, the greater part of them had been long deserted; and their fallen roofs, blackened gables, and ruinous walls, showed Desolation's triumph over Poverty. On some huts the rafters, varnished with soot, were still standing, in whole or in part, like skeletons, and a few, wholly or partially covered with thatch, seemed still inhabited, though scarce habitable; for the smoke of the peat-fires, which prepared the humble meal of the indwellers, stole upwards, not only from the chimneys, its regular vent, but from various other crevices in the roofs. Nature, in the mean while, always changing, but renewing as she changes, was supplying, by the power of vegetation, the fallen and decaying marks of human labour. Stunted pollards, which had been formerly planted around the little gardens

* See the old Ballad of King Estmere, in Percy's Reliques.

had now waxed into huge and high forest trees; the fruit-trees had extended their branches over the verges of the little yards, and the hedges had shot up into huge and irregular bushes; while quantities of dock, and nettles, and hemlock, hiding the ruined walls, were busily converting the whole scene of desolation into a picturesque forest-bank.

Two houses in St. Ronan's were still in something like decent repair; places essential—the one to the spiritual weal of the inhabitants, the other to the accommodation of travellers. These were the clergyman's manse, and the village inn. Of the former we need only say, that it formed no exception to the general rule by which the landed proprietors of Scotland seem to proceed in lodging their clergy, not only in the cheapest, but in the ugliest and most inconvenient house which the genius of masonry can contrive. It had the usual number of chimneys—two, namely—rising like asses' ears at either end, which answered the purpose for which they were designed as ill as usual. It had all the ordinary leaks and inlets to the fury of the elements, which usually form the subject of the complaints of a Scottish incumbent to his brethren of the presbytery; and, to complete the picture, the clergyman being a bachelor, the pigs had unmolested admission to the garden and court-yard, broken windows were repaired with brown paper, and the disordered and squalid appearance of a low farm-house, occupied by a bankrupt tenant, dishonoured the dwelling of one, who, besides his clerical character, was a scholar and a gentleman, though a little of a humourist.

Beside the manse stood the kirk of St. Ronan's, a little old mansion with a clay floor, and an assemblage of wretched pews, originally of carved oak, but heedfully clouted with white fir-deal. But the external form of the church was elegant in the outline, having been built in Catholic times, when we cannot deny to the forms of ecclesiastical architecture that grace, which, as good Protestants, we refuse to their doctrine. The fabric hardly raised its gray and vaulted roof among the crumbling hills of mortality by which it was surrounded, and was indeed so small in size, and so much lowered in height by the graves on the outside, which ascended half way up the low Saxon windows, that it might itself have appeared only a funeral vault, or mausoleum of larger size. Its little square tower, with the ancient belfry, alone distinguished it from such a monument. But when the gray-headed beadle turned the keys with his shaking hand, the antiquary was admitted into an ancient building, which, from the style of its architecture, and some monuments of the Mowbrays of St. Ronan's, which the old man was accustomed to point out, was generally conjectured to be as early as the thirteenth century.

These Mowbrays of St. Ronan's seem to have been at one time a very powerful family. They were allied to, and friends of the house of Douglas, at the time when the overgrown power of that heroic race made the Stewarts tremble on the Scottish throne. It followed that, when, as our old *naif* historian expresses it, "no one dared to strive with a Douglas, nor yet with a Douglas's man, for if he did, he was sure to come by the waur," the family of St. Ronan's shared their prosperity, and became lords of almost the whole of the rich valley of which their mansion commanded the prospect. But upon the turning of the tide, in the reign of James II., they became despoiled of the greater part of those fair acquisitions, and succeeding events reduced their importance still farther. Nevertheless, they were, in the middle of the seventeenth century, still a family of considerable note; and Sir Reginald Mowbray, after the unhappy battle of Dunbar, distinguished himself by the obstinate defence of the Castle against the arms of Cromwell, who, incensed at the opposition which he had unexpectedly encountered in an obscure corner, caused the fortress to be dismantled and blown up with gunpowder.

After this catastrophe the old Castle was abandoned to ruin; but Sir Reginald, when, like Allan Ramsay's Sir William Worthy, he returned after the Revolution, built himself a house in the fashion of that later age, which he prudently suited in size to the diminished fortunes of his family. It was situated about the middle of the village, whose vicinity was not in those days judged any inconvenience, upon a spot of ground more level than was presented by the rest of the acclivity, where, as we said before, the houses were notched as it were into the side of the steep bank, with little more level ground about them than the spot occupied by their site. But the Laird's house had a court in front and a small garden behind, connected with another garden, which, occupying three terraces, descended, in emulation of the orchards of the old Castle, almost to the banks of the stream.

The family continued to inhabit this new messuage until about fifty years before the commencement of our history, when it was much damaged by a casual fire; and the Laird of the day, having just succeeded to a more pleasant and commodious dwelling at the distance of about three miles from the village, determined to abandon the habitation of his ancestors. As he cut down at the same time an ancient rookery, (perhaps to defray the expenses of the migration,) it became a common remark among the country folk, that the decay of St. Ronan's began when Laird Lawrence and the crows flew off.

The deserted mansion, however, was not consigned to owls and birds of the desert; on the contrary, for many years it witnessed more fun and festivity than when it had been the sombre abode of a grave Scottish Baron of "auld lang syne." In short, it was converted into an inn, and marked by a huge sign, representing on the one side St. Ronan catching hold of the devil's game leg with his Episcopal crook, as the story may be read in his veracious legend, and on the other the Mowbray arms. It was by far the best frequented public house in that vicinity; and a thousand stories were told of the revels which had been held within its walls, and the gambols achieved under the influence of its liquors. All this, however, had long since passed away, according to the lines in my frontispiece,

"A merry place, 'twas said, in days of yore,
But something ail'd it now,—the place was cursed."

The worthy couple (servants and favourites of the Mowbray family) who first kept the inn, had died reasonably wealthy, after long carrying on a flourishing trade, leaving behind them an only daughter. They had acquired by degrees not only the property of the inn itself, of which they were originally tenants, but of some remarkably good meadow-land by the side of the brook, which, when touched by a little pecuniary necessity, the Lairds of St. Ronan's had disposed of piece-meal, as the readiest way to portion off a daughter, procure a commission for the younger son, and the like emergencies. So that Meg Dods, when she succeeded to her parents, was a considerable heiress, and, as such, had the honour of refusing three topping farmers, two bonnet-lairds, and a horse-couper, who successively made proposals to her.

Many bets were laid on the horse-couper's success, but the knowing ones were taken in. Determined to ride the fore-horse herself, Meg would admit no helpmate who might soon assert the rights of a master; and so, in single blessedness, and with the despotism of Queen Bess herself, she ruled all matters with a high hand, not only over her men-servants and maid-servants, but over the stranger within her gates, who, if he ventured to oppose Meg's sovereign will and pleasure, or desire to have either fare or accommodation different from that which she chose to provide for him, was instantly ejected with that answer which Erasmus tells us silenced all complaints in the German inns of his time, *Quære aliud hospitium*;* or, as Meg expressed it, "Troop aff wi' ye to another public." As this amounted to a banishment in extent equal to sixteen miles from Meg's residence, the unhappy party on whom it was passed, had no other refuge save by deprecating the wrath of his landlady, and resigning himself to her will. It is but justice to Meg Dods to state, that though hers was a severe and almost despotic government, it could not be termed a

* In a colloquy of Erasmus, called *Diversoria*, there is a very unsavoury description of a German inn of the period, where an objection of the guest is answered in the manner expressed in the text—a great sign of want of competition on the road.

tyranny, since it was exercised, upon the whole, for the good of the subject.

The vaults of the old Laird's cellar had not, even in his own day, been replenished with more excellent wines; the only difficulty was to prevail on Meg to look for the precise liquor you chose;—to which it may be added, that she often became restiff when she thought a company had had "as much as did them good," and refused to furnish any more supplies. Then her kitchen was her pride and glory; she looked to the dressing of every dish herself, and there were some with which she suffered no one to interfere. Such were the cock-a-leeky, and the savoury minced collops, which rivalled in their way even the veal cutlets of our old friend Mrs. Hall, at Ferrybridge. Meg's table-linen, bed-linen, and so forth, were always home-made, of the best quality, and in the best order; and a weary day was that to the chambermaid in which her lynx eye discovered any neglect of the strict cleanliness which she constantly enforced. Indeed, considering Meg's country and calling, we were never able to account for her extreme and scrupulous nicety, unless by supposing that it afforded her the most apt and frequent pretext for scolding her maids; an exercise in which she displayed so much eloquence and energy, that we must needs believe it to have been a favourite one.*

We have only further to commemorate, the moderation of Meg's reckonings, which, when they closed the banquet, often relieved the apprehensions, instead of saddening the heart, of the rising guest. A shilling for breakfast, three shillings for dinner, including a pint of old port, eighteen pence for a snug supper—such were the charges of the inn of St. Ronan's, under this landlady of the olden world, even after the nineteenth century had commenced; and they were ever tendered with the pious recollection, that her good father never charged half so much, but these weary times rendered it impossible for her to make the lawing less.†

Notwithstanding all these excellent and rare properties, the inn at Saint Ronan's shared the decay of the village to which it belonged. This was owing to various circumstances. The high-road had been turned aside from the place, the steepness of the street being murder (so the postilions declared) to their post-horses. It was thought that Meg's stern refusal to treat them with liquor, or to connive at their exchanging for porter and whisky the corn which should feed their cattle, had no small influence on the opinion of those respectable gentlemen, and that a little cutting and levelling would have made the ascent easy enough; but let that pass. This alteration of the highway was an injury which Meg did not easily forgive to the country gentlemen, most of whom she had recollected when children. "Their fathers," she said, "wad not have done the like of it to a lone woman." Then the decay of the village itself, which had formerly contained a set of feuars and bonnet-lairds, who, under the name of the Chirupping Club, contrived to drink twopenny, qualified with brandy or whisky, at least twice or thrice a week, was some small loss.

The temper and manners of the landlady scared away all customers of that numerous class, who will not allow originality to be an excuse for the breach of decorum, and who, little accustomed perhaps to attendance at home, love to play the great man at an inn, and to have a certain number of bows, deferential speeches, and apologies, in answer to the G—d d—n ye's which they bestow on the house, attendance, and entertainment. Unto those who commenced this sort of barter in the Clachan of Saint Ronan's, well could Meg Dods pay it back, in their own coin; and glad they were to escape from the house with eyes not quite scratched out, and ears not more deafened than if they had been within hearing of a pitched battle.

Nature had formed honest Meg for such encounters; and as her noble soul delighted in them, so her outward properties were in what Tony Lumpkin calls a concatenation accordingly. She had hair of a brindled colour, betwixt black and gray, which was apt to escape in elf-locks from under her mutch when she was thrown into violent agitation—long skinny hands, terminated by stout talons—gray eyes, thin lips, a robust person, a broad, though flat chest, capital wind, and a voice that could match a choir of fishwomen. She was accustomed to say of herself in her more gentle moods, that her bark was worse than her bite; but what teeth could have matched a tongue, which, when in full career, is vouched to have been heard from the Kirk to the Castle of Saint Ronan's?

These notable gifts, however, had no charms for the travellers of these light and giddy-paced times, and Meg's inn became less and less frequented. What carried the evil to the uttermost was, that a fanciful lady of rank in the neighbourhood chanced to recover of some imaginary complaint by the use of a mineral well about a mile and a half from the village; a fashionable doctor was found to write an analysis of the healing waters, with a list of sundry cures; a speculative builder took land in feu, and erected lodging-houses, shops, and even streets. At length a tontine subscription was obtained to erect an inn, which, for the more grace, was called a hotel; and so the desertion of Meg Dods became general.*

She had still, however, her friends and well-wishers, many of whom thought, that as she was a lone woman, and known to be well to pass in the world, she would act wisely to retire from public life, and take down a sign which had no longer fascination for guests. But Meg's spirit scorned submission, direct or implied. "Her father's door," she said, "should be open to the road, till her father's bairn should be stroekit and carried out at it with her feet foremost. It was not for the profit—there was little profit at it; —profit?—there was a dead loss; but she wad not be dung by any of them. They maun hae a hottle,† maun they?—and an honest public canna serve them! They may hottle that likes; but they shall see that Lucky Dods can hottle on as lang as the beat of them

* This circumstance shows of itself, that the Meg Dods of the tale cannot be identified with her namesake Jenny Dods, who kept the inn at Howgate, on the Peebles road: for Jenny, far different from our heroine, was unmatched as a slattern.

† This was universally the case in Scotland forty or fifty years ago; and so little was charged for a domestic's living when the author became first acquainted with the road, that a shilling or eighteen pence was sufficient board wages for a man-servant, when a crown would not now answer the purpose. It is true the cause of these reasonable charges rested upon a principle equally unjust to the landlord, and inconvenient to the guest. The landlord did not expect to make any thing upon the charge for eating which his bill contained; in consideration of which, the guest was expected to drink more wine than might be convenient or agreeable to him, "*for the good*," as it was called, "*of the house*." The landlord indeed was willing and ready to assist in this duty, every stranger who came within his gates. Other things were in proportion. A charge for lodging, fire, and candle, was long a thing unheard of in Scotland. A shilling to the housemaid settled all such considerations. See, from memorandums of 1720, that a young man, with two ponies and a serving-lad, might travel from the house of one Meg Dods to another, through most part of Scotland, for about five or six shillings a-day.

* In Scotland a village is erected upon a species of landright, very different from the copyhold so frequent in England. Every alienation or sale of landed property must be made in the shape of a feudal conveyance, and the party who acquires it holds thereby an absolute and perfect right of property in the fief, while he discharges the stipulations of the vassal, and, above all, pays the feu-duties. The vassal or tenant of the site of the smallest cottage holds his possession as absolutely as the proprietor, of whose large estate it is perhaps scarce a perceptible portion. By dint of excellent laws, the sasines, or deeds or delivery of such fiefs, are placed on record in such order, that every burden affecting the property can be seen for payment of a very moderate fee; so that a person proposing to lend money upon it, knows exactly the nature and extent of his security.

From the nature of these landrights being so explicit and secure, the Scottish people have been led to entertain a jealousy of building-leases, of however long duration. Not long ago, a great landed proprietor took the latter mode of disposing of some ground near a thriving town in the west country. The number of years in the lease was settled at nine hundred and ninety-nine. All was agreed to, and the deeds were ordered to be drawn. But the tenant, as he walked down the avenue, began to reflect that the lease, though so very long as to be almost perpetual, nevertheless had a termination; and that after the lapse of a thousand years, lacking one, the connexion of his family and representatives with the estate would cease. He took a qualm at the thought of the loss to be sustained by his posterity a thousand years hence; and going back to the house of the gentleman who feued the ground, he demanded, and readily obtained, the additional term of fifty years to be added to the lease.

† This Gallic word (hotel) was first introduced in Scotland during the author's childhood, and was so pronounced by the lower class.

—ay, though they had made a Tamteen of it, and finkit aw their breaths of lives, whilk are in their nostrils, on end of ilk other like a string of wild-geese, and the langest liver bruick a', (whilk was sinful presumption,) she would match ilk ane of them as lang as her ain wind held out." Fortunate it was for Meg, since she had formed this doughty resolution, that although her inn had decayed in custom, her land had risen in value in a degree which more than compensated the balance on the wrong side of her books, and, joined to her usual providence and economy, enabled her to act up to her lofty purpose.

She prosecuted her trade too with every attention to its diminished income; shut up the windows of one half of her house, to baffle the tax-gatherer; retrenched her furniture; discharged her pair of post-horses, and pensioned off the old humpbacked postilion who drove them, retaining his services, however, as an assistant to a still more aged hostler. To console herself for restrictions by which her pride was secretly wounded, she agreed with the celebrated Dick Tinto to re-paint her father's sign, which had become rather undecipherable; and Dick accordingly gilded the Bishop's crook, and augmented the horrors of the Devil's aspect, until it became a terror to all the younger fry of the school-house, and a sort of visible illustration of the terrors of the arch-enemy, with which the minister endeavoured to impress their infant minds.

Under this renewed symbol of her profession, Meg Dods, or Meg Dorts, as she was popularly termed, on account of her refractory humours, was still patronised by some steady customers. Such were the members of the Killnakelty Hunt, once famous on the turf and in the field, but now a set of venerable gray-headed sportsmen, who had sunk from fox-hounds to basket-beagles and coursing, and who made an easy canter on their quiet nags a gentle induction to a dinner at Meg's. "A set of honest decent men they were," Meg said; "had their sang and their joke—and what for no? Their bind was just a Scots pint over-head, and a tappithen to the bill, and no man ever saw them the waur o't. It was thae cockle-brained callants of the present day that would be mair owerta'en with a puir quart than douce folk were with a magnum."

Then there was a set of ancient brethren of the angle from Edinburgh, who visited Saint Ronan's frequently in the spring and summer, a class of guests peculiarly acceptable to Meg, who permitted them more latitude in her premises than she was known to allow to any other body. "They were," she said, "pawky auld carles, that kend whilk side their bread was buttered upon. Ye never kend of ony o' them ganging to the spring, as they behoved to ca' the stinking well yonder.—Na, na—they were up in the morning—had their parritch, wi' maybe a thimblefull of brandy, and then awa up into the hills, eat their bit cauld meat on the heather, and came hame at e'en with the creel full of caller trouts, and had them to their dinner, and their quiet cogue of ale, and their drap punch, and were set singing their catches and glees, as they ca'd them, till ten o'clock, and then to bed, wi' God bless ye—and what for no?"

Thirdly, we may commemorate some ranting blades, who also came from the metropolis to visit Saint Ronan's, attracted by the humours of Meg, and still more by the excellence of her liquor, and the cheapness of her reckonings. These were members of the Helter Skelter Club, of the Wildfire Club, and other associations formed for the express purpose of getting rid of care and sobriety. Such dashers occasioned many a racket in Meg's house, and many a *bourasque* in Meg's temper. Various were the arts of flattery and violence by which they endeavoured to get supplies of liquor, when Meg's conscience told her they had had too much already. Sometimes they failed, as when the croupier of the Helter Skelter got himself scalded with the mulled wine, in an unsuccessful attempt to coax this formidable virago by a salute; and the excellent president of the Wildfire received a broken head from the keys of the cellar, as he endeavoured to possess himself of these emblems of authority. But little did these dauntless officials care for the exuberant frolics of Meg's temper, which were to them only "pretty Fanny's way"—the *dulces Amaryllidis iræ*. And Meg, on her part, though she often called them "drunken ne'er-do-weels, and thoroughbred High-street blackguards," allowed no other person to speak ill of them in her hearing. "They were daft callants," she said, "and that was all—when the drink was in, the wit was out—ye could not put an auld head upon young shouthers—a young cowt will canter, be it up-hill or down—and what for no?" was her uniform conclusion.

Nor must we omit, among Meg's steady customers, "faithful amongst the unfaithful found," the copper-nosed sheriff-clerk of the county, who, when summoned by official duty to that district of the shire, warmed by recollections of her double-brewed ale, and her generous Antigua, always advertised that his "Prieves," or "Comptis," or whatever other business was in hand, were to proceed on such a day and hour, "within the house of Margaret Dods, vintner in Saint Ronan's."

We have only farther to notice Meg's mode of conducting herself towards chance travellers, who, knowing nothing of nearer or more fashionable accommodations, or perhaps consulting rather the state of their purse than of their taste, stumbled upon her house of entertainment. Her reception of these was as precarious as the hospitality of a savage nation to sailors shipwrecked on their coast. If the guests seemed to have made her mansion their free choice—or if she liked their appearance (and her taste was very capricious)—above all, if they seemed pleased with what they got, and little disposed to criticise or give trouble, it was all very well. But if they had come to Saint Ronan's because the house at the Well was full—or if she disliked what the sailor calls the cut of their jib—or if, above all, they were critical about their accommodations, none so likely as Meg to give them what in her country is called a *sloan*. In fact, she reckoned such persons a part of that ungenerous and ungrateful public, for whose sake she was keeping her house open at a dead loss, and who had left her, as it were, a victim to her patriotic zeal.

Hence arose the different reports concerning the little inn of Saint Ronan's, which some favoured travellers praised as the neatest and most comfortable old-fashioned house in Scotland, where you had good attendance, and good cheer, at moderate rates; while others, less fortunate, could only talk of the darkness of the rooms, the homeliness of the old furniture, and the detestable bad humour of Meg Dods, the landlady.

Reader, if you come from the more sunny side of the Tweed—or even if, being a Scot, you have had the advantage to be born within the last twenty-five years, you may be induced to think this portrait of Queen Elizabeth, in Dame Quickly's piqued hat and green apron, somewhat overcharged in the features. But I appeal to my own contemporaries, who have known wheel-road, bridle-way, and foot path, for thirty years, whether they do not, every one of them, remember Meg Dods—or somebody very like her. Indeed, so much is this the case, that, about the period I mention, I should have been afraid to have rambled from the Scottish metropolis, in almost any direction, lest I had lighted upon some one of the sisterhood of Dame Quickly, who might suspect me of having showed her up to the public in the character of Meg Dods. At present, though it is possible that some one or two of this peculiar class of wild-cats may still exist, their talons must be much impaired by age; and I think they can do little more than sit, like the Giant Pope, in the Pilgrim's Progress, at the door of their unfrequented caverns, and grin at the pilgrims over whom they used formerly to execute their despotism.

CHAPTER II.

THE GUEST.

Quis novas hic hospis?—*Dido apud Virgilium.*

Ch'am-maid! The Gemman in the front parlour!
BOOTS'S *free Translation of the Æneid.*

It was on a fine summer's day that a solitary traveller rode under the old-fashioned archway, and alighted

in the court-yard of Meg Dods's inn, and delivered the bridle of his horse to the humpbacked postilion. "Bring my saddle-bags," he said, "into the house—or stay—I am ableı, I think, to carry them than you." He then assisted the poor meager groom to unbuckle the straps which secured the humble and now despised convenience, and mean time gave strict charges that his horse should be unbridled, and put into a clean and comfortable stall, the girths slacked, and a cloth cast over his loins; but that the saddle should not be removed until he himself came to see him dressed.

The companion of his travels seemed in the hostler's eye deserving of his care, being a strong active horse, fit either for the road or field, but rather high in bone from a long journey, though from the state of his skin it appeared the utmost care had been bestowed to keep him in condition. While the groom obeyed the stranger's directions, the latter, with the saddle-bags laid over his arm, entered the kitchen of the inn.

Here he found the landlady herself in none of her most blessed humours. The cook-maid was abroad on some errand, and Meg, in a close review of the kitchen apparatus, was making the unpleasant discovery, that trenchers had been broken or cracked, pots and saucepans not so accurately scoured as her precise notions of cleanliness required, which, joined to other detections of a more petty description, stirred her bile in no small degree; so that while she disarranged and arranged the *bink*, she maundered, in an under tone, complaints and menaces against the absent delinquent.

The entrance of a guest did not induce her to suspend this agreeable a' .sement—she just glanced at him as he entered, then turned her back short on him, and continued her labour and her soliloquy of lamentation. Truth is, she thought she recognised in the person of the stranger, one of those useful envoys of the commercial community, called, by themselves and the waiters, *Travellers*, par excellence—by others, Riders and Ragmen. Now against this class of customers Meg had peculiar prejudices; because, there being no shops in the old village of Saint Ronan's, the said commercial emissaries, for the convenience of their traffic, always took up their abode at the New Inn, or Hotel, in the rising and rival village called Saint Ronan's Well, unless when some straggler, by chance or dire necessity, was compelled to lodge himself at the Auld Town, as the place of Meg's residence began to be generally termed. She had, therefore, no sooner formed the hasty conclusion, that the individual in question belonged to this obnoxious class, than she resumed her former occupation, and continued to soliloquize and apostrophize her absent handmaidens, without even appearing sensible of his presence.

"The huzzy Beenie—the jaud Eppie—the deil's buckie of a callant!—Another plate gane—they'll break me out of house and ha'!"

The traveller, who, with his saddle-bags rested on the back of a chair, had waited in silence for some note of welcome, now saw that, ghost or no ghost, he must speak first, if he intended to have any notice from his landlady.

"You are my old acquaintance, Mrs. Margaret Dods?" said the stranger.

"What for no?—and wha are ye that speers?" said Meg, in the same breath, and began to rub a brass candlestick with more vehemence than before—the dry tone in which she spoke, indicating plainly how little concern she took in the conversation.

"A traveller, good Mistress Dods, who comes to take up his lodgings here for a day or two."

"I am thinking ye will be mista'en," said Meg; "there's nae room far bags or jaugs here—ye've mista'en your road neighbour—ye maun e'en bundle yourself a bit farther down hill."

"I see you have not got the letter I sent you, Mistress Dods?" said the guest.

"How should I, man?" answered the hostess; "they have ta'en awa the post-office from us—moved it down till the Spa-well yonder, as they ca'd."

"Why, that is but a step off," observed the guest.

"Ye will get there the sooner," answered the hostess.

"Nay, but," said the guest, "if you had sent there for my letter, you would have learned"———

"I'm no wanting to learn ony thing at my years," said Meg. "If folk have ony thing to write to me about, they may gie the letter to John Hislop, the carrier, that has used the road these forty years. As for the letters at the post-mistress's, as they ca' her, down by yonder, they may bide in her shop-window, wi' the snaps and bawbee rows, till Beltane or I loose them. I'll never file my fingers with them. Post-mistress, indeed!—Upsetting cutty! I mind her fu' weel when she dree'd penance for ante-nup"———

Laughing, but interrupting Meg in good time for the character of the post-mistress, the stranger assured her he had sent his fishing-rod and trunk to her confidential friend the carrier, and that he sincerely hoped she would not turn an old acquaintance out of her premises, especially as he believed he could not sleep in a bed within five miles of Saint Ronan's, if he knew that her Blue room was unengaged.

"Fishing-rod!—Auld acquaintance!—Blue room!" echoed Meg, in some surprise; and, facing round upon the stranger, and examining him with some interest and curiosity,—"Ye'll be nae bag-man, then, after a'?"

"No," said the traveller; "not since I have laid the saddle-bags out of my hand."

"Weel, I canna say but I am glad of that—I canna abide their yanking way of knapping English at every word.—I have kent decent lads amang them too—What for no?—But that was when they stopped up here whiles, like other douce folk; but since they gaed down, the hail flight of them, like a string of wild-geese, to the new-fashioned hottle yonder, I am told there are as mony hellicate tricks played in the travellers' room, as they behove to call it, as if it were fu' of drunken young lairds."

"That is because they have not you to keep good order among them, Mistress Margaret."

"Ay, lad?" replied Meg, "ye are a fine blaw-in-nylug, to think to cuittle me off sae cleverly!" And, facing about upon her guest, she honoured him with a more close and curious investigation than she had at first designed to bestow upon him.

All that she remarked was in her opinion rather favourable to the stranger. He was a well-made man, rather above than under the middle size, and apparently betwixt five-and-twenty and thirty years of age—for, although he might, at first glance, have passed for one who had attained the latter period, yet, on a nearer examination, it seemed as if the burning sun of a warmer climate than Scotland, and perhaps some fatigue, both of body and mind, had imprinted the marks of care and of manhood upon his countenance, without abiding the course of years. His eyes and teeth were excellent, and his other features, though they could scarce be termed handsome, expressed sense and acuteness; he bore, in his aspect, that ease and composure of manner, equally void of awkwardness and affectation, which is said emphatically to mark the gentleman; and, although neither the plainness of his dress, nor the total want of the usual attendants, allowed Meg to suppose him a wealthy man, she had little doubt that he was above the rank of her lodgers in general. Amidst these observations, and while she was in the course of making them, the good landlady was embarrassed with various obscure recollections of having seen the object of them formerly; but when, or on what occasions she was quite unable to call to remembrance. She was particularly puzzled by the cold and sarcastic expression of a countenance, which she could not by any means reconcile with the recollections which it awakened. At length she said, with as much courtesy as she was capable of assuming,—"Either I have seen you before, sir, or some ane very like ye?—Ye ken the Blue room, too, and you a stranger in these parts?"

"Not so much a stranger as you may suppose, Meg," said the guest, assuming a more intimate tone, "when I call myself Frank Tyrrel."

"Tirl!" exclaimed Meg, with a tone of wonder—

It's impossible! You cannot be Francie Tirl, the wild callant that was fishing and bird-nesting here seven or eight years syne—it canna be—Francie was but a callant!"

"But add seven or eight years to that boy's life, Meg," said the stranger gravely, "and you will find you have the man who is now before you."

"Even sae!" said Meg, with a glance at the reflection of her own countenance in the copper coffee-pot, which she had scoured so brightly that it did the office of a mirror—"Just e'n sae—but folk maun grow auld or die.—But, Maister Tirl, for I mauna ca' ye Francie now, I am thinking"———

"Call me what you please, good dame," said the stranger; "it has been so long since I heard any one call me by a name that sounded like former kindness, that such a one is more agreeable to me than a lord's title would be."

"Weel, then, Maister Francie—if it be no offence to you—I hope ye are no a Nabob?"

"Not I, I can safely assure you, my old friend;—but what an I were?"

"Naething—only maybe I might bid ye gang farther, and be waur served.—Nabobs, indeed! the country's plagued wi' them. They have raised the price of eggs and pootry for twenty miles round—But what is my business?—They use amaist a' of them the Well down by—they need it, ye ken, for the clearing of their copper complexions, that need scouring as much as my saucepans, that naebody can clean but myself."

"Well, my good friend," said Tyrrel, "the upshot of all this is, I hope, that I am to stay and have dinner here?"

"What for no?" replied Mrs. Dods.

"And that I am to have the Blue room for a night or two—perhaps longer?"

"I dinna ken that," said the dame.—"The Blue room is the best—and they that get neis: best, are no ill aff in this world."

"Arrange it as you will," said the stranger, "I leave the whole matter to you, mistress.—Mean time, I will go see after my horse."

"The merciful man," said Meg, when her guests had left the kitchen, "is merciful to his beast.—He had aye something about him by ordinar, that callant—But eh, sirs! there is a sair change on his cheek-haffit since I saw him last!—He sall no want a good dinner for auld lang syne, that I'se engage for."

Meg set about the necessary preparations with all the natural energy of her disposition, which was so much exerted upon her culinary cares, that her two maids, on their return to the house, escaped the bitter reprimand which she had been previously conning over, in reward for their alleged slatternly negligence. Nay, so far, did she carry her complaisance, that when Tyrrel crossed the kitchen to recover his saddle-bags, she formally rebuked Eppie for an idle taupie, for not carrying the gentleman's things to his room.

"I thank you, mistress," said Tyrrel; "but I have some drawings and colours in these saddle-bags, and I always like to carry them myself."

"Ay, and are you at the painting trade yet?" said Meg; "an unco slaister ye used to make with it lang syne."

"I cannot live without it," said Tyrrel; and taking the saddle-bags, was formally inducted by the maid into a snug apartment, where he soon had the satisfaction to behold a capital dish of minced collops, with vegetables, and a jug of excellent ale, placed on the table by the careful hand of Meg herself. He could do no less, in acknowledgment of the honour, than ask Meg for a bottle of the yellow-seal, "if there was any of that excellent claret still left."

"Left?—ay is there, walth of it," said Meg; "I dinna gie it to every body—Ah! Maister Tirl, ye have not got ower your auld tricks!—I am sure, if ye are painting for your leeving, as you say, a little rum and water would come cheaper, and do ye as much good. But ye maun hae your ain way the day, nae doubt, if ye should never have it again."

Away trudged Meg, her keys clattering as she went, and, after much rummaging, returned with such a bottle of claret as no fashionable tavern could have produced, were it called for by a duke, or at a duke's price; and she seemed not a little gratified when her guest assured her that he had not yet forgotten its excellent flavour. She retired after these acts of hospitality, and left the stranger to enjoy in quiet the excellent matters which she had placed before him.

But there was that on Tyrrel's mind which defied the enlivening power of good cheer and of wine, which only maketh man's heart glad when that heart has no secret oppression to counteract its influence. Tyrrel found himself on a spot which he had loved in that delightful season, when youth and high spirits awaken all those flattering promises which are so ill kept to manhood. He drew his chair into the embrasure of the old-fashioned window, and throwing up the sash to enjoy the fresh air, suffered his thoughts to return to former days, while his eyes wandered over objects which they had not looked upon for several eventful years. He could behold beneath his eye, the lower part of the decayed village, as its ruins peeped from the umbrageous shelter with which they were shrouded. Still lower down, upon the little holm which formed its church-yard, was seen the Kirk of Saint Ronan's; and looking yet farther, towards the junction of Saint Ronan's burn with the river which traversed the larger dale or valley, he could see whitened, by the western sun, the rising houses, which were either newly finished, or in the act of being built, about the medicinal spring.

"Time changes all around us," such was the course of natural though trite reflection, which flowed upon Tyrrel's mind; "wherefore should loves and friendships have a longer date than our dwellings and our monuments?" As he indulged these sombre recollections, his officious landlady disturbed their tenour by her entrance.

"I was thinking to offer you a dish of tea, Maister Francie, just for the sake of auld lang syne, and I'll gar the quean Beenie bring it here, and mask it mysell.—But ye arena done with your wine yet?"

"I am indeed, Mrs. Dods," answered Tyrrel; "and I beg you will remove the bottle."

"Remove the bottle, and the wine no half drank out!" said Meg, displeasure lowering on her brow; "I hope there is nae fault to be found wi' the wine, Maister Tirl?"

To this answer, which was put in a tone resembling defiance, Tyrrel submissively replied, by declaring "the claret not only unexceptionable, but excellent."

"And what for dinna ye drink it, then?" said Meg, sharply; "folk should never ask for mair liquor than they can make a gude use of. Maybe ye think we have the fashion of the table-dot, as they ca' their newfangled ordinary down-by yonder, where a' the bits of vinegar cruets are put awa into an awmry, as they tell me, and ilk ane wi' the bit dribbles of syndings in it, and a paper about the neck o't, to show which of the customers is aught it—there they stand like doctor's drogs—and no an honest Scottish mutchkin will ane o' their viols haud, granting it were at the fouest."

"Perhaps," said Tyrrel, willing to indulge the spleen and prejudice of his old acquaintance, "perhaps the wine is not so good as to make full measure desirable."

"Ye may say that, lad—and yet them that sell it might afford a gude pennlworth, for they hae it for the making—maist feck of it ne'er saw France or Portugal. But as I was saying—this is no ane of their newfangled places, where wine is put by for them that canna drink it—when the cork's drawn the bottle maun be drank out—and what for no?—unless it be corkit."

"I agree entirely, Meg," said her guest; "but my ride to-day has somewhat heated me—and I think the dish of tea you promise me, will do me more good than to finish my bottle."

"Na, then, the best I can do for you is to put it by, to be sauce for the wild-duck the morn; for I think ye said ye were to bide here for a day or twa."

"It is my very purpose, Meg, unquestionably," replied Tyrrel.

"Sae be it then," said Mrs. Dods; "and then the

liquor's no lost—it has been seldom sic claret as that has simmered in a saucepan, let me tell you that, neighbour;—and I mind the day, when, headach or nae headach, ye wad hae been at the tinder-end of that bottle, and may be anither, if ye could have gotten it wiled out of me. But then ye had your cousin to help you—Ah! he was a blithe bairn that Valentine Bulmer!—Ye were a canty callant too, Mnister Francie, and muckle adо I had to keep ye baith in order when ye were on the ramble. But ye were a thought doucer than Valentine—But O! he was a bonny laddie!—wi' e'en like diamonds, cheeks like roses, a head like a heather-tap—he was the first I ever saw wear a crap, as they ca' it, but a' body cheats the barber now—and he had a laugh that wad has raised the dead!—What wi' flyting on him, and what wi' laughing at him, there was nae minding ony other body when that Valentine was in the house. —And how is your cousin Valentine Bulmer, Maister Francie?"

Tyrrel looked down, and only answered with a sigh.

"Ay—and is it even sae?" said Meg; "and has the puir bairn been sae soon removed frae this fashious warld?—Ay—ay—we maun a' gang ae gate—crackit quart-stoups and geisen'd barrels—leaky quaighs are we a', and canna keep in the liquor of life—Ohon, sirs!—Was the puir lad Bulmer frae Bu'mer bay, where they land the Hollands, think ye, Maister Francie?—They whiles rin in a pickle tea there too—I hope that is good that I have made you, Maister Francie?"

"Excellent, my good dame," said Tyrrel; but it was in a tone of voice which intimated that she had pressed upon a subject that awakened some unpleasant reflections.

"And when did this puir lad die?" continued Meg, who was not without her share of Eve's qualities, and wished to know something concerning what seemed to affect her guest so particularly; but he disappointed her purpose, and at the same time awakened another train of sentiment in her mind, by turning again to the window, and looking upon the distant buildings of Saint Ronan's Well. As if he had observed for the first time these new objects, he said to Mistress Dods in an indifferent tone, "You have got some gay new neighbours yonder, mistress."

"Neighbours!" said Meg, her wrath beginning to arise, as it always did upon any allusion to this sore subject—"Ye may ca' them neighbours, if ye like—but the deil flee awa wi' the neighbourhood for Meg Dods!"

"I suppose," said Tyrrel, as if he did not observe her displeasure, "that yonder is the Fox Hotel they told me of?"

"The Fox!" said Meg: "I am sure it is the fox that has carried off a' my geese.—I might shut up house, Maister Francie, if it was the thing I lived by—me, that has seen a' our gentlefolk bairns, and gien them snaps and sugar-biscuit maist of them wi' my ain hand! They wad hae seen my father's roof-tree a' down and smoor me before they wad hae gien a boddle a-piece to have propped it up—but they could find out their fifty pounds ower head to bigg a hottle at the Well yonder. And muckle they hae made o't—the bankrupt body, Sandie Lawson, hasna paid them a bawbee of four terms' rent."

"Surely, mistress, I think if the Well became so famous for its cures, the least the gentlemen could have done was to make you the priestess."

"Me priestess! I am nae Quaker, I wot, Maister Francie; and I never heard of alewife that turned preacher, except Luckie Buchan in the west.* And if I were to preach, I think I have mair the spirit of a Scottish woman, than to preach in the very room they hae been dancing in ilka night in the week, Saturday itsell not excepted, and that till twal o'clock at night. Na, na, Maister Francie; I leave the like o' that to Mr. Simon Chatterly, as they ca' the mystical sprig of divinity from the town yonder, that plays at cards and dances six days in the week, and on the seventh reads the Common Prayer-book in the ball-room, with Tam Simson, the drunken barber, for his clerk."

"I think I have heard of Mr. Chatterly," said Tyrrel.

"Ye'll be thinking o' the sermon he has printed," said the angry dame, "where he compares their nasty puddle of a Well yonder to the pool of Bethesda, like a foul-mouthed, fleeching, feather-headed fule as he is! He should hae kend that the place got a' its fame in the times of black Popery; and though they pat it in St. Ronan's name, I'll never believe for one that the honest man had ony hand in it; for I hae been tell'd by ane that suld ken, that he was nae Roman, but only a Cuddie, or Culdee, or such like.—But will ye not take anither dish of tea, Maister Francie? and a wee bit of the diet-loaf, raised wi' my ain fresh butter, Maister Francie? and no wi' greasy kitchen-fee, like the seedcake down at the confectioner's yonder, that has as mony dead flees as carvy in it. Set him up for a confectioner!—Wi' a penniworth of rye-meal, and anither of tryacle, and twa or three carvy-seeds, I will make better confections than ever cam out of his oven."

"I have no doubt of that, Mrs. Dods," said the guest; "and I only wish to know how these new comers were able to establish themselves against a house of such good reputation and old standing as yours?—It was the virtues of the mineral, I dare say; but how came the waters to recover a character all at once, mistress?"

"I dinna ken, sir—they used to be thought good for naething, but here and there for a puir body's bairn, that had gotten the cruells,* and could not afford a penniworth of salts. But my leddy Penelope Penfeather had fa'an ill, it's like, as nae other body ever fell ill, and sae she was to be cured some gate naebody was ever cured, which was naething mair than was reasonable—and my leddy, ye ken, has wit at will, and has a' the wise folk out from Edinburgh at her house at Windywa's yonder, which it is her leddyship's wull and pleasure to call Air-castle—and they have a' their different turns, and some can clink verses, wi' their tale, as weel as Rob Burns or Allar Ramsay—and some rin up hill and down dale, knapping the chucky stanes to pieces wi' hammers, like sae mony road-makers run daft—they say it is to see how the warld was made!—and some that play on all manner of ten-stringed instruments—and a wheen sketching souls, that ye may see perched like craws on every craig in the country, e'en working at your ain trade, Maister Francie; forby men that had been in foreign parts, or said they had been there, whilk is a' ane, ye ken; and maybe twa or three draggletailed misses, that wear my Leddy Penelope's follies when she has done wi' them, as her queans of maids wear her second-hand claithes. So, after her leddyship's happy recovery, as they ca'd it, down cam the hail tribe of wild-geese, and settled by the Well, to dine thereout on the bare grund, like a wheen tinklers; and they had sangs, and tunes, and healths, nae doubt, in praise of the fountain, as they ca'd the Well, and of Leddy Penelope Penfeather; and, lastly, they behoved a' to take a solemn bumper of the spring, which, as I'm tauld, made unco havoc amang them or they wan hame; and this they ca'd picknick, and a plague to them! And sae the jig was begun after her leddyship's pipe, and mony a mad measure has been danced sin' syne; for down cam masons and murgeon-makers, and preachers and player-folk, and Episcopalians and Methodists, and fools and fiddlers, and Papists and pie-bakers, and doctors and druggsters; by the shop-full, that sell trash and trumpery at three prices—and so up got the bonny new Well, and down fell the honest auld town of Saint Ronan's, where blithe decent folk had been heartsome enough for mony a day before ony o' them were born, or ony sic vapourings as these kittled in their cracked brains."

"What said you, landlord, the Laird of Saint Ronan's, to all this?" said Tyrrel.

"Is't *my* landlord ye are asking after, Maister Francie?—the Laird of Saint Ronan's is nae landlord of

* The foundress of a sect called Buchanites; a species of female Shoutheosts, who long after death was expected to return at head their disciples on the road to Jerusalem.

* Excrescences, King's Evil.

mine, and I think ye might hae minded that.—Na, na, thanks be to Praise! Meg Dods is baith land*lord* and land*leddy*. Ill eneugh to keep the doors open as it is, let be facing Whitsunday and Martinmas—an auld leather pock there is, Maister Francie, in ane of worthy Maister Bindloose the sheriff-clerk's pigeon-holes, in his dowcot of a closet in the burgh; and therein is baith charter and sasine, and special service to boot; and that will be chapter and verse, speer when ye list."

"I had quite forgotten," said Tyrrel, "that the inn was your own; though I remember you were a considerable landed proprietor."

"Maybe I am," replied Meg, "maybe I am not; and if I be, what for no?—But as to what the Laird, whose grandfather was my father's landlord, said to the new doings yonder—he just jumped at the ready penny, like a cock at a grosert, and feu'd the bonny holm beside the Well, that they ca'd the Saint-Wellholm, that was like the best land in his aught, to be carved, and biggit, and howkit up, just at the pleasure of Jock Ashler the stane-mason, that ca's himsell an arkiteck—there's nae living for new words in this new warld neither, and that is another vex to auld folk such as me.—It's a shame o' the young Laird, to let his auld patrimony gang the gate it's like to gang, and my heart is sair to see't, though it has but little cause to care what comes of him or his."

"Is it the same Mr. Mowbray," said Mr. Tyrrel, "who still holds the estate?—the old gentleman, you know, whom I had some dispute with"——

"About hunting moorfowl upon the Spring-well-head muirs?" said Meg. "Ah, lad! honest Mr. Bindloose brought you neatly off there—No, it's no that honest man, but his son John Mowbray—the t'other has slept down-by in Saint Ronan's Kirk for these six or seven years."

"Did he leave," asked Tyrrel, with something of a faltering voice, "no other child than the present Laird?"

"No other son," said Meg; "and there's e'en eneugh, unless he could have left a better ane."

"He died then," said Tyrrel, "excepting this son, without children?"

"By your leave, no," said Meg; "there is the lassie Miss Clara, that keeps house for the Laird, if it can be ca'd keeping house, for he is almost aye down at the Well yonder—so a sma' kitchen serves them at the Shaws."

"Miss Clara will have but a dull time of it there during her brother's absence?" said the stranger.

"Out no!—he has her aften jinketing about, and back and forward, wi' a' the fine flichtering fools that come yonder; and clapping palms wi' them, and linking at their dances and daffings. I wuss nae ill come o't, but it's a shame her father's daughter should keep company wi' a' that scauff and raff of physic-students, and writers' prentices, and bagmen, and siclike trash as are down at the Well yonder."

"You are severe, Mrs. Dods," replied the guest; "No doubt Miss Clara's conduct deserves all sort of freedom"

"I am saying naething against her conduct," said the dame; "and there's nae ground to say ony thing that I ken of—But I wad hae like draw to like, Maister Francie. I never quarrelled the ball that the gentry used to hae at my bit house a gude wheen years bygane—when they came, the auld folk in their coaches, wi' lang-tailed black horses, and a wheen galliard gallants on their hunting horses, and mony a decent leddy behind her ain goodman, and mony a bonny smirking lassie on her pownie, and wha sae happy as they—And what for no? And then there was the farmers' ball, wi' the tight lads of yeomen with the bran new blues and the buckskins—These were decent meetings—but then they were a' ae man's bairns that were at them, ilk ane kend ilk other—they danced farmers wi' farmers' daughters, at the tane, and gentles wi' gentles blood, at the t'other, unless maybe when some of the gentlemen of the Killnakelty Club would gie me a round of the floor my*sell, in the way of daffing and fun*, and me no able to *flyte on them for laughing—I am sure* I never grudged *these innocent pleasures, although* it has cost me maybe a week's redding up, before I got the better of the confusion."

"But, dame," said Tyrrel, "this ceremonial would be a little hard upon strangers like myself, for how were we to find partners in these family parties of yours?"

"Never you fash your thumb about that, Maister Francie," returned the landlady, with a knowing wink.—"Every Jack will find a Jill, gang the world as it may—and, at the warst o't, better hae some fashery in finding a partner for the night, than get yoked with ane that you may not be able to shake off the morn."

"And does that sometimes happen?" asked the stranger.

"Happen!—ance is't amang the Well folk that ye mean?" exclaimed the hostess. "Was it not the last season, as they ca't, no farther gane, that young Sir Bingo Binks, the English lad wi' the red coat, that keeps a mail-coach, and drives it himsell, gat cleekit with Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg, the auld Leddy Longengirth's lang-legged daughter—and they danced ane lang thegither, that there was mair said than suld hae been said about it—and the lad would fain hae louped back, but the auld leddy held him to his tackle, and the Commissary Court and somebody else made her Leddy Binks in spite of Sir Bingo's heart—and he has never daured take her to his friends in England, but they have just wintered and summered it at the Well ever sithee—and that is what the Well is good for!"

"And does Clara,—I mean does Miss Mowbray keep company with such women as these?" said Tyrrel, with a tone of interest which he checked as he proceeded with the question.

"What can she do, puir thing?" said the dame. "She maun keep the company that her brother keeps, for she is clearly dependent.—But, speaking of that, I ken what I have to do, and that is no little, before it darkens. I have sat clavering with you ower lang, Maister Francie."

And away she marched with a resolved step, and soon the clear octaves of her voice were heard in shrill admonition to her handmaidens.

Tyrrel paused a moment in deep thought, then took his hat, paid a visit to the stable, where his horse saluted him with feathering ears, and that low amicable neigh, with which that animal acknowledges the approach of a loving and beloved friend. Having seen that the faithful creature was in every respect attended to, Tyrrel availed himself of the continued and lingering twilight, to visit the old Castle, which, upon former occasions, had been his favourite evening walk. He remained while the light permitted, admiring the prospect we attempted to describe in the first chapter, and comparing, as in his former reverie, the faded hues of the glimmering landscape to those of human life, when early youth and hope have ceased to gild them.

A brisk walk to the inn, and a light supper on a Welsh rabbit and the dame's home-brewed, were stimulants of livelier, at least more resigned thought—and the Blue bedroom, to the honours of which he had been promoted, received him a contented if not a cheerful tenant.

CHAPTER III.

ADMINISTRATION.

There must be government in all society—
Bees have their Queen, and stag-herds have their leader;
Rome had her Consuls, Athens had her Archons,
And we, sir, have our Managing Committee.
The Album of St. Ronan's

FRANCIS TYRREL was, in the course of the next day formally settled in his old quarters, where he announced his purpose of remaining for several days. The old-established carrier of the place brought his fishing-rod and travelling-trunk, with a letter to Meg dated a week previously, desiring her to prepare to receive an old acquaintance. This announciation, though something of the latest, Meg received with great complacency, observing it was a civil attention in Maister Tirl; and that John Hislop, though he was not yet

sae fast, was far surer than ony post of them a', or express either. She also observed with satisfaction, that there was no gun-case along with her guest's baggage; "for that weary gunning had brought him and her into trouble—the lairds had cried out upon't, as if she made her house a howff for common fowlers and poachers; and yet how could she hinder twa daft hempie callants from taking a start and an owerloup?* They had been ower the neighbour's ground they had leave on up to the march, and they werena just to ken meiths when the moorfowl got up."

In a day or two, her guest fell into such quiet and solitary habits, that Meg, herself the most restless and bustling of human creatures, began to be vexed, for want of the trouble which she expected to have had with him, experiencing, perhaps, the same sort of feeling from his extreme and passive indifference on all points, that a good horseman has for the over-patient steed, which he can scarce feel under him. His walks were devoted to the most solitary recesses among the neighbouring woods and hills—his fishing-rod was often left behind him, or carried merely as an apology for sauntering slowly by the banks of some little brooklet—and his success so indifferent, that Meg said the piper of Peebles† would have caught a creelfu' before Maister Francie made out the half-dozen; so that he was obliged, for peace's sake, to vindicate his character, by killing a handsome salmon.

Tyrrel's painting, as Meg called it, went on equally slowly: He often, indeed, showed her the sketches which he brought from his walks, and used to finish at home; but Meg held them very cheap. What signified, she said, a wheen bits of paper, wi' black and white scarts upon them, that he ca'd bushes, and trees, and craigs?—Couldna he paint them wi' green, and blue, and yellow, like the other folk? "Ye will never mak your bread that way, Maister Francie. Ye suld munt up a muckle square of canvass, like Dick Tinto, and paint folks ainsells, that they like muckle better to see than ony craig in the haill water; and I wadna muckle object even to some of the Wallers coming up and sitting to ye. They waste their time waur, I wis—and, I warrant, ye might make a guinea a-head of them. Dick made twa, but he was an auld used hand, and folk maun creep before they gang."

In answer to these remonstrances, Tyrrel assured her, that the sketches with which he busied himself were held of such considerable value, that very often an artist in that line received much higher remuneration for these, than for portraits or coloured drawings. He added, that they were often taken for the purpose of illustrating popular poems, and hinted as if he himself were engaged in some labour of that nature.

Eagerly did Meg long to pour forth to Nelly Trotter, the fishwoman,—whose cart formed the only neutral channel of communication between the Auld Town and the Well, and who was in favour with Meg, because, as Nelly passed her door in her way to the Well, she always had the first choice of her fish,—the merits of her lodger as an artist. Luckie Dods had, in truth, been so much annoyed and bullied, as it were, with the report of clever persons, accomplished in all sorts of excellence, arriving day after day at the Hotel, that she was overjoyed in this fortunate opportunity to triumph over them in their own way; and it may be believed, that the excellences of her lodger lost nothing by being trumpeted through her mouth.

"I maun hae the best of the cart, Nelly—if you and me can gree—for it is for ane of the best of painters. Your fine folk down yonder would gie their lugs to look at what he has been doing—he gets gowd in goupins, for three downright skarts and three cross anes—And he is no an ungrateful loon, like Dick Tinto, that had nae sooner my good five-and-twenty shillings in his pocket than he gaed down to birl it awa at their bonny hottle yonder, but a decent quiet lad, that kens when he is weel aff, and bides still at the auld howff—And what for no?—Tell them all this, and hear what they will say till't."

"Indeed, mistress, I can tell ye that already, without stirring my shanks for the matter," answered Nelly Trotter; "they will e'en say that ye are ae auld fule, and me anither, that may hae some judgment in cock-bree or in scate-rumples, but mauna fash our beards about ony thing else."

"Wad they say sae, the frontless villains! and me been a housekeeper this thirty year!" exclaimed Meg; "I wadna hae them say it to my face! But I am no speaking without warrant—for what an I had spoken to the minister, lass, and shown him ane of the loose skarts of paper that Maister Tirl leaves flocing about his room?—and what an he had said he had kend Lord Bidmore gie five guineas for the waur on't? and a' the warld kens he was lang tutor in the Bidmore family."

"Troth," answered her gossip, "I doubt if I was to tell a' this they would hardly believe me, mistress; for there are sae mony judges arneng them, and they think sae muckle of themsells, and see little of other folk, that unless ye were to send down the bit picture, I am no thinking they will believe a word that I can tell them."

"No believe what an honest woman says—let abee to say twa o' them?" exclaimed Meg; "O the unbelieving generation!—Weel, Nelly, since my back is up, ye sall tak down the picture, or sketching, or whatever it is, (though I thought sketchers* were aye made of airn,) and shame wi' it the conceited crew that they are.—But see and bring't back wi' ye again, Nelly, for it's a thing of value; and trustna it out o' your hand, *that* I charge you, for I lippen no muckle to their honesty.—And Nelly, ye may tell them he has an illustrated poem—*illustrated*—mind the word, Nelly—that is to be stuck as fou o' the like o' that, as ever turkey was larded wi' dabs o' bacon."

Thus furnished with her credentials, and acting the part of a herald betwixt two hostile countries, honest Nelly switched her little fish-cart downwards to St. Ronan's Well.

In watering-places, as in other congregated assemblies of the human species, various kinds of government have been dictated, by chance, caprice, or convenience; but in almost all of them, some sort of direction has been adopted, to prevent the consequences of anarchy. Sometimes the sole power has been vested in a Master of Ceremonies; but this, like other despotisms, has been of late unfashionable, and the powers of this great officer have been much limited even at Bath, where Nash once ruled with undisputed supremacy. Committees of management, chosen from among the most steady guests, have been in general resorted to, as a more liberal mode of sway, and to such was confided the administration of the infant republic of St. Ronan's Well. This little senate, it must be observed, had the more difficult task in discharging their high duties, that, like those of other republics, their subjects were divided into two jarring and contending factions, who every day eat, drank, danced, and made merry together, hating each other all the while with all the animosity of political party, endeavouring by every art to secure the adherence of each guest who arrived, and ridiculing the absurdities and follies of each other, with all the wit and bitterness of which they were masters.

At the head of one of these parties was no less a personage than Lady Penelope Penfeather, to whom the establishment owed its fame, nay, its existence; and whose influence could only have been balanced by that of the Lord of the Manor, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, or, as he was called usually by the company who affected what Meg called knapping English, The Squire, who was leader of the opposite faction.

The rank and fortune of the lady, her pretensions to beauty as well as talent, (though the former was something faded,) and the consequence which she arrogated to herself as a woman of fashion, drew round her painters and poets, and philosophers, and men of science, and lecturers, and foreign adventurers, *et hoc genus omne*.

On the contrary, the Squire's influence, as a man of family and property in the immediate neighbourhood, who actually kept greyhounds and pointers, and

* The usual expression for a slight encroachment on a neighbour's property.

† The said piper was famous at the mystery.

* Skates are called sketchers in Scotland.

least talked of hunters and of racers, ascertained him the support of the whole class of bucks, half and whole bred, from the three next counties; and if more inducements were wanting, he could grant his favourites the privilege of shooting over his moors, which is enough to turn the head of a young Scottishman at any time. Mr. Mowbray was of late especially supported in his pre-eminence, by a close alliance with Sir Bingo Binks, a sapient English Baronet, who, ashamed, as many thought to return to his own country, had set him down at the Well of St. Ronan's, to enjoy the blessing which the Caledonian Hymen had so kindly forced on him in the person of Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg. As this gentleman actually drove a regular-built mail-coach, not in any respect differing from that of his Majesty, only that it was more frequently overturned, his influence with a certain set was irresistible, and the Squire of St. Ronan's, having the better sense of the two, contrived to reap the full benefit of the consequence attached to his friendship.

These two contending parties were so equally balanced, that the predominance of the influence of either was often determined by the course of the sun. Thus, in the morning and forenoon, when Lady Penelope led forth her herd to lawn and shady bower, whether to visit some ruined monument of ancient times, or eat their pic-nic luncheon, to spoil good paper with bad drawings, and good verses with repetition—in a word,

"To rave, recite, and madden round the land,"

her ladyship's empire over the loungers seemed uncontrolled and absolute, and all things were engaged in the *tourbillon*, of which she formed the pivot and centre. Even the hunters, and shooters, and hard drinkers, were sometimes fain reluctantly to follow in her train, sulking, and quizzing, and flouting at her solemn festivals, besides encouraging the younger nymphs to giggle when they should have looked sentimental. But after dinner the scene was changed and her ladyship's sweetest smiles, and softest invitations, were often insufficient to draw the neutral part of the company to the tea-room; so that her society was reduced to those whose constitution or finances rendered early retirement from the dining-parlour a matter of convenience, together with the more devoted and zealous of her own immediate dependents and adherents. Even the faith of the latter was apt to be debauched. Her ladyship's poet-laureate, in whose behalf she was teazing each new-comer for subscriptions, got sufficiently independent to sing in her ladyship's presence, at supper, a song of rather equivocal meaning; and her chief painter, who was employed upon an illustrated copy of the Loves of the Plants, was, at another time, seduced into such a state of potvalour, that, upon her ladyship's administering her usual dose of criticism upon his works, he not only bluntly disputed her judgment, but talked something of his right to be treated like a gentleman.

These feuds were taken up by the Managing Committee, who interceded for the penitent offenders on the following morning, and obtained their re-establishment in Lady Penelope's good graces, upon moderate terms. Many other acts of moderating authority they performed, much to the assuaging of faction, and the quiet of the Wellers; and so essential was their government to the prosperity of the place, that, without them, St. Ronan's spring would probably have been speedily deserted. We must, therefore, give a brief sketch of that potential Committee, which both factions, acting as if on a self-denying ordinance, had combined to invest with the reins of government.

Each of its members appeared to be selected, as Fortunio, in the fairy tale, chose his followers, for his peculiar gifts. First on the list stood the MAN OF MEDICINE, Dr. Quentin Quackleben, who claimed right to regulate medical matters at the spring, upon the principle which, of old, assigned the property of a newly-discovered country to the bucanier who committed the earliest piracy on its shores. The acknowledgment of the Doctor's merit, as having been first to proclaim and vindicate the merits of these healing fountains, had occasioned his being universally installed First Physician and Man of Science last qualification he could apply to all purpos the boiling of an egg to the giving a lectu was, indeed, qualified, like many of his profe spread both the bane and antidote before a d patient, being as knowing a gastronome as I gill himself, or any other worthy physician written for the benefit of the *cuisine*, from D crieff of Tippermalloch, to the late Dr. H York, and the present Dr. Kitchiner of Lond pluralities are always invidious, and there Doctor prudently relinquished the office of cat head-carver to the Man of Taste, who occupi larly, and *ex officio*, the head of the table, rese himself the occasional privilege of criticisin principal share in consuming, the good thing the common entertainment afforded. We h to sum up this brief account of the learned by informing the reader that he was a ta beetle-browed man, with an ill-made black wig, that stared out on either side from his jaws. He resided nine months out of the t St. Ronan's, and was supposed to make a ferent good thing of it,—especially as he play to admiration.

First in place, though perhaps second to t tor in real authority, was Mr. Winterblossom sort of person, who was nicely precise in his wore his hair cued, and dressed with pow knee-buckles set with Bristol stones, and a s as large as Sir John Falstaff's. In his heyda a small estate, which he had spent like a ger by mixing with the gay world. He was, in sh of those respectable links that connect the c of the present day with those of the last could compare, in his own experience, the both. In latter days, he had sense enough to himself from his course of dissipation, thou impaired health and impoverished fortune.

Mr. Winterblossom now lived upon a mod nuity, and had discovered a way of reconc economy with much company and made di acting as perpetual president of the table- the Well. Here he used to amuse the societ ing stories about Garrick, Foote, Bonnel Th and Lord Kelly, and delivering his opinions ters of taste and vertu. An excellent carver, how to help each guest to what was precisely and never failed to reserve a proper slice a ward of his own labours. To conclude, he sessed of some taste in the fine arts, at least ing and music, although it was rather of the t kind, than that which warms the heart and the feelings. There was, indeed, about Wi som, nothing that was either warm or eleva was shrewd, selfish, and sensual; the last which qualities he screened from observatio a specious varnish of exterior complaisance. fore, in his professed and apparent anxiety t honours of the table, to the most punctilious good breeding, he never permitted the at upon the public taste to supply the wants o until all his own private comforts had b arranged and provided for.

Mr. Winterblossom was also distinguished sessing a few curious engravings, and oth mens of art, with the exhibition of which sionally beguiled a wet morning at the publ They were collected, "*viis et modis*," said of Law, another distinguished member of th mittee, with a knowing cock of his eye to neighbour.

Of this person little need be said. He was boned, loud-voiced, red-faced man, named wham; a country writer, or attorney, who m the matters of the Squire much to the profit other,—if not of both. His nose projected ffont of his broad vulgar face, like the stile o sun-dial, twisted all of one side. He was a bully in his profession, as if it had been mil stead of civil: conducted the whole technicali cerning the cutting up the Saint's-Well-h much lamented by Dame Dods, into building and was on excellent terms with Doctor Qu

who always recommended him to make the wills of his patients.

After the Man of Law comes Captain Mungo MacTurk, a Highland lieutenant on half-pay, and that of ancient standing; one who preferred toddy of the strongest to wine, and in that fashion and cold drams finished about a bottle of whisky *per diem*, whenever he could come by it. He was called the Man of Peace, on the same principle which assigns to constables, Bow-street runners, and such like, who carry bludgeons to break folk's heads, and are perpetutually and officially employed in scenes of riot, the title of peace-officers—that is, because by his valour he compelled others to act with discretion. The Captain was the general referee in all those abortive quarrels, which, at a place of this kind, are so apt to occur at night, and to be quietly settled in the morning; and occasionally adopted a quarrel himself, by way of taking down any guest who is unusually pugnacious. This occupation procured Captain MacTurk a good deal of respect at the Well; for he was precisely that sort of person, who is ready to fight with any one,—whom no one can find an apology for declining to fight with,—in fighting with whom considerable danger was incurred, for he was ever and anon showing that he could snuff a candle with a pistol ball,—and lastly, through fighting with whom no eclat or credit could redound to the antagonist. He always wore a blue coat and red collar, had a supercilious taciturnity of manner, ate sliced leeks with his cheese, and resembled in complexion a Dutch red-herring.

Still remains to be mentioned the Man of Religion—the gentle Mr. Simon Chatterly, who had strayed to St. Ronan's Well from the banks of Cam or Isis, and who piqued himself, first on his Greek, and secondly, on his politeness to the ladies. During all the week days, as Dame Dods has already hinted, this reverend gentleman was the partner at the whist-table, or in the ball-room, to what maid or matron soever lacked a partner at either; and on the Sundays, he read prayers in the public room to all who chose to attend. He was also a deviser of charades, and an unriddler of riddles; he played a little on the flute, and was Mr. Winterblossom's principal assistant in contriving those ingenious and romantic paths, by which, as by the zig-zags which connect military parallels, you were enabled to ascend to the top of the hill behind the hotel, which commands so beautiful a prospect, at exactly that precise angle of ascent, which entitles a gentleman to offer his arm, and a lady to accept it, with perfect propriety.

There was yet another member of this Select Committee, Mr. Michael Meredith, who might be termed the Man of Mirth, or, if you please, the Jack Pudding to the company, whose business it was to crack the best joke, and sing the best song,—he could. Unluckily, however, this functionary was for the present obliged to absent himself from St. Ronan's; for, not recollecting that he did not actually wear the privileged motley of his profession, he had passed some jest upon Captain Mac-Turk, which cut so much to the quick, that Mr. Meredith was fain to go to goat-whey quarters, at some ten miles' distance, and remain there in a sort of concealment, until the affair should be made up through the mediation of his brethren of the Committee.

Such were the honest gentlemen who managed the affairs of this rising settlement, with as much impartiality as could be expected. They were not indeed without their own secret predilections; for the lawyer and the soldier privately inclined to the party of the Squire, while the parson, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Winterblossom, were more devoted to the interests of Lady Penelope; so that Doctor Quackleben alone, who probably recollected that the gentlemen were as liable to stomach complaints, as the ladies to nervous disorders, seemed the only person who preserved in word and deed the most rigid neutrality. Nevertheless, the interests of the establishment being very much at the heart of this honourable council, and each feeling his own profit, *pleasure, or comfort, in some degree involved, they suffered not their private affairs to interfere with their public duties*. but acted, every one in his own sphere, for the public benefit of the whole community.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INVITATION.

Thus painters write their names at Co.—PRIOR.

THE clamour which attends the removal of dinner from a public room had subsided; the clatter of plates, and knives and forks—the bustling tread of awkward boobies of country servants, kicking each other's shins, and wrangling, as they endeavour to rush out of the door three abreast—the clash of glasses and tumblers, borne to earth in the tumult—the shrieks of the landlady—the curses, not loud, but deep, of the landlord—had all passed away; and those of the company who had servants, had been accommodated by their respective Ganymedes with such remnants of their respective bottles of wine, spirits, &c., as the said Ganymedes had not previously consumed, while the rest, broken into such observance by Mr. Winterblossom, waited patiently until the worthy president's own special and multifarious commissions had been executed by a tidy young woman and a lumpish lad, the regular attendants belonging to the house, but whom he permitted to wait on no one, till, as the hymn says,

"All his wants were well supplied."

"And Dinah—my bottle of pale sherry, Dinah—place it on this side—there's a good girl;—and, Toby—get my jug with the hot water—and let it be boiling—and don't spill it on Lady Penelope, if you can help it, Toby."

"No—for her ladyship has been in hot water to-day already," said the Squire; a sarcasm to which Lady Penelope only replied with a look of contempt.

"And, Dinah, bring the sugar—the soft East India sugar, Dinah—and a lemon, Dinah, one of those which came fresh to-day—Go fetch it from the bar, Toby—and don't tumble down stairs, if you can help it.—And, Dinah—stay, Dinah—the nutmeg, Dinah, and the ginger, my good girl—And, Dinah—put the cushion up behind my back—and the footstool to my foot, for my toe is something the worse of my walk with your ladyship this morning to the top of Belvidere."

"Her ladyship may call it what she pleases in common parlance," said the writer; "but it must stand Munt-grunzie in the stamped paper, being so nominated in the ancient writs and evidents thereof."

"And, Dinah," continued the president, "lift up my handkerchief—and—a bit of biscuit, Dinah—and—and I do not think I want any thing else—Look to the company, my good girl.—I have the honour to drink the company's very good health—Will your ladyship honour me by accepting a glass of negus?—I learned to make negus from old Dartineuf's son.—He always used East India sugar and added a tamarind—it improves the flavour infinitely.—Dinah, see your father sends for some tamarinds—Dartineuf knew a good thing almost as well as his father—I met him at Bath in the year—let me see—Garrick was just taking leave, and that was in," &c. &c. &c. "And what is this now, Dinah?" he said, as she put into his hand a roll of paper.

"Something that Nelly Trotter" (Trotting Nelly, as the company called her) "brought from a sketching gentleman that lives at the woman's" (thus bluntly did the upstart minx describe the reverend Mrs. Margaret Dods) "at the Cleikum of Aultoun yonder"—A name, by the way, which the inn had acquired from the use which the saint upon the sign post was making of his pastoral crook.

"Indeed, Dinah?" said Mr. Winterblossom, gravely taking out his spectacles, and wiping them before he opened the roll of paper; "some boy's daubing, I suppose, whose pa and ma wish to get him into the Trustees' School, and so are beating about for a little interest.—But I am drained dry—I put three lads in last season; and if it had not been my particular interest with the secretary, who asks my opinion now and then, I could not have managed it. But stiff-stuff, say I.—Eh! What, in the devil's name, is this?—Have

is both force and keeping—Who can this be, my lady? —Do but see the sky-line—why, this is really a little bit—an exquisite little bit—Who the devil can it be? and how can he have stumbled upon the dog-hole in the Old Town, and the snarling b—— I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons—that kennels there?"

"I dare say, my lady," said a little miss of fourteen, her eyes growing rounder and rounder, and her cheeks redder and redder, as she found herself speaking, and so many folks listening—"O la! I dare say it is the same gentleman we met one day in the Low-wood walk, that looked like a gentleman, and yet was none of the company, and that you said was a handsome man."

"I did not say handsome, Maria," replied her ladyship; "ladies never say men are handsome—I only said he looked genteel and interesting."

"And that, my lady," said the young parson, bowing and smiling, "is, I will be judged by the company, the more flattering compliment of the two—We shall be jealous of this Unknown presently."

"Nay, but," continued the sweetly communicative Maria, with some real and some assumed simplicity, "your ladyship forgets—for you said presently after, you were sure she was no gentleman, for he did not run after you with your glove which you had dropped —and so I went back myself to find your ladyship's glove, and he never offered to help me, and I saw him closer than your ladyship did, and I am sure he is handsome, though he is not very civil."

"You speak a little too much and too loud, miss," said Lady Penelope, a natural blush reinforcing the *nuance* of rouge by which it was usually superseded.

"What say you to that, Squire Mowbray?" said the elegant Sir Bingo Binks.

"A fair challenge to the field, Sir Bingo," answered the squire; "when a lady throws down the gauntlet, a gentleman may throw the handkerchief."

"I have always the benefit of *your* best construction, Mr. Mowbray," said the lady with dignity. "I suppose Miss Maria has contrived this pretty story for your amusement. I can hardly answer to Mr. Digga, for bringing her into company where she receives encouragement to behave so."

"Nay, nay, my lady," said the president, "you must let the jest pass by; and since this is really such an admirable sketch, you must honour us with your opinion, whether the company can consistently with propriety make any advances to this man."

"In my opinion," said her ladyship, the angry spot still glowing on her brow, "there are enough of *men* among us already—I wish I could say gentlemen—As matters stand, I see little business *ladies* can have at St. Ronan's."

This was an intimation which always brought the Squire back to good-breeding, which he could make use of when he pleased. He deprecated her ladyship's displeasure, until she told him, in returning good humour, that she really would not trust him unless he brought his sister to be security for his future politeness.

"Clara, my lady," said Mowbray, "is a little wilful; and I believe your ladyship must take the task of unharbouring her into your own hands. What say you to a gipsy party up to my old shop?—It is a bachelor's house—you must not expect things in much order; but Clara would be honoured"——

The Lady Penelope eagerly accepted the proposal of something like a party, and, quite reconciled with Mowbray, began to inquire whether she might bring the stranger artist with her; "that is," said her ladyship, looking to Dinah, "if he be a gentleman."

Here Dinah interposed her assurance, "that the gentleman at Meg Dods's was quite and clean a gentleman, and an illustrated poet besides."

"An illustrated poet, Dinah?" said Lady Penelope; "you must mean an illustrious poet."

"I dare to say your ladyship is right," said Dinah, dropping a curtsey.

A joyous flutter of impatient anxiety was instantly excited through all the blue-stocking faction of the company, nor were the news totally indifferent to the *rest of the community. The former belonged* to that *class, who, like the young Ascanius,* are ever beating about in quest of a tawny lion, though they are much more successful in now and then starting a great bore;* and the others, having left all their own ordinary affairs and subjects of interest at home, were glad to make a matter of importance of the most trivial occurrence. A mighty poet, said the former class—who could it possibly be?—All names were recited—all Britain scrutinized, from Highland hills to the Lakes of Cumberland—from Sydenham Common to St. James's Place—even the Banks of the Bosphorus were explored for some name which might rank under this distinguished epithet.—And then, besides his illustrious poesy, to sketch so inimitably!—who *could* it be? And all the gapers, who had nothing of their own to suggest, answered with the antistrophe, "Who could it be?"

The Claret-Club, which comprised the choicest and firmest adherents of Squire Mowbray and the Baronet—men who scorned that the reversion of one bottle of wine should furnish forth the feast of to-morrow, though caring naught about either of the fine arts in question, found out an interest of their own, which centred in the same individual.

"I say, little Sir Bingo," said the Squire, "this is the very fellow that we saw down at the Willow-slack on Saturday—he was tog'd gnostically enough, and cast twelve yards of line with one hand—the fly fell like a thistledown on the water."

"Uich!" answered the party he addressed, in the accents of a dog choking in the collar.

"We saw him pull out the salmon yonder," said Mowbray; "you remember—clean fish—the tide-ticks on his gills—weighed, I dare say, a matter of eighteen pounds."

"Sixteen!" replied Sir Bingo, in the same tone of strangulation.

"None of your rigs, Bing!" said his companion, "—nearer eighteen than sixteen!"

"Nearer sixteen, by —— !"

"Will you go a dozen of blue on it to the company?" said the Squire.

"No, d—n me!" croaked the Baronet—"to our own set I will."

"Then, I say done!" quoth the Squire.

And "Done!" responded the Knight; and out came their red pocketbooks.

"But who shall decide the bet?" said the Squire. "The genius himself, I suppose; they talk of asking him here, but I suppose he will scarce mind quizzes like them."

"Write myself—John Mowbray," said the Baronet.

"You, Baronet!—you write!" answered the Squire, "d—n me, that cock won't fight—you won't."

"I will," growled Sir Bingo, more articulately than usual.

"Why, you can't!" said Mowbray. "You never wrote a line in your life, save those you were whipped for at school."

"I can write—I will write!" said Sir Bingo. "Two to one I will."

And there the affair rested, for the council of the company were in high consultation concerning the most proper manner of opening a communication with the mysterious stranger; and the voice of Mr. Winterblossom, whose tones, originally fine, age had reduced to falsetto, was calling upon the whole party for "Order, order!" So that the bucks were obliged to lounge in silence, with both arms reclined on the table, and testifying, by coughs and yawns, their indifference to the matters in question, while the rest of the company debated upon them, as if they were matters of life and death.

"A visit from one of the gentlemen—Mr. Winterblossom, if he would take the trouble—in name of the company at large—would, Lady Penelope Penfeather presumed to think, be a necessary preliminary to an invitation."

Mr. Winterblossom was "quite of her ladyship's opinion, and would gladly have been the personal representative of the company at St. Ronan's Well—

* The one or the other was equally *in reris* to Ascanius,—

"Optat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte leonem."

Modern Trojans make a great distinction betwixt these two objects of chase.

but it was up hill—her ladyship knew his tyrant, the gout, was hovering upon the frontiers—there were other gentlemen, younger and more worthy to fly at the lady's command than an ancient Vulcan like him—there was the valiant Mars and the eloquent Mercury."

Thus speaking, he bowed to Captain MacTurk and the Rev. Mr. Simon Chatterly, and reclined on his chair, sipping his negus with the self-satisfied smile of one, who, by a pretty speech, has rid himself of a troublesome commission. At the same time, by an act probably of mental absence, he put in his pocket the drawing, which, after circulating around the table, had returned back to the chair of the president, being the point from which it had set out.

"By Cot, madam," said Captain MacTurk, "I should be proud to obey your leddyship's commands—but, by Cot, I never call first on any man that never called upon me at all, unless it were to carry him a friend's message, or such like."

"Twig the old connoisseur," said the Squire to the Knight.—"He is conciddling the drawing."

"Go it, Johnnie Mowbray—pour it into him," whispered Sir Bingo.

"Thank ye for nothing, Sir Bingo," said the Squire, in the same tone. "Winterblossom is one of us—*was* one of us at least—and won't stand the ironing. He has his Wogdens still, that were right things in his day, and can hit the hay-stack with the best of us—but stay, they are hallooing on the parson."

They were indeed busied on all hands, to obtain Mr. Chatterly's consent to wait on the Genius unknown; but though he smiled and simpered, and was absolutely incapable of saying No, he begged leave, in all humility, to decline that commission. "The truth was," he pleaded in his excuse, "that having one day walked to visit the old Castle of St. Ronan's, and returning through the Auld Town, as it was popularly called, he had stopped at the door of the *Cleikum*," (pronounced *Anglicé*, with the open diphthong,) "in hopes to get a glass of syrup of capillaire, or a draught of something cooling; and had in fact expressed his wishes, and was knocking pretty loudly, when a sash-window was thrown suddenly up, and ere he was aware what was about to happen, he was soused with a deluge of water," (as he said,) "while the voice of an old hag from within assured him, that if that did not cool him there was another biding him,—an intimation which induced him to retreat in all haste from the repetition of the shower-bath."

All laughed at the account of the chaplain's misfortune, the history of which seemed to be wrung from him reluctantly, by the necessity of assigning some weighty cause for declining to execute the ladies' commands. But the Squire and Baronet continued their mirth far longer than decorum allowed, flinging themselves back in their chairs, with their hands thrust into their side-pockets, and their mouths expanded with unrestrained enjoyment, until the sufferer, angry, disconcerted, and endeavouring to look scornful, incurred another general burst of laughter on all hands.

When Mr. Winterblossom had succeeded in restoring some degree of order, he found the mishaps of the young divine proved as intimidating as ludicrous. Not one of the company chose to go Envoy Extraordinary to the dominions of Queen Meg, who might be suspected of paying little respect to the sanctity of an ambassador's person. And what was worse, when it was resolved that a civil card from Mr. Winterblossom, in the name of the company, should be sent to the stranger, instead of a personal visit, Dinah informed them that she was sure no one about the house could be bribed to carry up a letter of the kind; for, when such an event had taken place two summers since, Meg, who construed it into an attempt to seduce from her tenement the invited guest, had so handled a ploughboy who carried the letter, that he fled the country-side altogether, and never thought himself safe till he was at a village ten miles off, where it was afterwards learned he enlisted with a recruiting party, choosing rather to face the French than to return within the sphere of Meg's displeasure.

Just while they were agitating this new difficulty, a prodigious clamour was heard without, which, to the first apprehensions of the company, seemed to be Meg, in all her terrors, come to anticipate the proposed invasion. Upon inquiry, however, it proved to be her gossip, Trotting Nelly, or Nelly Trotter, in the act of forcing her way up stairs, against the united strength of the whole household of the hotel, to reclaim Luckie Dod's picture, as she called it. This made the connoisseur's treasure tremble in his pocket, who, thrusting a half-crown into Toby's hand, exhorted him to give it her, and try his influence in keeping her back. Toby, who knew Nelly's nature, put the half-crown into his own pocket, and snatched up a gill-stoup of whisky from the sideboard. Thus armed, he boldly confronted the virago, and interposing a *remora*, which was able to check poor Nelly's course in her most determined moods, not only succeeded in averting the immediate storm which approached the company in general, and Mr. Winterblossom in particular, but brought the guests the satisfactory information, that Trotting Nelly had agreed, after she had slept out her nap in the barn, to convey their commands to the Unknown of Cleikum of Aultoun.

Mr. Winterblossom, therefore, having authenticated his proceedings, by inserting in the Minutes of the Committee, the authority which he had received, wrote his card in the best style of diplomacy, and sealed it with the seal of the Spa, which bore something like a nymph, seated beside what was designed to represent an urn.

The rival factions, however did not trust entirely to this official invitation. Lady Penelope was of opinion that they should find some way of letting the stranger—a man of talent unquestionably—understand that there were in the society to which he was invited, spirits of a more select sort, who felt worthy to intrude themselves on his solitude.

Accordingly, her ladyship imposed upon the elegant Mr. Chatterly the task of expressing the desire of the company to see the unknown artist, in a neat occasional copy of verses. The poor gentleman's muse, however, proved unpropitious; for he was able to proceed no farther than two lines in half an hour, which, coupled with its variations, we insert from the blotted manuscript, as Dr. Johnson has printed the alterations in Pope's version of the Iliad:

1. *Maids.* 2. *Dames.* *unity joining.*
The [nymphs] of St. Ronan's [in purpose combining
1. *Swains,* 2. *Men.*
To the [youth] who is great both in verse and designing.
. . . . . dining.

The eloquence of a prose billet was necessarily resorted to in the absence of the heavenly muse, and the said billet was secretly intrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The same trusty emissary, when refreshed by her nap among the pease-straw, and about to harness her cart for her return to the sea-coast, (in the course of which she was to pass the Aultoun,) received another card, written, as he had threatened, by Sir Bingo Binks himself, who had given himself this trouble to secure the settlement of the bet; conjecturing that a man with a fashionable exterior, who could throw twelve yards of line at a cast with such precision, might consider the invitation of Winterblossom as that of an old twaddler, and care as little for the good graces of an affected blue stocking and her *coterie*, whose conversation, in Sir Bingo's mind, relished of nothing but of weak tea and bread and butter. Thus the happy Mr. Francis Tyrrel received, considerably to his surprise, no less than three invitations at once from the Well of St. Ronan's.

CHAPTER V.

EPISTOLARY ELOQUENCE.

But how can I answer, since first I must read thee?—PRIOR.

DESIROUS of authenticating our more important facts, by as many original documents as possible, we have, after much research, enabled ourselves to present the reader with the following accurate trans-

scripts of the notes intrusted to the care of Trotting Nelly. The first ran thus:

"Mr. Winterblossom [of Silverhed] has the commands of Lady Penelope Penfeather, Sir Bingo and Lady Binks, Mr. and Miss Mowbray [of St. Ronan's], and the rest of the company at the Hotel and Tontine Inn of St. Ronan's Well, to express their hope that the gentleman lodged at the Cleikum Inn, Old Town of St. Ronan's, will favour them with his company at the Ordinary, as early and as often as may suit his convenience. The COMPANY think it necessary to send this intimation, because, according to the RULES of the place, the Ordinary can only be attended by such gentlemen and ladies as lodge at St. Ronan's Well; but they are happy to make a distinction in favour of a gentleman so distinguished for success in the fine arts as Mr. ——, residing at Cleikum. If Mr. —— should be inclined, upon becoming further acquainted with the COMPANY and RULES of the Place, to remove his residence to the Well, Mr. Winterblossom, though he would not be understood to commit himself by a positive assurance to that effect, is inclined to hope that an arrangement might be made, notwithstanding the extreme crowd of the season, to accommodate Mr. —— at the lodging-house, called Lilliput-Hall. It will much conduce to facilitate this negotiation, if Mr. —— would have the goodness to send an exact note of his stature, as Captain Rannletree seems disposed to resign the folding-bed at Lilliput-Hall, on account of his finding it rather deficient in length. Mr. Winterblossom begs farther to assure Mr. —— of the esteem in which he holds his genius, and of his high personal consideration.

"For ——, Esquire,
Cleikum Inn, Old Town of
St. Ronan's.

"*The Public Rooms,*
Hotel and Tontine, St. Ronan's Well,
&c. &c. &c.

The above card was written (we love to be precise in matters concerning orthography) in a neat, round, clerk-like hand, which, like Mr. Winterblossom's character, in many particulars was most accurate and commonplace, though betraying an affectation both of flourish and of facility.

The next billet was a contrast to the diplomatic gravity and accuracy of Mr. Winterblossom's official communication, and ran thus, the young divine's academic jests and classical flowers of eloquence being mingled with some wild flowers from the teeming fancy of Lady Penelope.

"A choir of Dryads and Naiads, assembled at the healing spring of St. Ronan's, have learned with surprise that a youth, gifted by Apollo, when the Deity was prodigal, with two of his most esteemed endowments, wanders at will among their domains, frequenting grove and river, without once dreaming of paying homage to its tutelary deities. He is, therefore, summoned to their presence, and prompt obedience will insure him forgiveness; but in case of contumacy, let him beware how he again essays either the lyre or the pallet.

"*Postscript.* The adorable Penelope, long enrolled among the Goddesses for her beauty and virtues, gives Nectar and Ambrosia, which mortals call tea and cake, at the Public Rooms, near the Sacred Spring, on Thursday evening, at eight o'clock, when the Muses never fail to attend. The stranger's presence is requested to participate in the delights of the evening.

"*Second Postscript.* A shepherd, ambitiously aiming at more accommodation than his narrow cot affords, leaves it in a day or two.

'Assuredly the thing is to be hired.'—*As You Like It.*

"*Postscript third.* Our Iris, whom mortals know as Trotting Nelly in her tartan cloak, will bring us *the stranger's answer to our celestial summons.*"

This letter was written in a delicate Italian hand, garnished with fine hair-strokes and dashes, were sometimes so dexterously thrown off as present lyres, pallets, vases, and other appro decorations, suited to the tenor of the contents.

The third epistle was a complete contrast t other two. It was written in a coarse, irre schoolboy half-text, which, however, seemed to cost the writer as much pains as if it had b specimen of the most exquisite caligraphy. these were the contents:—

"SIR—Jack Moobray has betted with me th samon you killed on Saturday last weyd ni to pounds,—I say nyer sixteen.—So you being a s man, 'tis refer'd.—So hope you will come or me't; do not doubt you will be on honour. T is a dozen of claret, to be drank at the hotel b own sett, on Monday next; and we beg yo make one; and Moobray hopes you will come —Being, sir, your most humbel servant,—Bingo Baronet, and of Block-hall.

"*Postscript.* Have sent some loops of I gout, also some black bakkles of my groom's ing; hope they will prove killing, as suiting rive season."

No answer was received to any of these invit for more than three days; which, while it see rather added to than diminished the curiosity Wellers concerning the Unknown, occasioned railing in public against him, as ill-mannere rude.

Mean time, Francis Tyrrel, to his great sur began to find, like the philosophers, that he was less alone than when alone. In the most silen sequestered walks, to which the present state mind induced him to betake himself, he was s find some strollers from the Well, to whom h become the object of so much solicitous int Quite innocent of the knowledge that he himsel sessed the attraction which occasioned his m them so frequently, he began to doubt wheth Lady Penelope and her maidens—Mr. Winterblo and his gray pony—the parson and his short coat and raven-gray pantaloons—were not actually polygraphic copies of the same indivi or possessed of a celerity of motion resembling presence and ubiquity; for no where could without meeting them, and that oftener than a-day, in the course of his walks. Sometime presence of the sweet Lycoris was intimated sweet prattle in an adjacent shade; sometimes, Tyrrel thought himself most solitary, the parson was heard snoring forth Gramachree Molly; he betook himself to the river, he was pretty s find his sport watched by Sir Bingo or some friends.

The efforts which Tyrrel made to escape fro persecution, and the impatience of it which his ner indicated, procured him, among the Weller name of the *Misanthrope*; and, once distingu as an object of curiosity, he was the person attended to, who could at the ordinary of the da the most accurate account of where the Misant had been, and how occupied in the course morning. And so far was Tyrrel's shyness diminishing the desire of the Wellers for his ac that the latter feeling increased with the difficu gratification,—as the angler feels the most pe interest when throwing his fly for the most cu and considerate trout in the pool.

In short, such was the interest which the e imaginations of the company took in the M thrope, that, notwithstanding the unamiable qu which the word expresses, there was only one society who did not desire to see the specim their rooms, for the purpose of examining him c and at leisure; and the ladies were particular sirous to inquire whether he was actually a M thrope? Whether he had been always a M thrope? What had induced him to become a M thrope? And whether there were no mea inducing him to cease to be a Misanthrope?

One individual only, as we have said,

se nor hear more of the supposed Timon and that was Mr. Mowbray of St. Rough the medium of that venerable cha- Pirner, professed weaver and practical in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's, who usu- l Tyrrel, to show him the casts of the his bag, and so forth, the Squire had as- at the judgment of Sir Bingo regarding weight of the fish was more correct than his inferred an immediate loss of honour, payment of a heavy bill. And the con- ught be yet more serious; nothing short cipation of Sir Bingo, who had hitherto ray's convenient shadow and adherent, riumphant, confiding in his superiority of on so important a point, might either cut ier, or expect that, in future, the Squire, g seemed the planet of their set, should o roll around himself, Sir Bingo, in the t satellite.

e, therefore, devoutly hoped that Tyrrel's osition might continue, to prevent the he bet, while, at the same time, he nour- ry reasonable degree of dislike to that o had been the indirect occasion of the predicament in which he found himself, ing a salmon weighing a pound heavier. e, openly censured the meanness of those ed taking further notice of Tyrrel, and he unanswered letters, as a piece of im- which announced him to be no gentle-

gh appearances were against him, and as in truth naturally inclined to solitude, to the affectation and bustle of such a t part of Tyrrel's behaviour which indi- eeding was easily accounted for, by his g received the letters which required an rotting Nelly, whether unwilling to face Meg Dods, without bringing back the whether oblivious through the influence e dram wth which she had been indulged jumbled off with her cart to her beloved Scate-raw, from which she transmitted y the first bare-legged gillie who travelled ltoun of St. Ronan's; so that at last, but delay, they reached the Cleikum Inn and f Mr. Tyrrel.

ral of these documents explained some oddity of behaviour which had surprised neighbours of the Well; and as he saw t somehow an idea of his being a lion ry, and was sensible that such is a cha- ly ridiculous, and difficult to support, he write to Mr. Winterblossom a card in the inary mortals. In this he stated the de- ed by miscarriage of the letter, and his last account; expressed his intention of the company at the Well on the suc- r, while he regretted that other circum- well as the state of his health and spirits, it him this honour very infrequently during the country, and begged no trouble might bout his accommodation at the Well, as ectly satisfied with his present residence. note to Sir Bingo, said he was happy he r the weight of the fish, which he had diary; ("D—n the fellow, does he keep a id the Baronet,) and though, the result be particularly agreeable to one party, wish both winner and loser mirth with —he was sorry he was unable to promise pleasure of participating in either. En- a signed note of the weight of the fish. h this, Sir Bingo claimed his wine—tri- his judgment—swore louder and more ar- an ever he was known to utter any pre- ds, that this Tyrrel was a devilish honest l he trusted to be better acquainted with the crest-fallen Squire, privately cursing r by all his gods, had no mode of silencing tion but by allowing *his loss, and fixing a ussing the bet.*

blic rooms the company examined even microscopically the response of the stranger to Mr Winterblossom, straining their ingenuity to discover in the most ordinary expressions, a deeper and esoteric meaning, expressive of something mysterious, and not meant to meet the eye. Mr. Meiklewham, the writer, dwelt on the word *circumstances*, which he rend with peculiar emphasis.

"Ah, poor lad!" he concluded, "I doubt he sits cheaper at Meg Dort's chimney-corner than he could do with the present company."

Doctor Quackleben, in the manner of a clergyman selecting a word from his text, as that which is to be particularly insisted upon, repeated in an under tone, the words, "*State of health?*—umph—state of health?—Nothing acute—no one has been sent for—must be chronic—tending to gout, perhaps.—Or his shyness to society—light wild eye—irregular step—starting when met suddenly by a stranger, and turning abruptly and angrily away—Pray, Mr. Winterblossom, let me have an order to look over the file of newspapers—it's very troublesome that restriction about consulting them."

"You know it is a necessary one, Doctor," said the president; "because so few of the good company read any thing else, that the old newspapers would have been worn to pieces long since."

"Well, well, let me have the order," said the Doctor; "I remember something of a gentleman run away from his friends—I must look at the description.—I believe I have a strait-jacket somewhere about the Dispensary."

While this suggestion appalled the male part of the company, who did not much relish the approaching dinner in company with a gentleman whose situation seemed so precarious, some of the younger Misses whispered to each other—"Ah, poor fellow!—and if it be as the Doctor supposes, my lady, who knows what the cause of his illness may have been?—His *spirits* he complains of—ah, poor man!"

And thus, by the ingenious commentaries of the company at the Well, on as plain a note as ever covered the eighth part of a sheet of foolscap, the writer was deprived of his property, his reason, and his heart, "all or either, or one or other of them," as is briefly and distinctly expressed in the law phrase.

In short, so much was said *pro* and *con*. so many ideas started and theories maintained, concerning the disposition and character of the Misanthrope, that, when the company assembled at the usual time, before proceeding to dinner, they doubted, as it seemed, whether the expected addition to their society was to enter the room on his hands or his feet; and when "Mr. Tyrrel" was announced by Toby, at the top of his voice, the gentleman who entered the room had so very little to distinguish him from others, that there was a momentary disappointment. The ladies, in particular, began to doubt whether the compound of talent, misanthropy, madness, and mental sensibility, which they had pictured to themselves, actually was the same with the genteel, and even fashionable looking man whom they saw before them; who, though in a morning-dress, which the distance of his residence, and the freedom of the place, made excusable, had, even in the minute points of his exterior, none of the negligence, or wildness, which might be supposed to attach to the vestments of a misanthropic recluse, whether sane or insane. As he paid his compliments round the circle, the scales seemed to fall from the eyes of those he spoke to; and they saw with surprise, that the exaggerations had existed entirely in their own preconceptions, and that whatever the fortunes, or rank in life, of Mr. Tyrrel might be, his manners, without being showy, were gentlemanlike and pleasing. He returned his thanks to Mr. Winterblossom in a manner which made that gentleman recall his best breeding to answer the stranger's address in kind. He then escaped from the awkwardness of remaining the sole object of attention, by gliding gradually among the company,—not like an owl, which seeks to hide itself in a thicket, or an awkward and retired man, shrinking from the society into which he is compelled, but with the air of one who could maintain with ease his part in a higher circle. His address to Lady Penelope was adapted to the roman-

tic tone of Mr. Chatterly's epistle, to which it was necessary to allude. He was afraid, he said, he must complain to Juno of the neglect of Iris, for her irregularity in delivery of a certain ethereal command, which he had not dared to answer otherwise than by mute obedience—unless, indeed, as the import of the letter seemed to infer, the invitation was designed for some more gifted individual than he to whom chance had assigned it.

Lady Penelope by her lips, and many of the young ladies with their eyes, assured him there was no mistake in the matter; that he was really the gifted person whom the nymphs had summoned to their presence, and that they were well acquainted with his talents as a poet and a painter. Tyrrel disclaimed, with earnestness and gravity, the charge of poetry, and professed, that, far from attempting the art itself, he "read with reluctance all but the productions of the very first-rate poets, and some of these—he was almost afraid to say—he should have liked better in humble prose."

"You have now only to disown your skill as an artist," said Lady Penelope, "and we must consider Mr. Tyrrel as the falsest and most deceitful of his sex, who has a mind to deprive us of the opportunity of benefiting by the productions of his unparalleled endowments. I assure you I shall put my young friends on their guard. Such dissimulation cannot be without its object."

"And I," said Mr. Winterblossom, "can produce a piece of real evidence against the culprit."

So saying, he unrolled the sketch which he had filched from Trotting Nelly, and which he had pared and pasted, (arts in which he was eminent,) so as to take out its creases, repair its breaches, and vamp it as well as my old friend Mrs. Weir could have repaired the damages of time on a folio Shakspeare.

"The vara *corpus delicti*," said the writer, grinning and rubbing his hands.

"If you are so good as to call such scratches drawings," said Tyrrel, "I must stand so far confessed. I used to do them for my own amusement; but since my landlady, Mrs. Dods, has of late discovered that I gain my livelihood by them, why should I disown it?"

This avowal, made without the least appearance either of shame or *retenue*, seemed to have a striking effect on the whole society. The president's trembling hand stole the sketch back to the portfolio, afraid doubtless it might be claimed in form, or else compensation expected by the artist. Lady Penelope was disconcerted, like an awkward horse when it changes the leading foot in galloping. She had to recede from the respectful and easy footing on which he had contrived to place himself, to one which might express patronage on her own part, and dependence on Tyrrel's; and this could not be done in a moment.

The Man of Law murmured, "Circumstances—circumstances—I thought so!"

Sir Bingo whispered to his friend the Squire, "Run out—blown up—off the course—pity—d—d pretty fellow he has been!"

"A raff from the beginning!" whispered Mowbray. —"I never thought him any thing else."

"I'll hold ye a poney of that, my dear, and I'll ask him."

"Done, for a poney, provided you ask him in ten minutes," said the Squire; "but you dare not, Bingie —he has a d—d cross game look, with all that civil chaff of his."

"Done," said Sir Bingo, but in a less confident tone than before, and with a determination to proceed with some caution in the matter.—"I have got a rouleau above, and Winterblossom shall hold stakes."

"I have no rouleau," said the Squire; "but I'll fly a cheque on Meiklewham."

"See it be better than your last," said Sir Bingo, "for I won't be skylarked again. Jack, my boy, you are had."

"Not till the bet's won; and I shall see you walking *dandy break your head*, Bingie, before that," answered Mowbray. "Best speak to the Captain before hand—it is a hellish scrape you are running into—I'll let you off yet, Bingie, for a guinea forfeit.—See, I am just going to start the tattler."

"Start, and be d—d!" said Sir Bingo. "You are gotten, I assure you o' that, Jack." And with a bow and a shuffle, he went up and introduced himself to the stranger as Sir Bingo Binks.

"Had—honour—write—sir," were the only sounds which his throat, or rather his cravat seemed to send forth.

"Confound the booby!" thought Mowbray; "he will get out of leading strings, if he goes on at this rate; and doubly confounded be this cursed tramper, who, the Lord knows why, has come hither from the Lord knows where, to drive the pigs through my game."

In the mean time, while his friend stood with his stop-watch in his hand, with a visage lengthened under the influence of these reflections, Sir Bingo, with an instinctive tact, which self-preservation seemed to dictate to a brain neither the most delicate nor subtle in the world, premised his inquiry by some general remark on fishing and field-sports. With all these, he found Tyrrel more than passably acquainted. Of fishing and shooting, particularly, he spoke with something like enthusiasm; so that Sir Bingo began to hold him in considerable respect, and to assure himself that he could not be, or at least could not originally have been bred, the itinerant artist which he now gave himself out—and this, with the fast lapse of the time, induced him thus to address Tyrrel.—"I say, Mr. Tyrrel—why, you have been one of us—I say"——

"If you mean a sportsman, Sir Bingo—I have been, and am a pretty keen one still," replied Tyrrel.

"Why, then, you did not always do them sort of things?"

"What sort of things do you mean, Sir Bingo?" said Tyrrel. "I have not the pleasure of understanding you."

"Why, I mean them sketches," said Sir Bingo. "I'll give you a handsome order for them, if you will tell me. I will, on my honour."

"Does it concern you particularly, Sir Bingo, to know any thing of my affairs?" said Tyrrel.

"No—certainly—not immediately," answered Sir Bingo, with some hesitation, for he liked not the dry tone in which Tyrrel's answers were returned, half so well as a bumper of dry sherry; "only I said you were a d—d gnostic fellow, and I laid a bet you have not been always professional—that's all."

Mr. Tyrrel replied, "A bet with Mr. Mowbray, I suppose?"

"Yes, with Jack," replied the Baronet—"you have hit it—I hope I have done him?"

Tyrrel bent his brows, and looked first at Mr. Mowbray, then at the Baronet, and, after a moment's thought, addressed the latter.—"Sir Bingo Binks, you are a gentleman of elegant inquiry and acute judgment.—You are perfectly right—I was *not* bred to the profession of an artist, nor did I practise it formerly, whatever I may do now; and so that question is answered."

"And Jack is diddled," said the Baronet, smiting his thigh in triumph, and turning towards the Squire and the stake-holder, with a smile of exultation.

"Stop a single moment, Sir Bingo," said Tyrrel; "take one word with you. I have a great respect for bets;—it is part of an Englishman's charter to bet on what he thinks fit, and to prosecute his inquiries over hedge and ditch, as if he were steeple-hunting. But as I have satisfied you on the subject of two bets, that is sufficient compliance with the custom of the country; and therefore I request, Sir Bingo, you will not make me or my affairs the subject of any more wagers."

"I'll be d—d if I do," was the internal resolution of Sir Bingo. Aloud he muttered some apologies, and was heartily glad that the dinner-bell, sounding at this moment, afforded him an apology for shuffling off in a different direction.

CHAPTER VI.

TABLE-TALK.

And, sir, if these accounts be true,
The Dutch have mighty things in view;
The Austrians—I admire French beans,
Dear ma'am, above all other greens.
* * *
And all as lively and as brisk
As—Ma'am, d'ye choose a game at whisk?

Table-Talk.

WHEN they were about to leave the room, Lady Penelope assumed Tyrrel's arm with a sweet smile of condescension, meant to make the honoured party understand in its full extent the favour conferred. But the unreasonable artist, far from intimating the least confusion at an attention so little to be expected, seemed to consider the distinction as one which was naturally paid to the greatest stranger present; and when he placed Lady Penelope at the head of the table, by Mr. Winterblossom the president, and took a chair for himself betwixt her ladyship and Lady Blinks, the provoking wretch appeared no more sensible of being exalted above his proper rank in society, than if he had been sitting at the bottom of the table by honest Mrs. Blower from the Bow-head, who had come to the Well to carry off the dregs of the *Influenzie*, which she scorned to term a surfeit.

Now this indifference puzzled Lady Penelope's game extremely, and irritated her desire to get at the bottom of Tyrrel's mystery, if there was one, and secure him to her own party. If you were ever at a watering-place, reader, you know that while the guests do not always pay the most polite attention to unmarked individuals, the appearance of a stray lion makes an interest as strong as it is reasonable, and the Amazonian chiefs of each coterie, like the hunters of Buenos-Ayres, prepare their *lasso*, and manœuvre to the best advantage they can, each hoping to noose the unsuspicious monster, and lead him captive to her own menagerie. A few words concerning Lady Penelope Penfeather will explain why she practised this sport with even more than common zeal.

She was the daughter of an earl, possessed a showy person, and features which might be called handsome in youth, though now rather too much *prononcés* to render the term proper. The nose was become sharper; the cheeks had lost the roundness of youth; and as, during fifteen years that she had reigned a beauty and a ruling toast, the right man had not spoken, or, at least, had not spoken at the right time, her ladyship now rendered sufficiently independent by the inheritance of an old relation, spoke in praise of friendship, began to dislike the town in summer, and to "babble of green fields."

About the time Lady Penelope thus changed the tenor of her life, she was fortunate enough, with Dr. Quackleben's assistance, to find out the virtues of St. Ronan's spring; and having contributed her share to establish the *urbs in rure*, which had risen around it, she sat herself down as leader of the fashions in the little province which she had in a great measure both discovered and colonized. She was therefore, justly desirous to compel homage and tribute from all who should approach the territory.

In other respects, Lady Penelope pretty much resembled the numerous class she belonged to. She was at bottom a well-principled woman, but too thoughtless to let her principles control her humour, therefore not scrupulously nice in her society. She was good-natured, but capricious and whimsical, and willing enough to be kind or generous, if it neither thwarted her humour, nor cost her much trouble; would have chaperoned a young friend any where, and moved the world for subscription tickets; but never troubled herself how much her giddy charge flirted, or with whom; so that, with a numerous class of Misses, her ladyship was the most delightful creature in the world. Then Lady Penelope had lived so much in society, knew so exactly when to speak, and how to escape from an embarrassing discussion by professing ignorance, *while she looked* intelligence, *that she was not generally discovered to be a fool, unless when she set up for being remarkably clever. This happened more frequently of* late, when, perhaps, as she could not but observe that the repairs of the toilet became more necessary, she might suppose that new lights, according to the poet, were streaming on her mind through the chinks that Time was making. Many of her friends, however, thought that Lady Penelope would have better consulted her genius by remaining in mediocrity, as a fashionable and well-bred woman, than by parading her new-founded pretensions to taste and patronage; but such was not her own opinion, and doubtless, her ladyship was the best judge.

On the other side of Tyrrel sat Lady Binks, lately the beautiful Miss Bonnyrigg, who, during the last season, had made the company at the Well alternately admire, smile, and stare, by dancing the highest Highland fling, riding the wildest pony, laughing the loudest laugh at the broadest joke, and wearing the briefest petticoat of any nymph of St. Ronan's. Few knew that this wild, hoydenish, half-mad humour, was only superinduced over her real character, for the purpose of—getting well married. She had fixed her eyes on Sir Bingo, and was aware of his maxim, that to catch him, "a girl must be," in his own phrase, "bang up to every thing;" and that he would choose a wife for the neck-or-nothing qualities which recommend a good hunter. She made out her catch-match, and she was miserable. Her wild good-humour was entirely an assumed part of her character, which was passionate, ambitious, and thoughtful. Delicacy she had none—she knew Sir Bingo was a brute and a fool, even while she was hunting him down; but she had so far mistaken her own feelings, as not to have expected that when she became bone of his bone, she should feel so much shame and anger when she saw his folly expose him to be laughed at and plundered, or so disgusted when his brutality became intimately connected with herself. It is true, he was on the whole rather an innocent monster; and between bitting and bridling, coaxing and humouring, might have been made to pad on well enough. But an unhappy boggling which had taken place previous to the declaration of their private marriage, had so exasperated her spirits against her helpmate, that modes of conciliation were the last she was likely to adopt. Not only had the assistance of the Scottish Themis, so propitiously indulgent to the foibles of the fair, been resorted to on the occasion, but even Mars seemed ready to enter upon the tapis, if Hymen had not intervened. There was, *de par le monde*, a certain brother of the lady—an officer—and, as it happened, on leave of absence,—who alighted from a hack-chaise at the Fox Hotel, at eleven o'clock at night, holding in his hand a slip of well-dried oak, accompanied by another gentleman, who, like himself, wore a military travelling-cap and a black stock; out of the said chaise, as was reported by the trusty Toby, was handed a small rose-sac, an Andrew Ferrara, and a neat mahogany box, eighteen inches long, three deep, and some six broad. Next morning a solemn *palaver* (as the natives of Madagascar call their national convention) was held at an unusual hour, at which Captain MacTurk and Mr. Mowbray assisted; and the upshot was, that at breakfast the company were made happy by the information, that Sir Bingo had been for some weeks the happy bridegroom of their general favourite; which union, concealed for family reasons, he was now at liberty to acknowledge, and to fly with the wings of love to bring his sorrowing turtle from the shades to which she had retired, till the obstacles to their mutual happiness could be removed. Now, though all this sounded very smoothly, that gall-less turtle, Lady Binks, could never think of the tenor of the proceedings without the deepest feelings of resentment and contempt for the principal actor, Sir Bingo.

Besides all these unpleasant circumstances, Sir Bingo's family had refused to countenance her wish that he should bring her to his own seat; and hence a new shock to her pride, and new matter of contempt against poor Sir Bingo, for being ashamed and afraid to face down the opposition of his kinsfolk, for whose displeasure, though never attending to any good advice from them, he retained a childish awe.

The manners of the young lady were no less

changed than was her temper; and, from being much too careless and free, were become reserved, sullen, and haughty. A consciousness that many scrupled to hold intercourse with her in society, rendered her disagreeably tenacious of her rank, and jealous of every thing that appeared like neglect. She had constituted herself mistress of Sir Bingo's purse; and, unrestrained in the expenses of dress and equipage, chose, contrary to her maiden practice, to be rather rich and splendid than gay, and to command that attention by magnificence, which she no longer deigned to solicit by rendering herself either agreeable or entertaining. One secret source of her misery was the necessity of showing deference to Lady Penelope Penfeather, whose understanding she despised, and whose pretensions to consequence, to patronage, and to literature, she had acuteness enough to see through, and to contemn; and this dislike was the more grievous, that she felt she depended a good deal on Lady Penelope's countenance for the situation she was able to maintain even among the not very select society of St. Ronan's Well; and that, neglected by her, she must have dropped lower in the scale even there. Neither was Lady Penelope's kindness to Lady Binks extremely cordial. She partook in the ancient and ordinary dislike of single nymphs of a certain age, to those who make splendid alliances under their very eye—and she more than suspected the secret disaffection of the lady. But the name sounded well; and the style in which Lady Binks lived was a credit to the place. So they satisfied their mutual dislike with saying a few sharp things to each other occasionally, but all under the mask of civility.

Such was Lady Binks; and yet, being such, her dress, and her equipage, and carriages, were the envy of half the Misses at the Well, who, while she sat disfiguring with sullenness her very lovely face, (for it was as beautiful as her shape was exquisite,) only thought she was proud of having carried her point, and felt herself, with her large fortune and diamond bandeau, no fit company for the rest of the party. They gave way, therefore, with meekness to her domineering temper, though it was not the less tyrannical, that in her maiden state of hoydenhood, she had been to some of them an object of slight and of censure: and Lady Binks had not forgotten the offences offered to Miss Bonnyrigg. But the fair sisterhood submitted to her retaliations, as lieutenants endure the bullying of a rude and boisterous captain of the sea, with the secret determination to pay it home to their underlings, when they shall become captains themselves.

In this state of importance, yet of penance, Lady Binks occupied her place at the dinner-table, alternately disconcerted by some stupid speech of her lord and master, and by some slight sarcasm from Lady Penelope, to which she longed to reply, but dared not.

She looked from time to time at her neighbour Frank Tyrrel, but without addressing him, and accepted in silence the usual civilities which he proffered to her. She had remarked keenly his interview with Sir Bingo, and knowing by experience the manner in which her honoured lord was wont to retreat from a dispute in which he was unsuccessful, as well as his genius for getting into such perplexities, she had little doubt that he had sustained from the stranger some new indignity; whom, therefore, she regarded with a mixture of feeling, scarce knowing whether to be pleased with him for having given pain to him whom she hated, or angry with him for having affronted one in whose degradation her own was necessarily involved. There might be other thoughts—on the whole, she regarded him with much though with mute attention. He paid her but little in return, being almost entirely occupied in replying to the questions of the engrossing Lady Penelope Penfeather.

Receiving polite though rather evasive answers to her inquiries concerning his late avocations, her ladyship could only learn that Tyrrel had been travelling in several remote parts of Europe, and even of Asia. Baffled, but not repulsed, the lady continued her courtesy, by pointing out to him, as a stranger, several individuals of the company to whom she proposed introducing him, as persons from whose society he might derive either profit or amusement. In the midst of this sort of conversation, however, she suddenly stopped short.

"Will you forgive me, Mr. Tyrrel," she said, "if I say I have been watching your thoughts for some moments, and that I have detected you? All the while that I have been talking of these good folks, and that you have been making such civil replies, that they might be with great propriety and utility inserted in the 'Familiar Dialogues, teaching foreigners how to express themselves in English upon ordinary occasions'—your mind has been entirely fixed upon that empty chair, which hath remained there opposite betwixt our worthy president and Sir Bingo Binks."

"I own, madam," he answered, "I was a little surprised at seeing such a distinguished seat unoccupied, while the table is rather crowded."

"O, confess more, sir!—Confess that to a poet a seat unoccupied—the chair of Banquo—has more charms than if it were filled even as an alderman would fill it.—What if 'the Dark Ladye'* should glide in and occupy it?—Would you have courage to stand the vision, Mr. Tyrrel?—I assure you the thing is not impossible."

"*What* is not impossible, Lady Penelope?" said Tyrrel, somewhat surprised.

"Startled already?—Nay, then, I despair of your enduring the awful interview."

"What interview? who is expected?" said Tyrrel, unable with the utmost exertion to suppress some signs of curiosity, though he suspected the whole to be merely some mystification of her ladyship.

"How delighted I am," she said, "that I have found out where you are vulnerable!—Expected—did I say expected?—no, not expected.

> 'She glides, like Night, from land to land,
> She hath strange power of speech.'

—But come, I have you at my mercy, and I will be generous and explain.—We call—that is, among ourselves, you understand—Miss Clara Mowbray, the sister of that gentleman that sits next to Miss Parker, the Dark Ladye, and that seat is left for her.—For she was expected—no, not expected—I forget again!—but it was thought *possible* she might honour us to-day, when our feast was so full and piquant.—Her brother is our Lord of the Manor—and so they pay her that sort of civility to regard her as a visiter—and neither Lady Binks nor I think of objecting—She is a singular young person, Clara Mowbray—she amuses me very much—I am always rather glad to see her."

"She is not to come hither to-day," said Tyrrel; "am I so to understand your ladyship?"

"Why, it is past her time—even *her* time," said Lady Penelope—"dinner was kept back half an hour, and our poor invalids were famishing, as you may see by the deeds they have done since.—But Clara is an odd creature, and if she took it into her head to come hither at this moment, hither she would come—she is very whimsical.—Many people think her handsome—but she looks so like something from another world, that she makes me always think of Mat Lewis's Spectre Lady."

And she repeated with much cadence,

> "There is a thing—there is a thing,
> I fain would have from thee;
> I fain would have that gay gold ring,
> O warrior, give it me!"

"And then you remember his answer:

> 'This ring Lord Brooke from his daughter took,
> And a solemn oath he swore,
> That that ladye my bride should be
> When this crusade was o'er.'

You do figures as well as landscapes, I suppose, Mr. Tyrrel?—You shall make a sketch for me—a slight

* The Dark Ladye is one of those tantalizing fragments, in which Mr. Coleridge has shown us what exquisite powers of poetry he has suffered to remain uncultivated. Let us be thankful for what we have received, however. The unfashioned ore, drawn from so rich a mine, is worth all to which art can add its highest decorations, when drawn from less abundant sources. The verses beginning the poem which are published separately, are said to have soothed the last hours of Mr. Fox. They are the stanzas entitled Love.

thing—for sketches, I think, show the freedom of art better than finished pieces—I dote on the first coruscations of genius—flashing like lightning from the cloud!—You shall make a sketch for my own boudoir—my dear sulky den at Air Castle, and Clara Mowbray shall sit for the Ghost Ladye."

"That would be but a poor compliment to your ladyship's friend," replied Tyrrel.

"Friend? We don't get quite that length, though I like Clara very well.—Quite sentimental cast of face—I think I saw an antique in the Louvre very like her—(I was there in 1800)—quite an antique countenance—eyes something hollowed—care has dug caves for them, but they are caves of the most beautiful marble, arched with jet—a straight nose, and absolutely the Grecian mouth and chin—a profusion of long straight black hair, with the whitest skin you ever saw—as white as the whitest parchment—and not a shade of colour in her cheek—none whatever—If she would be naughty, and borrow a prudent touch of complexion, she might be called beautiful. Even as it is, many think her so, although, surely, Mr. Tyrrel, three colours are necessary to the female face. However, we used to call her the Melpomene of the Spring last season, as we called Lady Binks—who was not then Lady Binks—our Euphrosyne—Did we not, my dear?"

"Did we not what, madam?" said Lady Binks, in a tone something sharper than ought to have belonged to so beautiful a countenance.

"I am sorry I have started you out of your reverie, my love," answered Lady Penelope. "I was only assuring Mr. Tyrrel that you were once Euphrosyne, though now so much under the banners of Il Penseroso."

"I do not know that I have been either one or the other," answered Lady Binks; "one thing I certainly am not—I am not capable of understanding your ladyship's wit and learning."

"Poor soul," whispered Lady Penelope to Tyrrel; "we know what we are, we know not what we may be.—And now, Mr. Tyrrel, I have been your sibyl to guide you through this Elysium of ours, I think, in reward, I deserve a little confidence in return."

"If I had any to bestow, which could be in the slightest degree interesting to your ladyship," answered Tyrrel.

"Oh! cruel man—he will not understand me!" exclaimed the lady—"In plain words, then, a peep into your portfolio—just to see what objects you have rescued from natural decay, and rendered immortal by the pencil. You do not know—indeed, Mr. Tyrrel, you do not know how I dote upon your 'serenely silent art,' second to poetry alone—equal—superior perhaps—to music."

"I really have little that could possibly be worth the attention of such a judge as your ladyship," answered Tyrrel; "such trifles as your ladyship has seen, I sometimes leave at the foot of the tree I have been sketching."

"As Orlando left his verses in the Forest of Ardennes?—Oh, the thoughtless prodigality!—Mr. Winterblossom, do you hear this?—We must follow Mr. Tyrrel in his walks, and glean what he leaves behind him."

Her ladyship was here disconcerted by some laughter on Sir Bingo's side of the table, which she chastised by an angry glance, and then proceeded emphatically:

"Mr. Tyrrel—this must *not* be—this is not the way of the world, my good sir, to which even genius must stoop its flight. We must consult the engraver—though perhaps you etch as well as you draw!"

"I should suppose so," said Mr. Winterblossom, edging in a word with difficulty, "from the freedom of Mr. Tyrrel's touch."

"I will not deny my having spoiled a little copper now and then," said Tyrrel, "since I am charged with the crime by such good judges; but it has only been by way of experiment."

"Say no more," said the lady; "*my darling* wish is accomplished!—*We have long desired to have the remarkable and most romantic spots of our little Arcadia here—spots consecrated to friendship, the fine* arts, the loves and the graces, immortalized by the graver's art, faithful to its charge of fame—you shall labour on this task, Mr. Tyrrel; we will all assist with notes and illustrations—we will all contribute—only some of us must be permitted to remain anonymous—Fairy favours, you know, Mr. Tyrrel, must be kept secret—And you shall be allowed the pillage of the Album—some sweet things there of Mr. Chatterly's—and Mr. Edgeit, a gentleman of your own profession, I am sure will lend his aid—Dr. Quackleben will contribute some scientific notices.—And for subscription"——

"Financial—financial—your leddyship, I speak to order!" said the writer, interrupting Lady Penelope with a tone of impudent familiarity, which was meant doubtless for jocular ease.

"How am I out of order, Mr. Meiklewham?" said her ladyship, drawing herself up.

"I speak to order!—No warrants for money can be extracted before intimation to the Committee of Management."

"Pray, who mentioned money, Mr. Meiklewham?" said her ladyship.—"That wretched old pettifogger," she added in a whisper to Tyrrel, "thinks of nothing else but the filthy pelf."

"Ye spake of subscription, my leddy, whilk is the same thing as money, differing only in respect of time—the subscription being a contract *de futuro*, and having a *tractus temporis in gremio*—And I have kend many honest folks in the company at the Well, complain of the subscriptions as a great abuse, as obliging them either to look unlike other folk, or to gie good lawful coin for ballants and picture-books, and things they caredna a pinch of snuff for."

Several of the company, at the lower end of the table, assented both by nods and murmurs of approbation; and the orator was about to proceed, when Tyrrel with difficulty procured a hearing before the debate went farther, and assured the company that her ladyship's goodness had led her into an error; that he had no work in hand worthy of their patronage, and, with the deepest gratitude for Lady Penelope's goodness, had it not in his power to comply with her request. There was some tittering at her ladyship's expense, who, as the writer slyly observed, had been something *ultronious* in her patronage. Without attempting for the moment any rally, (as indeed the time which had passed since the removal of the dinner scarce permitted an opportunity,) Lady Penelope gave the signal for the ladies' retreat, and left the gentlemen to the circulation of the bottle.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TEA-TABLE.

—— While the cups,
Which cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each.—COWPER.

It was common at the Well, for the fair guests occasionally to give tea to the company,—such at least as, from their rank and leading in the little society, might be esteemed fit to constitute themselves patronesses of an evening; and the same lady generally carried the authority she had acquired into the ball-room, where two fiddles and a bass, at a guinea a night, with a *quantum sufficit* of tallow candles, (against the use of which Lady Penelope often mutinied,) enabled the company—to use the appropriate phrase—"to close the evening on the light fantastic toe."

On the present occasion, the lion of the hour, Mr. Francis Tyrrel, had so little answered the high-wrought expectations of Lady Penelope, that she rather regretted having ever given herself any trouble about him, and particularly that of having manœuvred herself into the patronage of the tea-table for the evening, to the great expenditure of souchong and congo. Accordingly, her ladyship had no sooner summoned her own woman, and her *fille de chambre*, to make tea, with her page, footman, and postilion, to hand it about, (in which duty they were assisted by two richly-laced and thickly-powdered footmen of Lady Binks's, whose liveries put to shame the more modest garb of Lady Penelope's, and even dimmed

the glory of the suppressed coronet upon the buttons,) than she began to vilipend and deprociate what had been so long the object of her curiosity.

"This Mr. Tyrrel," she said, in a tone of authoritative decision, "seems after all a very ordinary sort of person, quite a commonplace man, who, she dared say, had considered his condition, in going to the old alehouse, much better than they had done for him, when they asked him to the Public Rooms. He had known his own place better than they did—there was nothing uncommon in his appearance or conversation—nothing at all *frappant*—she scarce believed he could even draw that sketch. Mr. Winterblossom, indeed, made a great deal of it; but then all the world knew that every scrap of engraving or drawing, which Mr. Winterblossom contrived to make his own, was, the instant it came into his collection, the finest thing that ever was seen—that was the way with collectors—their geese were all swans."

"And your ladyship's swan has proved but a goose, my dearest Lady Pen," said Lady Binks.

"*My* swan, dearest Lady Binks! I really do not know how I have deserved the appropriation."

"Do not be angry, my dear Lady Penelope; I only mean, that for a fortnight and more you have spoke constantly *of* this Mr. Tyrrel, and all dinner-time you spoke *to* him."

The fair company began to collect around, at hearing the word *dear* so often repeated in the same brief dialogue, which induced them to expect sport, and, like the vulgar on a similar occasion, to form a ring for the expected combatants.

"He sat betwixt us, Lady Binks," answered Lady Penelope, with dignity. "You had your usual headache, you know, and, for the credit of the company, I spoke for one."

"For *two*, if your ladyship pleases," replied Lady Binks. "I mean," she added, softening the expression, "for yourself and me."

"I am sorry," said Lady Penelope, "I should have spoken for one who can speak so smartly for herself, as my dear Lady Binks—I did not, by any means, desire to engross the conversation—I repeat it, there is a mistake about this man."

"I think there is," said Lady Binks, in a tone which implied something more than mere assent to Lady Penelope's proposition.

"I doubt if he is an artist at all," said the Lady Penelope; "or if he is, he must be doing things for some Magazine, or Encyclopedia, or some such matter."

"*I* doubt, too, if he be a professional artist," said Lady Binks. "If so, he is of the very highest class, for I have seldom seen a better-bred man."

"There are very well-bred artists," said Lady Penelope. "It is the profession of a gentleman."

"Certainly," answered Lady Binks; "but the poorer class have often to struggle with poverty and dependance. In general society, they are like commercial people in presence of their customers; and that is a difficult part to sustain. And so you see them of all sorts—shy and reserved, when they are conscious of merit—petulant and whimsical, by way of showing their independence—intrusive, in order to appear easy—and sometimes obsequious and fawning, when they chance to be of a mean spirit. But you seldom see them quite at their ease, and therefore I hold this Mr. Tyrrel to be either an artist of the first class, raised completely above the necessity and degradation of patronage, or else to be no professional artist at all."

Lady Penelope looked at Lady Binks with much such a regard as Baalam may have cast upon his ass, when he discovered the animal's capacity for holding an argument with him. She muttered to herself—

"*Mon ane parle, et meme il parle bien!*"

But, declining the altercation which Lady Binks seemed disposed to enter into, she replied, with good humour, "Well, dearest Rachel, we will not pull caps about this man—nay, I think your good opinion of him gives him new value in my eyes. That is always the way with us, my good friend! We may confess it when there are none of these conceited male wretches among us. We will know what he really is—he shall not wear fern-seed, and walk among us invisible thus—what say you, Maria?"

"Indeed, I say, dear Lady Penelope," answered Miss Digges, whose ready chatter we have already introduced to the reader, "he is a very handsome man, though his nose is too big, and his mouth too wide—but his teeth are like pearl—and he has such eyes!—especially when your ladyship spoke to him. I don't think you looked at his eyes—they are quite deep and dark, and full of glow, like what you read to us in the letter from that lady, about Robert Burns."

"Upon my word, miss, you come on finely!" said Lady Penelope.—"One had need take care what they read or talk about before you, I see—Come, Jones, have mercy upon us—put an end to that symphony of tinkling cups and saucers, and let the first act of the tea-table begin, if you please."

"Does her leddyship mean the grace?" said honest Mrs. Blower, for the first time admitted into this worshipful society, and busily employed in arranging an Indian handkerchief, that might have made a mainsail for one of her husband's smuggling luggers, which she spread carefully on her knee, to prevent damage to a flowered black silk gown from the repast of tea and cake, to which she proposed to do due honour,—"Does her leddyship mean the grace? I see the minister is just coming in.—Her leddyship waits till ye say a blessing, an ye please, sir."

Mr. Winterblossom, who *toddled* after the chaplain, his toe having given him an alert hint to quit the dining-table, though he saw every feature in the poor woman's face swoln with desire to procure information concerning the ways and customs of the place, passed on the other side of the way, regardless of her agony of curiosity.

A moment after, she was relieved by the entrance of Dr. Quackleben, whose maxim being, that one patient was as well worth attention as another, and who knew by experience, that the *honoraria* of a godly wife of the Bow-head were as apt to be forthcoming, (if not more so,) as my Lady Penelope's he e'en sat himself quietly down by Mrs. Blower, and proceeded with the utmost kindness to inquire after her health, and to hope he had not forgotten taking a tablespoonful of spirits burnt to a *residuum*, in order to qualify the crudities.

"Indeed, Doctor," said the honest woman, "I loot the brandy burn as lang as I dought look at the gude creature wasting itself that gate—and then, when I was fain to put it out for very thrift, I did take a thimbleful of it, (although it is not the thing I am used to Dr. Quackleben,) and I winna say but that it did me good."

"Unquestionably, madam," said the Doctor, "I am no friend to the use of alcohol in general, but there are particular cases—there are particular cases, Mrs. Blower—My venerated instructer, one of the greatest men in our profession that ever lived, took a wineglassful of old rum, mixed with sugar, every day after his dinner."

"Ay? dear heart, he would be a comfortable doctor that," said Mrs. Blower. "He wad maybe ken something of my case. Is he leevin' think ye, sir?"

"Dead for many years, madam," said Dr. Quackleben; "and there are but few of his pupils that can fill his place, I assure ye. If I could be thought an exception, it is only because I was a favourite. Ah! blessings on the old red cloak of him!—It covered more of the healing science than the gowns of a whole modern university."

"There is ane, sir," said Mrs. Blower, "that has been muckle recommended about Edinburgh—Mac[*]gregor, I think they ca' him—folk come far and near to see him."

"I know whom you mean, ma'am—a clever man—no denying it—a clever man—but there are certain cases—yours, for example—and I think that of many that come to drink this water—which I cannot say I

* The late Dr. Gregory is probably intimated, as one of the celebrated Dr. Cullen's personal habits is previously mentioned. Dr. Gregory was distinguished for putting his patients on a severe regimen.

link he perfectly understands—hasty—very hasty nd rapid. Now I—I give the disease its own way at rst—then watch it, Mrs. Blower—watch the turn of e tide."

"Ay, troth, that's true," responded the widow; John Blower was aye watching turn of tide, puir an."

"Then he is a starving doctor, Mrs. Blower—reuces diseases as soldiers do towns—by famine, not onsidering that the friendly inhabitants suffer as uch as the hostile garrison—ahem!"

Here he gave an important and emphatic cough, nd then proceeded.

"I am no friend either to excess or to violent stiulus, Mrs. Blower—but nature must be supported—a generous diet—cordials judiciously thrown in—not without the advice of a medical man—that is my opinion, Mrs. Blower, to speak as a friend—others may starve their patients if they have a mind."

"It wadna do for me, the starving, Dr. Keekerben," said the alarmed relict,—"it wadna do for me at a'—Just a' I can do to wear through the day with the sma' supports that nature requires—not a soul to look after me, Doctor, since John Blower was ta'en awa.—Thank ye kindly, sir," (to the servant who handed the tea,)—"thank ye, my bonny man," (to the page who served the cake)—"Now, dinna, ye think, Doctor," (in a low and confidential voice,) "that her leddyship's tea is rather of the weakliest—water bewitched, I think—and Mrs. Jones, as they ca' her, has cut the seedcake very thin?"

"It is the fashion, Mrs. Blower," answered Dr. Quackleben; "and her ladyship's tea is excellent. But your taste is a little chilled, which is not uncommon at the first use of the waters, so that you are not sensible of the flavour—we must support the system —reinforce the digestive powers—give me leave—you are a stranger, Mrs. Blower, and we must take care of you—I have an elixir which will put that matter to rights in a moment."

So saying, Dr. Quackleben pulled from his pocket a small portable case of medicines—"Catch me without my tools,"—he said, "here I have the real useful pharmacopœia—the rest is all humbug and hard names—this little case, with a fortnight or month, spring and fall, at St. Ronan's Well, and no one will be till his day come."

Thus boasting, the Doctor drew from his case a large vial or small flask, full of a high-coloured liquid, of which he mixed three tea-spoonfuls in Mrs. Blower's cup, who, immediately afterwards, allowed that the flavour was improved beyond all belief, and that it was "vera comfortable and restorative indeed."

"Will it not do good to my complaints, Doctor?" said Mr. Winterblossom, who had strolled towards them, and held out his cup to the physician.

"I by no means recommend it, Mr. Winterblossom," said Dr. Quackleben, shutting up his case with great coolness; "your case is œdematous, and you treat it your own way—you are as good a physician as I am, and I never interfere with another practitioner's patient."

"Well, Doctor," said Winterblossom, "I must wait till Sir Bingo comes in—he has a hunting-flask usually about him, which contains as good medicine as yours to the full."

"You will wait for Sir Bingo some time," said the Doctor; "he is a gentleman of sedentary habits—he has ordered another magnum."

"Sir, Bingo is an unco name for a man o' quality, inna ye think sae, Dr. Cocklehen?" said Mrs. Blower. "John Blower, when he was a wee bit in the wind's eye, as he ca'd it, puir fallow—used to sing a sang about a dog they ca'd Bingo, that suld hae belanged to a farmer."

"Our Bingo is but a puppy yet, madam—or if a dog, he is a sad dog," said Mr. Winterblossom, applauding his own wit, by one of his own inimitable smiles.

"Or a mad dog, rather," said Mr. Chatterly, "*for he drinks no water;" and he also smiled gracefully at the thoughts of having trumped, as it were,* the [illegible] *'s pun*

"Twa pleasant men, Doctor," said the widow, "and so is Sir Bungy too, for that matter; but O! is nae it a pity he should bide sae lang by the bottle? It was puir John Blower's faut too, that weary tippling; when he wan to the lee-side of a bowl of punch, there was nae raising him.—But they are taking awa the things, and, Doctor, is it not an awfu' thing that the creature-comforts should hae been used without grace or thanksgiving?—that Mr. Chitterling, if he really be a minister, has muckle to answer for, that he neglects his Master's service."

"Why, madam," said the Doctor, "Mr. Chatterly is scarce arrived at the rank of a minister plenipotentiary."

"A minister potentiary—ah, Doctor, I doubt that is some jest of yours," said the widow; "that's sae like puir John Blower. When I wad hae had him gie up the Lovely Peggy, ship and cargo, (the vessel was named after me, Doctor Kittleben,) to be remembered in the prayers o' the congregation, he wad say to me, 'they may pray that stand the risk, Peggy Bryce, for I've made insurance.' He was a merry man, Doctor; but he had the root of the matter in him, for a' his light way of speaking, as deep as ony skipper that ever loosed anchor from Leith Roads. I hae been a forsaken creature since his death—O the weary days and nights that I have had!—and the weight on the spirits—the spirits, Doctor!—though I canna say I hae been easier since I hae been at the Wall than even now—if I kend what I was awing ye for elickstir, Doctor, for it's done me muckle heart's good, for-by the opening of my mind to you."

"Fie, fie, ma'am," said the Doctor, as the widow pulled out a seal-skin pouch, such as sailors carry tobacco in, but apparently well-stuffed with bank-notes, —"Fie, fie, madam—I am no apothecary—I have my diploma from Leyden—a regular physician, madam, —the elixir is heartily at your service; and should you want any advice, no man will be prouder to assist you than your humble servant."

"I am sure I am muckle obliged to your kindness, Dr. Kickalpin," said the widow, folding up her pouch; "this was puir John Blower's *spleuchan*,* as they ca' it—I e'en wear it for his sake. He was a kind man, and left me comfortable in warld's gudes; but comforts hae their cumbers,—to be a lone woman is a sair weird, Dr. Kittlepin."

Dr. Quackleben drew his chair a little nearer that of the widow, and entered into a closer communication with her, in a tone doubtless of more delicate consolation than was fit for the ears of the company at large.

One of the chief delights of a watering-place is, that every one's affairs seem to be put under the special surveillance of the whole company, so that, in all probability, the various flirtations, *liaisons*, and so forth, which naturally take place in the society, are not only the subject of amusement to the parties engaged, but also to the lookers on; that is to say, generally speaking, to the whole community, of which for the time the said parties are members. Lady Penelope, the presiding goddess, of the region, watchful over all her circle, was not long of observing that the Doctor seemed to be suddenly engaged in close communication with the widow, and that he had even ventured to take hold of her fair plump hand, with a manner which partook at once of the gallant suitor, and of the medical adviser.

"For the love of Heaven," said her ladyship, "who can that comely dame be, on whom our excellent and learned Doctor looks with such uncommon regard?"

"Fat, fair, and forty," said Mr. Winterblossom; "that is all I know of her—a mercantile person."

"A carrack, Sir President," said the chaplain, "richly laden with colonial produce, by name the Lovely Peggy Bryce—no master—the late John Blower of North Leith having pushed off his bont for the Stygian Creek, and left the vessel without a hand on board."

"The Doctor," said Lady Penelope, turning her glass towards them, "seems willing to play the part of pilot."

* A fur pouch for keeping tobacco.

"I dare say he will be willing to change her name and register," said Mr. Chatterly.

"He can be no less in common requital," said Winterblossom. "She has changed *his* name six times in the five minutes that I stood within hearing of them."

"What do you think of the matter, my dear, Lady Binks?" said Lady Penelope.

"Madam?" said Lady Binks, starting from a reverie, and answering as one who either had not heard, or did not understand the question.

"I mean, what think you of what is going on yonder?"

Lady Binks turned her glass in the direction of Lady Penelope's glance, fixed the widow and the Doctor with one bold fashionable stare, and then dropping her hand slowly, said with indifference, "I really see nothing there worth thinking about."

"I dare say it is a fine thing to be married," said Lady Penelope; "one's thoughts, I suppose, are so much engrossed with one's own perfect happiness, that they have neither time nor inclination to laugh like other folks. Miss Rachel Bonnyrigg would have laughed till her eyes ran over, had she seen what Lady Binks cares so little about—I dare say it must be an all-sufficient happiness to be married."

"He would be a happy man that could convince your ladyship of that in good earnest," said Mr. Winterblossom.

"Oh, who knows—the whim may strike me," replied the lady; "but no—no—no;—and that is three times."

"Say it sixteen times more," said the gallant president, "and let nineteen nay-says be a grant."

"If I should say a thousand Noes, there exists not the alchymy in living man that could extract one Yes out of the whole mass," said her ladyship. "Blessed be the memory of Queen Bess!—She set us all an example to keep power when we have it—What noise is that?"

"Only the usual after-dinner quarrel," said the divine. "I hear the Captain's voice, else most silent, commanding them to keep peace, in the devil's name and that of the ladies."

"Upon my word, dearest Lady Binks, this is too bad of that lord and master of yours, and of Mowbray, who might have more sense, and of the rest of that claret-drinking set, to be quarrelling and alarming our nerves every evening with presenting their pistols perpetually at each other, like sportsmen confined to the house upon a rainy 12th of August. I am tired of the Peace-maker—he but skins the business over in one case to have it break out elsewhere.—What think you, love, if we were to give out in orders, that the next quarrel which may arise, shall be *bona fide* fought to an end?—We will all go out and see it, and wear the colours on each side; and if there should a funeral come of it, we will attend it in a body.—Weeds are so becoming!—Are they not, my dear Lady Binks? Look at Widow Blower in her deep black—don't you envy her, my love?"

Lady Binks seemed about to make a sharp and hasty answer, but checked herself, perhaps under the recollection that she could not prudently come to an open breach with Lady Penelope.—At the same moment the door opened, and a lady dressed in a riding-habit, and wearing a black veil over her hat, appeared at the entry of the apartment.

"Angels and ministers of grace!" exclaimed Lady Penelope, with her very best tragic start—"my dearest Clara, why so late? and why thus? Will you step to my dressing-room—Jones will get you one of my gowns—we are just of a size, you know—do, pray—let me be vain of something of my own for once, by seeing you wear it."

This was spoken in the tone of the fondest female friendship, and at the same time the fair hostess bestowed on Miss Mowbray one of those tender caresses, which ladies—God bless them!—sometimes bestow on each other with unnecessary prodigality, to the great discontent and envy of the male spectators.

"*You are fluttered, my dearest Clara*—you are *feverish—I am sure you are*," continued the sweetly anxious Lady Penelope; "let me persuade you to lie down."

"Indeed you are mistaken, Lady Penelope," said Miss Mowbray, who seemed to receive much as a matter of course her ladyship's profusion of affectionate politeness:—"I am heated, and my pony trotted hard, that is the whole mystery.—Let me have a cup of tea, Mrs. Jones, and the matter is ended."

"Fresh tea, Jones, directly," said Lady Penelope, and led her passive friend to her own corner, as she was pleased to call the recess, in which she held her little court—ladies and gentlemen curtseying and bowing as she passed; to which civilities the new guest made no more return, than the most ordinary politeness rendered unavoidable.

Lady Binks did not rise to receive her, but sat upright in her chair, and bent her head very stiffly; a courtesy which Miss Mowbray returned in the same stately manner, without farther greeting on either side.

"Now, wha can that be, Doctor?" said the Widow Blower—"mind ye have promised to tell me all about the grand folk—wha can that be that Leddy Penelope hauds such a racket wi'?—and what for does she come wi' a habit and a beaver-hat, when we are a' (a glance at her own gown) in our silks and satins?"

"To tell you who she is, my dear Mrs. Blower, is very easy," said the officious Doctor. "She is Miss Clara Mowbray, sister to the Lord of the Manor—the gentleman who wears the green coat, with an arrow on the cape. To tell why she wears that habit, or does any thing else, would be rather beyond doctor's skill. Truth is, I have always thought she was a little—a very little—touched—call it nerves—hypochondria—or what you will."

"Lord help us, puir thing!" said the compassionate widow.—"And troth it looks like it. But it's a shame to let her go loose, Doctor—she might hurt hersell, or somebody. See, she has ta'en the knife!—O, it's only to cut a shave of the diet-loaf. She winna let the powder-monkey of a boy help her. There's judgment in that though, Doctor, for she can cut thick or thin as she likes.—Dear me! she has not taken mair than a crumb, that ane would pit between the wires of a canary-bird's cage, after all. I wish she would lift up that lang veil, or put off that riding-skirt, Doctor. She should really be showed the regulations, Doctor Kickelshin."

"She cares about no rules we can make, Mrs. Blower," said the Doctor; "and her brother's will and pleasure, and Lady Penelope's whim of indulging her, carry her through in every thing. They should take advice on her case."

"Ay, truly, it's time to take advice, when young creatures like her caper in amang dressed leddies, just as if they were come from scampering on Leith sands.—Such a wark as my leddy makes wi' her, Doctor! Ye would think they were baith fools of a feather."

"They might have flown on one wing, for what I know," said Dr. Quackleben; "but there was early and sound advice taken in Lady Penelope's case. My friend, the late Earl of Featherhead, was a man of judgment—did little in his family but by rule of medicine—so that, what with the waters, and what with my own care, Lady Penelope is only freakish—fanciful—that's all—and her quality bears it out—the peccant principle might have broken out under other treatment."

"Ay—she has been weel-friended," said the widow; "but this bairn Mowbray, puir thing! how came she to be sae left to hersell?"

"Her mother was dead—her father thought of nothing but his sports," said the Doctor. "Her brother was educated in England, and cared for nobody but himself, if he had been here. What education she got was at her own hand—what reading she read was in a library full of old romances—what friends or company she had was what chance sent her—then no family-physician, not even a good surgeon, within ten miles! And so you cannot wonder if the poor thing became unsettled."

"Puir thing!—no doctor—nor even a surgeon!—But, doctor," said the widow, "may be the yun

thing had the enjoyment of her health, ye ken, and then"——

"Ah! ha! ha!—why *then*, madam, she needed a physician far more than if she had been delicate. A skilful physician, Mrs. Blower, knows how to bring down that robust health, which is a very alarming state of the frame when it is considered *secundum artem*. Most sudden deaths happen when people are in a robust state of health. Ah! that state of perfect health is what the doctor dreads most on behalf of his patient."

"Ay, ay, Doctor?—I am quite sensible, nae doubt," said the widow, "of the great advantage of having a skeelfu' person about ane."

Here the Doctor's voice, in his earnestness to convince Mrs. Blower of the danger of supposing herself capable of living and breathing without a medical man's permission, sunk into a soft pleading tone, of which our reporter could not catch the sound. He was, as great orators will sometimes be, "inaudible in the gallery."

Mean while, Lady Penelope overwhelmed Clara Mowbray with her caresses. In what degree her ladyship, at her heart, loved this young person, might be difficult to ascertain,—probably in the degree in which a child loves a favourite toy. But Clara was a toy not always to be come by—as whimsical in her way as her ladyship in her own, only that poor Clara's singularities were real, and her ladyship's chiefly affected. Without adopting the harshness of the Doctor's conclusions concerning the former, she was certainly unequal in her spirits; and her occasional fits of levity were chequered by very long intervals of sadness. Her levity also appeared, in the world's eye, greater than it really was; for she had never been under the restraint of society which was really good, and entertained an undue contempt for that which she sometimes mingled with; having unhappily none to teach her the important truth, that some forms and restraints are to be observed, less in respect to others than to ourselves. Her dress, her manners, and her ideas, were therefore very much her own; and though they became her wonderfully, yet, like Ophelia's garlands, and wild snatches of melody, they were calculated to excite compassion and melancholy, even while they amused the observer.

"And why came you not to dinner?—We expected you—your throne was prepared."

"I had scarce come to tea," said Miss Mowbray, "of my own free will. But my brother says your ladyship proposes to come to Shaws-Castle, and he insisted it was quite right and necessary, to confirm you in so flattering a purpose, that I should come and say, Pray do, Lady Penelope; and so now here am I to say, Pray, do come."

"Is an invitation so flattering limited to me alone, my dear Clara?—Lady Binks will be jealous."

"Bring Lady Binks, if she has the condescension to honour us"—[a bow was very stiffly exchanged between the ladies]—"bring Mr. Springblossom—Winterblossom—and all the lions and lionesses—we have room for the whole collection. My brother, I suppose, will bring his own particular regiment of bears, which, with the usual assortment of monkeys seen in all caravans, will complete the menagerie. How you are to be entertained at Shaws-Castle, is, I thank Heaven, not my business, but John's."

"We shall want no formal entertainment, my love," said Lady Penelope; "a *déjeûner à la fourchette*—we know, Clara, you would die of doing the honours of a formal dinner."

"Not a bit; I should live long enough to make my will, and bequeath all large parties to old Nick, who invented them."

"Miss Mowbray," said Lady Binks, who had been thwarted by this free-spoken young lady, both in her former character of a coquette and romp, and in that of a prude which she at present wore—"Miss Mowbray declares for

'Champagne and a chicken at last.'"

"The chicken *without the champagne, if you please," said Miss Mowbray; "I have known ladies say dear to have champagne on the board.*—By the by, Lady Penelope, you have not your collection in the same order and discipline as Pidcock and Polito. There was much growling and snarling in the lower den when I passed it."

"It was feeding-time, my love," said Lady Penelope; "and the lower animals of every class become pugnacious at that hour—you see all our safer and well-conditioned animals are loose, and in good order."

"Oh, yes—in the keeper's presence, you know—Well, I must venture to cross the hall again among all that growling and grumbling—I would I had the fairy prince's quarters of mutton to toss among them if they should break out—He, I mean, who fetched water from the Fountain of Lions. However on second thoughts, I will take the back way, and avoid them.—What says honest Bottom?—

'For if they should as lions come in strife
Into such place, 'twere pity of their life.'"

"Shall I go with you, my dear?" said Lady Penelope.

"No—I have too great a soul for that—I think some of them are lions only as far as the hide is concerned."

"But why would you go so soon, Clara?"

"Because my errand is finished—have I not invited you and yours? and would not Lord Chesterfield himself allow I have done the polite thing?"

"But you have spoke to none of the company—how can you be so odd, my love?" said her ladyship.

"Why, I spoke to them all when I spoke to you and Lady Binks—but I am a good girl, and will do as I am bid."

So saying, she looked round the company, and addressed each of them with an affectation of interest and politeness, which thinly concealed scorn and contempt.

"Mr. Winterblossom, I hope the gout is better—Mr. Robert Rymar—(I have escaped calling him Thomas for once)—I hope the public give encouragement to the muses—Mr. Keelavine, I trust your pencil is busy—Mr. Chatterly, I have no doubt your flock improves—Dr. Quackleben, I am sure your patients recover.—These are all the especials of the worthy company I know—for the rest, health to the sick, and pleasure to the healthy!"

"You are not going in reality, my love?" said Lady Penelope; "these hasty rides agitate your nerves—they do, indeed—you should be cautious—Shall I speak to Quackleben?"

"To neither Quack nor quackle, on my account, my dear lady. It is not as you would seem to say, by your winking at Lady Binks—it is not, indeed—I shall be no Lady Clementina, to be the wonder and pity of the spring of St. Ronan's—No Ophelia neither—though I will say with her, Good-night, ladies—Good night, sweet ladies!—and now—not my coach, my coach—but my horse, my horse!"

So saying, she tripped out of the room by a side passage, leaving the ladies looking at each other significantly, and shaking their heads with an expression of much import.

"Something has ruffled the poor unhappy girl," said Lady Penelope; "I never saw her so very odd before."

"Were I to speak my mind," said Lady Binks, "I think, as Mrs. Highmore says in the farce, her madness is but a poor excuse for her impertinence."

"Oh fie! my sweet Lady Binks," said Lady Penelope, "spare my poor favourite! You, surely, of all others, should forgive the excesses of an amiable eccentricity of temper.—Forgive me, my love, but I must defend an absent friend—My Lady Binks, I am very sure, is too generous and candid to

'Hate for arts which caused herself to rise.'"

"Not being conscious of any high elevation, my lady," answered Lady Binks, "I do not know any arts I have been under the necessity of practising to attain it. I suppose a Scotch lady of an ancient family may become the wife of an English baronet, and no very extraordinary great cause to wonder at it."

"No, surely—but people in this world will, you know, wonder at nothing," answered Lady Penelope.

"If you envy me my poor quiz, Sir Bingo, I'll get you a better, Lady Pen."

"I don't doubt your talents, my dear, but when I want one, I will get one for myself.—But here comes the whole party of quizzes.—Joliffe, offer the gentlemen tea—then get the floor ready for the dancers, and set the card-tables in the next room."

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER DINNER.

They draw the cork, they broach the barrel,
And first they kiss, and then they quarrel.—PRIOR.

IF the reader has attended much to the manners of the canine race, he may have remarked the very different manner in which the individuals of the different sexes carry on their quarrels among each other. The females are testy, petulant, and very apt to indulge their impatient dislike of each other's presence, or the spirit of rivalry which it produces, in a sudden bark and snap, which last is generally made as much at advantage as possible. But these ebullitions of peevishness lead to no very serious or prosecuted conflict; the affair begins and ends in a moment. Not so the ire of the male dogs, which, once produced and excited by growls of mutual offence and defiance, leads generally to a fierce and obstinate contest; in which, if the parties be dogs of game, and well-matched, they grapple, trottle, tear, roll each other in the kennel, and can only be separated by choking them with their own collars, till they lose wind and hold at the same time, or by surprising them out of their wrath by sousing them with cold water.

The simile, though a currish one, will hold good in its application to the human race. While the ladies in the tea-room of the Fox Hotel were engaged in the light snappish velitation, or skirmish, which we have described, the gentlemen who remained in the parlour were more than once like to have quarrelled more seriously.

We have mentioned the weighty reasons which induced Mr. Mowbray to look upon the stranger whom a general invitation had brought into their society, with unfavourable prepossessions; and these were far from being abated by the demeanour of Tyrrel, which, though perfectly well-bred, indicated a sense of equality, which the young Laird of St. Ronan's considered as extremely presumptuous.

As for Sir Bingo, he already began to nourish the genuine hatred always entertained by a mean spirit against an antagonist, before whom it is conscious of having made a dishonourable retreat. He forgot not the manner, look, and tone, with which Tyrrel had checked his unauthorized intrusion; and though he had sunk beneath it at the moment, the recollection rankled in his heart as an affront to be avenged. As he drank his wine, courage, the want of which was, in his more sober moments, a check upon his bad temper, began to inflame his malignity, and he ventured upon several occasions to show his spleen, by contradicting Tyrrel more flatly than good manners permitted upon so short an acquaintance, and without any provocation. Tyrrel saw his ill humour and despised it, as that of an overgrown school-boy, whom it was not worth his while to answer according to his folly.

One of the apparent causes of the Baronet's rudeness was indeed childish enough. The company were talking of shooting, the most animating topic of conversation among Scottish country gentlemen of the younger class, and Tyrrel had mentioned something of a favourite setter, an uncommonly handsome dog, from which he had been for sometime separated, but which he expected would rejoin him in the course of next week.

"A setter!" retorted Sir Bingo, with a sneer; "a pointer I suppose you mean?"

"No, sir," said Tyrrel; "I am perfectly aware of the difference betwixt a setter and a pointer, and I know the old-fashioned setter is become unfashionable among modern sportsmen. But I love my dog as *a companion, as well as for his merits in the field; and a setter is more sagacious, more attached, and fitter for his place on the hearth-rug, than a pointer* —not," he added, "from any deficiency of intellect on the pointer's part, but he is generally so abused while in the management of brutal breakers and grooms, that he loses all excepting his professional accomplishments, of finding and standing steady to game."

"And who the d—l desires he should have more?" said Sir Bingo.

"Many people, Sir Bingo," replied Tyrrel, "have been of opinion, that both dogs and men may follow sport indifferently well, though they do happen, at the same time, to be fit for mixing in friendly intercourse in society."

"That is for licking trenchers, and scratching copper, I suppose," said the Baronet, *sotto voce;* and added, in a louder and more distinct tone,—"He never before heard that a setter was fit to follow any man's heels but a poacher's."

"You know it now then, Sir Bingo," answered Tyrrel; "and I hope you will not fall into so great a mistake again."

The Peace-maker here seemed to think his interference necessary, and, surmounting his taciturnity, made the following pithy speech:—"By Cot! and do you see, as you are looking for my opinion, I think there is no dispute in the matter—because, by Cot! it occurs to me, d'ye see, that ye are both right, by Cot! It may do ferry well for my excellent friend Sir Bingo, who hath stables, and kennels, and what not, to maintain the six filthy prutes that are yelping and yowling all the tay, and all the neight too, under my window, by Cot!—And if they are yelping and yowling there, may I never die but I wish they were yelping and yowling somewhere else. But then there is many a man who may be as good a gentleman at the bottom as my worthy friend Sir Bingo, though it may be that he is poor; and if he is poor—and as if it might be my own case, or that of this honest gentleman, Mr. Tirl—is that a reason or a law, that he is not to keep a prute of a tog, to help him to take his sports and his pleasures? and if he has not a stable or a kennel to put the crature into, must he not keep it in the pit of pedroom, or upon his parlour hearth, seeing that Luckie Doda would make the kitchen too hot for the paist—and so, if Mr. Tirl finds a setter more fitter for his purpose than a pointer, by Cot, I know no law against it, else may I never die the black death."

If this oration appear rather long for the occasion, the reader must recollect that Captain MacTurk had in all probability the trouble of translating it from the periphrastic language of Ossian, in which it was originally conceived in his own mind.

The Man of Law replied to the Man of Peace, "Ye are mistaken for ance in your life, Captain, for there is a law against setters; and I will undertake to prove them to be the 'lying dogs' which are mentioned in the auld Scots statute, and which all and sundry are discharged to keep, under a penalty of"——

Here the Captain broke in, with a very solemn mien and dignified manner—"By Cot! Master Meiklewham, and I shall be asking what you mean by talking to me of peing mistaken, and apout lying togs, sir—because I would have you to know, and to believe, and to very well consider, that I never was mistaken in my life, sir, unless it was when I took you for a gentleman."

"No offence, Captain," said Mr. Meiklewham; "dinna break the wand of peace, man, you that should be the first to keep it.—He is as cankered," continued the Man of Law, apart to his patron, "as an auld Hieland terrier, that snaps at whatever comes near it—but I tell you ae thing, St. Ronan's, and that is on saul and conscience, that I believe this is the very lad Tirl, that I raised a summons against before the justices—him and another hempie—in your father's time, for shooting on the Spring-well-head muirs."

"The devil you did, Mick!" replied the Lord of the Manor, also aside;—"Well I am obliged to you for giving me some reason for the ill thoughts I had of him—I knew he was some trumpery scamp—I'll blow him, by"——

"Whisht—atop—hush—haud your tongue, St. Ronan's—keep a calm sough—ye see, I intended the

process, by your worthy father's desire, before the Quarter Sessions—but I ken na—The auld sheriff-clerk stood the lad's friend—and some of the justices thought it was but a mistake of the marches, and sae we couldna get a judgment—and your father was very ill of the gout, and I was feared to vex him, and so I was fain to let the process sleep, for fear they had been assoilzied.—Sae ye had better gang cautiously to wark, St. Ronan's, for though they were summoned, they were not convict."

"Could you not take up the action again?" said Mr. Mowbray.

"Whew! it's been prescribed sex or seeven year syne. It is a great shame, St. Ronan's, that the game laws, whilk are the very best protection that is left to country gentlemen against the encroachment of their inferiors, rin sae short a course of prescription—a poacher may just jink ye back and forward like a flea in a blanket, (wi' pardon)—hap ye out of ae county and into anither at their pleasure, like pyots—and unless ye get your thumb-nail on them in the very nick o' time, ye may dine on a dish of prescription, and sup upon an absolvitor."

"It is a shame indeed," said Mowbray, turning from his confidant and agent, and addressing himself to the company in general, yet not without a peculiar look directed to Tyrrel.

"What is a shame, sir?" said Tyrrel, conceiving that the observation was particularly addressed to him.

"That we should have so many poachers upon our moors, sir," answered St. Ronan's. "I sometimes regret having countenanced the Well here, when I think how many guns it has brought on my property every season."

"Hout fie! hout awa, St. Ronan's!" said his Man of Law; "no countenance the Waal? What would the country-side be without it, I would be glad to ken? It's the greatest improvement that has been made on this country since the year forty-five. Na, na, it's no the Waal that's to blame for the poaching and delinquencies on the game. We maun to the Aultoun for the howf of that kind of cattle. Our rules at the Waal are clear and express against trespassers on the game."

"I can't think," said the Squire, "what made my father sell the property of the old change-house yonder, to the hag that keeps it open out of spite, I think, and to harbour poachers and vagabonds!—I cannot conceive what made him do so foolish a thing!"

"Probably because your father wanted money, sir," said Tyrrel, dryly; "and my worthy landlady, Mrs. Dodds, had got some.—You know, I presume, sir, that I lodge there?"

"Oh, sir," replied Mowbray, in a tone betwixt scorn and civility, "you cannot suppose the present company is alluded to; I only presumed to mention as a fact, that we have been annoyed with unqualified people shooting on our grounds, without either liberty or license. And I hope to have her sign taken down for it—that is all.—There was the same plague in my father's days, I think, Mick?"

But Mr. Meiklewham, who did not like Tyrrel's looks so well as to induce him to become approver on the occasion, replied with an inarticulate grunt, addressed to the company, and a private admonition to his patron's own ear, "to let sleeping dogs lie."

"I can scarce forbear the fellow," said St. Ronan's; "and yet I cannot well tell where my dislike to him lies—but it would be d—d folly to turn out with him for nothing; and so, honest Mick, I will be as quiet as I can."

"And that you may be so," said Meiklewham, "I think you had best take no more wine."

"I think so too," said the Squire; "for each glass I drink in his company gives me the heartburn—yet the man is not different from other raffs either—but there is a something about him intolerable to me."

So saying, he pushed back his chair from the table, and—*regis ad exemplar*—after the pattern of the Laird, all the company arose.

Sir Bingo *got up with reluctance, which he testified by two or three deep growls, as he followed the rest of the company into the outer apartment*, which served as an entrance-hall, and divided the dining-parlour from the tea-room, as it was called. Here, while the party were assuming their hats, for the purpose of joining the ladies' society, (which old-fashioned folk used only to take up for that of going into the open air,) Tyrrel asked a smart footman, who stood near, to hand him the hat which lay on the table beyond.

"Call your own servant, sir," answered the fellow, with the true insolence of a pampered menial.

"Your master," answered Tyrrel, "ought to have taught you good manners, my friend, before bringing you here."

"Sir Bingo Binks is my master," said the fellow, in the same insolent tone as before.

"Now for it, Bingie," said Mowbray, who was aware that the Baronet's pot-courage had arrived at fighting pitch.

"Yes!" said Sir Bingo aloud, and more articulately than usual—"The fellow is my servant—what has any one to say to it?"

"I at least have my mouth stopped," answered Tyrrel, with perfect composure. "I should have been surprised to have found Sir Bingo's servant better bred than himself."

"What d'ye mean by that, sir?" said Sir Bingo, coming up in an offensive attitude, for he was no mean pupil of the Fives-Court—"What d'ye mean by that? D—n you, sir! I'll serve you out before you can say dumpling."

"And I, Sir Bingo, unless you presently lay aside that look and manner, will knock you down before you can cry help."

The visiter held in his hand a slip of oak, with which he gave a flourish, that, however slight, intimated some acquaintance with the noble art of single-stick. From this demonstration Sir Bingo thought it prudent somewhat to recoil, though backed by a party of friends, who, in their zeal for his honour, would rather have seen his bones broken in conflict bold, than his honour injured by a discreditable retreat; and Tyrrel seemed to have some inclination to indulge them. But, at the very instant when his hand was raised with a motion of no doubtful import, a whispering voice, close to his ear, pronounced the emphatic words—"Are you a man?"

Not the thrilling tone with which our inimitable Siddons used to electrify the scene, when she uttered the same whisper, ever had a more powerful effect upon an auditor, than had these unexpected sounds on him, to whom they were now addressed. Tyrrel forgot every thing—his quarrel—the circumstances in which he was placed—the company. The crowd was to him at once annihilated, and life seemed to have no other object than to follow the person who had spoken. But suddenly as he turned, the disappearance of the monitor was at least equally so, for amid the group of commonplace countenances by which he was surrounded, there was none which assorted to the tone and words, which possessed such a power over him. "Make way," he said, to those who surrounded him; and it was in the tone of one who was prepared, if necessary, to make way for himself.

Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's stepped forward. "Come, sir," said he, "this will not do—you have come here, a stranger among us, to assume airs and dignities, which, by G—d, would become a duke, or a prince! We must know who and what you are, before we permit you to carry your high tone any farther."

This address seemed at once to arrest Tyrrel's anger, and his impatience to leave the company. He turned to Mowbray, collected his thoughts for an instant, and then answered him thus:—"Mr. Mowbray, I seek no quarrel with any one here—with you, in particular, I am most unwilling to have any disagreement. I came here by invitation, not certainly expecting much pleasure, but, at the same time, supposing myself secure from incivility. In the last point, I find myself mistaken, and therefore wish the company good-night. I must also make my adieus to the ladies."

So saying he walked several steps, yet, as it

seemed, rather irresolutely, towards the door of the card-room—and then, to the increased surprise of the company, stopped suddenly, and muttering something about the "unfitness of the time," turning on his heel, and bowing haughtily, as there was way made for him, walked in the opposite direction towards the door which led to the outer hall.

"D—me, Sir Bingo, will you let him off?" said Mowbray, who seemed to delight in pushing his friend into new scrapes—"To him, man—to him—he shows the white feather."

Sir Bingo, thus encouraged, planted himself with a look of defiance exactly between Tyrrel and the door; upon which the retreating guest, bestowing on him most emphatically the epithet Fool, seized him by the collar, and flung him out of his way with some violence.

"I am to be found at the Old Town of St. Ronan's by whomsoever has any concern with me."—Without waiting the issue of this aggression farther than to utter these words, Tyrrel left the hotel. He stopped in the court-yard, however, with the air of one uncertain whither he intended to go, and who was desirous to ask some question, which seemed to die upon his tongue. At length his eye fell upon a groom who stood not far from the door of the inn, holding, in his hand a handsome pony, with a side-saddle.

"Whose"—— said Tyrrel—but the rest of the question he seemed unable to utter.

The man, however, replied, as if he had heard the whole interrogation.—"Miss Mowbray's, sir, of St. Ronan's—she leaves directly—and so I am walking the pony—a clever thing, sir, for a lady."

"She returns to Shaws-Castle by the Buck-stane road?"

"I suppose so, sir," said the groom. "It is the nighest, and Miss Clara cares little for rough roads. Zounds! She can spank it over wet and dry."

Tyrrel turned away from the man, and hastily left the hotel—not, however, by the road which led to the Aultoun, but by a footpath among the natural copse-wood, which, following the course of the brook, intersected the usual horse-road to Shaws-Castle, the seat of Mr. Mowbray, at a romantic spot called the Buck-stane.

In a small peninsula, formed by a winding of the brook, was situated, on a rising hillock, a large rough-hewn pillar of stone, said by tradition to commemorate the fall of a stag of unusual speed, size, and strength, whose flight, after having lasted through a whole summer's day, had there terminated in death, to the honour and glory of some ancient baron of St. Ronan's, and of his stanch hounds. During the periodical cuttings of the copse, which the necessities of the family of St. Ronan's brought round more frequently than Ponty would have recommended, some oaks had been spared in the neighbourhood of this massive obelisk, old enough perhaps to have heard the whoop and halloo which followed the fall of the stag, and to have witnessed the raising of the rude monument by which that great event was commemorated. These trees, with their broad spreading boughs, made a twilight even of noon-day; and, now that the sun was approaching its setting point, their shade already anticipated night. This was especially the case where three or four of them stretched their arms over a deep gully, through which winded the horse-path to Shaws-Castle, at a point about a pistol-shot distant from the Buck-stane. As the principal access to Mr. Mowbray's mansion was by a carriageway, which passed in a different direction, the present path was left almost in a state of nature, full of large stones, and broken by gullies, delightful, from the varied character of its banks, to the picturesque traveller, and most inconvenient, nay dangerous, to him who had a stumbling horse.

The footpath to the Buck-stane, which here joined the bridle-road, had been constructed, at the expense of a subscription, under the direction of Mr. Winterblossom, who had taste enough to see the beauties of this secluded spot, which was exactly such as in earlier times might have harboured the ambush of some marauding chief. This recollection had not escaped Tyrrel to whom the whole scenery was familiar, who now hastened to the spot, as one which peculiarly suited his present purpose. He sat down by one of the larger projecting trees, and, screened by its enormous branches from observation, was enabled to watch the road from the Hotel for a great part of its extent, while he was himself invisible to any who might travel upon it.

Mean while his sudden departure excited a considerable sensation among the party whom he had just left, and who were induced to form conclusions not very favourable to his character. Sir Bingo, in particular, blustered loudly and more loudly, in proportion to the increasing distance betwixt himself and his antagonist, declaring his resolution to be revenged on the scoundrel for his insolence—to drive him from the neighbourhood—and I know not what other menaces of formidable import. The devil in the old stories of *diddlerie*, was always sure to start up at the elbow of any one who nursed diabolical purposes, and only wanted a little backing from the foul fiend to carry his imaginations into action. The noble Captain MacTurk had so far this property of his infernal majesty, that the least hint of an approaching quarrel drew him always to the vicinity of the party concerned. He was now at Sir Bingo's side, and was taking his own view of the matter, in his character of peace-maker.

"By Cot! and it's very exceedingly true, my goot friend, Sir Binco—and as you say, it concerns your honour, and the honour of the place, and credit and character of the whole company, by Cot! that this matter be properly looked after; for, as I think, he laid hands on your body, my excellent goot friend."

"Hands, Captain MacTurk!" exclaimed Sir Bingo, in some confusion; "no, blast him—not so bad as that neither—if he had, I should have handed *him* over the window—but, by ——, the fellow had the impudence to offer to collar me—I had just stepped back to square at him, when, curse me, the blackguard ran away."

"Right, vara right, Sir Bingo," said the Man of Law, "a vara perfect blackguard, a poaching sorning sort of fallow, that I will have scoured out of the country before he be three days aulder. Fash you your beard nae farther about the matter, Sir Bingo."

"By Cot! but I can tell you, Mr. Meiklewham," said the Man of Peace, with great solemnity of visage, "that you are scalding your lips in other folk's kale, and that it is necessary for the credit, and honour, and respect of this company, at the Well of St. Ronan's, that Sir Bingo goes by more competent advice than yours upon the present occasion, Mr. Meiklewham; for though your counsel may do very well in a small debt court, here, do you see, Mr. Meiklewham, is a question of honour, which is not a thing in your line, as I take it."

"No, before George! it is not," answered Meiklewham; "e'en take it all to yoursell, Captain, and meikle ye are likely to make on't."

"Then," said the Captain, "Sir Binco, I will beg the favour of your company to the smoking room, where we may have a cigar and a glass of gin-twist; and we will consider how the honour of the company must be supported and upholden upon the present conjuncture."

The Baronet complied with this invitation, as much, perhaps, in consequence of the medium through which the Captain intended to convey his warlike counsels, as for the pleasure with which he anticipated the result of these counsels themselves. He followed the military step of his leader, whose stride was more stiff, and his form more perpendicular, when exalted by the consciousness of an approaching quarrel, to the smoking-room, where, sighing as he lighted his cigar, Sir Bingo prepared to listen to the words of wisdom and valour, as they should flow in mingled stream from the lips of Captain MacTurk.

Mean while the rest of the company joined the ladies. "Here has been Clara," said Lady Penelope to Mr. Mowbray; "here has been Miss Mowbray among us, like the ray of a sun which does but dazzle and die."

"Ah, poor Clara," said Mowbray; "I thought I saw

her thread her way through the crowd a little while since, but I was not sure."

"Well," said Lady Penelope, "she has asked us all up to Shaws-Castle on Thursday, to a *déjenner a la fourchette*—I trust you confirm your sister's invitation, Mr. Mowbray?"

"Certainly, Lady Penelope," replied Mowbray; "and I am truly glad Clara has had the grace to think of it—How we shall acquit ourselves is a different question, for neither she nor I are much accustomed to play host or hostess."

"Oh! it will be delightful, I am sure," said Lady Penelope; "Clara has a grace in every thing she does; and you, Mr. Mowbray, can be a perfectly well-bred gentleman—when you please."

"That qualification is severe—Well—good manners be my speed—I will certainly please to do my best, when I see your ladyship at Shaws-Castle, which has received no company this many a day.—Clara and I have lived a wild life of it, each in their own way."

"Indeed, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Binks, "if I might presume to speak—I think you do suffer your sister to ride about a little too much without an attendant. I know Miss Mowbray rides as woman never rode before, but still an accident may happen."

"An accident?" replied Mowbray—"Ah, Lady Binks! accidents happen as frequently when ladies *have* attendants as when they are without them."

Lady Binks, who, in her maiden state, had cantered a good deal about these woods under Sir Bingo's escort, coloured, looked spiteful, and was silent.

"Besides," said John Mowbray, more lightly, "where is the risk, after all? There are no wolves in our woods *to* eat up our pretty Red-Riding Hoods; and no lions either—except those of Lady Penelope's train."

"Who draw the car of Cybele," said Mr. Chatterly.

Lady Penelope luckily did not understand the allusion, which was indeed better intended than imagined.

"Apropos!" she said; "what have you done with the great lion of the day? I see Mr. Tyrrel no where—Is he finishing an additional bottle with Sir Bingo?"

"Mr. Tyrrel, madam," said Mowbray, "has acted successively the lion rampant, and the lion passant: he has been quarrelsome, and he has run away—fled from the ire of your doughty knight, Lady Binks."

"I am sure I hope not," said Lady Binks; "my Chevalier's unsuccessful campaigns have been unable to overcome his taste for quarrels—a victory would make a fighting-man of him for life."

"That inconvenience might bring its own consolations," said Winterblossom, apart to Mowbray; "quarrellers do not usually live long."

"No, no," replied Mowbray, "the lady's despair, which broke out just now, even in her own despite, is quite natural—absolutely legitimate. Sir Bingo will give her no chance that way."

Mowbray then made his bow to Lady Penelope, and in answer to her request that he would join the ball or the card-table, observed, that he had no time to lose; that the heads of the old domestics at Shaws-Castle would be by this time absolutely turned, by the apprehensions of what Thursday was to bring forth; and that as Clara would certainly give no directions for the proper arrangements, it was necessary that he should take that trouble himself.

"If you ride smartly," said Lady Penelope, "you may save even a temporary alarm, by overtaking Clara, dear creature, ere she gets home—She sometimes suffers her pony to go at will along the lane, as slow as Betty Foy's."

"Ah, but then," said little Miss Digges, "Miss Mowbray sometimes gallops as if the lark was a snail to her pony—and it quite frights one to see her."

The Doctor touched Mrs. Blower, who had approached so as to be on the verge of the genteel circle, though she did not venture within it—they exchanged sagacious looks, and a most pitiful shake of the head. Mowbray's eye happened at that moment to glance on them; *and doubtless, notwithstanding their hasting to compose their countenances to a different expression, he comprehended what* was passing through their minds;—and perhaps it awoke a corresponding note in his own. He took his hat, and with a cast of thought upon his countenance which it seldom wore, left the apartment. A moment afterwards his horse's feet were heard spurning the pavement, as he started off at a sharp pace.

"There is something singular about these Mowbrays to-night," said Lady Penelope.—"Clara, poor dear angel, is always particular; but I should have thought Mowbray had too much worldly wisdom to be fanciful.—What are you consulting your *souvenir* for with such attention, my dear Lady Binks?"

"Only for the age of the moon," said her ladyship, putting the little tortoise shell bound calendar into her reticule; and having done so, she proceeded to assist Lady Penelope in the arrangements for the evening.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING.

We meet as shadows in the land of dreams,
Which speak not but in signs.

Anonymous.

BEHIND one of the old oaks which we have described in the preceding chapter, shrouding himself from observation like a hunter watching for his game, or an Indian for his enemy, but with different, very different purpose, Tyrrel lay on his breast near the Buck-stane, his eye on the horse-road which winded down the valley, and his ear alertly awake to every sound which mingled with the passing breeze, or with the ripple of the brook.

"To have met her in yonder congregated assembly of brutes and fools"—such was a part of his internal reflections,—"had been little less than an act of madness—madness almost equal in its degree to that cowardice which has hitherto prevented my approaching her when our eventful meeting might have taken place unobserved.—But now—now—my resolution is as fixed as the place is itself favourable. I will not wait till some chance again shall throw us together, with a hundred malignant eyes to watch, and wonder, and stare, and try in vain to account for the expression of feelings which I might find it impossible to suppress.—Hark—hark!—I hear the tread of a horse—No—it was the changeful sound of the water rushing over the pebbles. Surely she cannot have taken the other road to Shaws-Castle!—No—the sounds become distinct—her figure is visible on the path, coming swiftly forward.—Have I the courage to show myself?—I have—the hour is come, and what must be shall be."

Yet this resolution was scarcely formed ere it began to fluctuate, when he reflected upon the fittest manner of carrying it into execution. To show himself at a distance, might give the lady an opportunity of turning back and avoiding the interview which he had determined upon—to hide himself till the moment when her horse, in rapid motion, should pass his lurking-place, might be attended with danger to the rider—and while he hesitated which course to pursue, there was some chance of his missing the opportunity of presenting himself to Miss Mowbray at all. He was himself sensible of this, formed a hasty and desperate resolution not to suffer the present moment to escape, and, just as the ascent induced the poney to slacken its pace, Tyrrel stood in the middle of the defile, about six yards distant from the young lady.

She pulled up the reins, and stopped as if arrested by a thunderbolt.—"Clara!"—"Tyrrel!" These were the only words which were exchanged between them, until Tyrrel, moving his feet as slowly as if they had been of lead, began gradually to diminish the distance which lay betwixt them. It was then that, observing his closer approach, Miss Mowbray called out with great eagerness,—"No nearer—no nearer!—So long have I endured your presence, but if you approach me more closely, I shall be mad indeed!"

"What do you fear?" said Tyrrel, in a hollow voice—"What can you fear?" and he continued to draw nearer, until they were within a pace of each other.

Clara, mean while, dropping her bridle, clasped her hands together, and held them up towards Heaven.

muttering, in a voice scarcely audible, "Great God!—If this apparition be formed by my heated fancy, let it pass away; if it be real, enable me to bear its presence!—Tell me, I conjure you, are you Francis Tyrrel in blood and body, or is this but one of those wandering visions, that have crossed my path and glared on me, but without daring to abide my steadfast glance?"

"I am Francis Tyrrel," answered he, "in blood and body, as much as she to whom I speak is Clara Mowbray."

"Then God have mercy on us both!" said Clara, in a tone of deep feeling.

"Amen!" said Tyrrel.—"But what avails this excess of agitation?—You saw me but now, Miss Mowbray—Your voice still rings in my ears—You saw me but now—you spoke to me—and that when I was among strangers—Why not preserve your composure, when we are where no human eye can see—no human ear can hear?"

"Is it so?" said Clara; "and was it indeed yourself whom I saw even now?—I thought so, and something I said at the time—but my brain has been but ill settled since we last met—But I am well now—quite well—I have invited all the people yonder to come to Shaws-Castle—my brother desired me to do it—I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Tyrrel there—though I think there is some old grudge between my brother and you."

"Alas! Clara, you mistake. Your brother I have scarcely seen," replied Tyrrel much distressed, and apparently uncertain in what tone to address her, which might soothe, and not irritate her mental malady, of which he could now entertain no doubt.

"True—true," she said, after a moment's reflection, "my brother was then at college. It was my father, my poor father, whom you had some quarrel with.—But you will come to Shaws-Castle on Thursday, at two o'clock?—John will be glad to see you—he can be kind when he pleases—and then we will talk of old times—I must get on, to have things ready—Good evening."

She would have passed him, but he took gently hold of the rein of her bridle.—"I will walk with you, Clara," he said; "the road is rough and dangerous—you ought not to ride fast.—I will walk along with you, and we will talk of former times now, more conveniently than in company."

"True—true—very true, Mr. Tyrrel—it shall be as you say. My brother obliges me sometimes to go into company at that hateful place down yonder; and I do so because he likes it, and because the folks let me have my own way, and come and go as I list. Do you know Tyrrel, that very often when I am there, and John has his eye on me, I can carry it on as gayly as if you and I had never met?"

"I would to God we never had," said Tyrrel, in a trembling voice, "since this is to be the end of all?"

"And wherefore should not sorrow be the end of sin and of folly? And when did happiness come of disobedience?—And when did sound sleep visit a bloody pillow? That is what I say to myself, Tyrrel, and that is what you must learn to say too, and then you will bear your burden as cheerfully as I endure mine. If we have no more than our deserts, why should we complain?—You are shedding tears, I think—Is not that childish?—They say it is a relief—if so, weep on, and I will look another way."

Tyrrel walked on by the pony's side, in vain endeavouring to compose himself so as to reply.

"Poor Tyrrel," said Clara, after she had remained silent for some time—"Poor Frank Tyrrel!—Perhaps you will say in your turn, Poor Clara—but I am not so poor in spirit as you—the blast may bend, but it shall never break me."

There was another long pause; for Tyrrel was unable to determine with himself in what strain he could address the unfortunate young lady, without awakening recollections equally painful to her feelings, and dangerous, when her precarious state of health was considered. At length she herself proceeded:—

"*What needs all this, Tyrrel?—and indeed, why came you here?—Why did I find you but now brawling* and quarrelling among the loudest of the brawlers and quarrellers of yonder idle and dissipated debauchees?—You were used to have more temper—more sense. Another person—ay, another that you and I once knew—he might have committed such a folly, and he would have acted perhaps in character.—But you who pretend to wisdom—for shame, for shame!—And indeed, when we talk of that, what wisdom was there in coming hither at all?—or what good purpose can your remaining here serve?—Surely you need not come, either to renew your own unhappiness or to augment mine?"

"To augment yours—God forbid!" answered Tyrrel. "No—I came hither only because, after so many years of wandering, I longed to revisit the spot where all my hopes lay buried."

"Ay—buried is the word," she replied, "crushed down and buried when they budded fairest. I often think of it, Tyrrel; and there are times when, Heaven help me! I can think of little else.—Look at me—you remember what I was—see what grief and solitude have made me."

She flung back the veil which surrounded her riding-hat, and which had hitherto hid her face. It was the same countenance which he had formerly known in all the bloom of early beauty; but though the beauty remained, the bloom was fled for ever. Not the agitation of exercise—not that which arose from the pain and confusion of this unexpected interview, had called to poor Clara's cheek even the momentary semblance of colour. Her complexion was marble-white, like that of the finest piece of statuary.

"Is it possible?" said Tyrrel; "can grief have made such ravages?"

"Grief," replied Clara, "is the sickness of the mind, and its sister is the sickness of the body—they are twin-sisters, Tyrrel, and are seldom long separate. Sometimes the body's disease comes first, and dims our eyes and palsies our hands, before the fire of our mind and of our intellect is quenched. But mark me—soon after comes her cruel sister with her urn, and sprinkles cold dew on our hopes and on our loves, our memory, our recollections, and our feelings, and shows us that they cannot survive the decay of our bodily powers."

"Alas!" said Tyrrel, "is it come to this?"

"To this," she replied, speaking from the rapid and irregular train of her own ideas, rather than comprehending the purport of his sorrowful exclamation,—"to this it must ever come, while immortal souls are wedded to the perishable substance of which our bodies are composed. There is another state, Tyrrel, in which it will be otherwise—God grant our time of enjoying it were come!"

She fell into a melancholy pause, which Tyrrel was afraid to disturb. The quickness with which she spoke, marked but too plainly the irregular succession of thought, and he was obliged to restrain the agony of his own feelings, rendered more acute by a thousand painful recollections, lest by giving way to his expressions of grief, he should throw her into a still more disturbed state of mind.

"I did not think," she proceeded, "that after so horrible a separation, and so many years, I could have met you thus calmly and reasonably. But although what we were formerly to each other can never be forgotten, it is now all over, and we are only friends—Is it not so?"

Tyrrell was unable to reply.

"But I must not remain here," she said, "till the evening grows darker on me.—We shall meet again, Tyrrel—meet as friends—nothing more—You will come up to Shaws-Castle and see me?—no need of secrecy now—my poor father is in his grave, and his prejudices sleep with him—my brother John is kind, though he is stern and severe sometimes—Indeed, Tyrrel, I believe he loves me, though he has taught me to tremble at his frown when I am in spirits, and talk too much—But he loves me, at least I think so, for I am sure I love him; and I try to go down amongst them yonder, and to endure their folly, and, all things considered, I do carry on the farce of life wonderfully well—We are but actors, you know, and the world but a stage."

! ours has been a sad and tragic scene," said
in the bitterness of his heart, unable any
o refrain from speech.
ias indeed—but, Tyrrel, when was it other-
th engagements formed in youth and in folly?
d I would, you know, become men and wo-
hile we were yet scarcely more than children
ave run, while yet in our nonage, through the
s and adventures of youth, and therefore we
r old before our day, and the winter of our life
ie on ere its summer was well begun.—O Tyr-
en and often have I thought of this!—Thought
en? Alas, when will the time come that I shall
to think of any thing else!"
poor young woman sobbed bitterly, and her
gan to flow with a freedom which they had
bably enjoyed for a length of time. Tyrrel
on by the side of her horse, which now prose-
s road homewards, unable to devise a proper
addressing the unfortunate young lady, and
alike to awaken her passions and his own.
er he might have proposed to say, was dis-
d by the plain indications that her mind was
more or less slightly, with a shade of insa-
tich deranged, though it had not destroyed,
ers of judgment.
gth he asked her, with as much calmness as
I assume—if she was contented—if aught
e done to render her situation more easy—if
as aught of which she could complain which
t be able to remedy? She answered gently,
e was calm and resigned, when her brother
ermit her to stay at home; but that when she
ught into society, she experienced such a
as that which the water of the brook that
s in a crystalline pool of the rock may be
l to feel, when, gliding from its quiet bed, it
s involved in the hurry of the cataract.
my brother Mowbray," she said, "thinks he
—and perhaps he is so. There are things on
e may ponder too long;—and were he mis-
hy should I not constrain myself in order to
im—there are so few left to whom I can now
ier pleasure or pain?—I am a gay girl, too, in
ation, Tyrrel—still as gay for a moment, as
u used to chide me for my folly. So, now I
d you all,—I have one question to ask on my
e question—if I had but breath to ask it—Is
live?"
ives," answered Tyrrel, but in a tone so low,
ught but the eager attention which Miss
y paid could possibly have caught such feeble

s!" she exclaimed,—"lives!—he lives, and
d on your hand is not then indelibly imprint-
yrrel, did you but know the joy which this
e gives to me!"
" replied Tyrrel—"joy, that the wretch lives
poisoned our happiness for ever?—lives, per-
claim you for his own?"
er, never shall he—dare he do so," replied
fildly, "while water can drown, while cords
ngle, steel pierce—while there is a precipice
ill, a pool in the river—never—never!"
ot thus agitated, my dearest Clara," said
"I spoke I know not what—he lives indeed
distant, and, I trust, never again to revisit
l."
uld have said more, but that, agitated with
assion, she struck her horse impatiently with
g-whip. The spirited animal, thus stimulated
ie same time restrained, became intractable,
ed so much, that Tyrrel, fearful of the conse-
and trusting to Clara's skill as a horsewo-
ught he best consulted her safety in letting
im. The animal instantly sprung forward on
en and hilly path at a very rapid pace, and
n lost to Tyrrel's anxious eyes.
stood pondering whether he ought not to
llise Mowbray towards Shaws-Castle, in or-
satisfied that *no accident had befallen her*
ad, he heard the tread of a horse's feet ad-
hastily in the same direction, leading from
Unwilling to be observed at this moment,
he stepped aside under shelter of the underwood, and presently afterwards saw Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, followed by a groom, ride hastily past his lurking-place, and pursue the same road which had been just taken by his sister. The presence of her brother seemed to assure Miss Mowbray's safety, and so removed Tyrrel's chief reason for following her. Involved in deep and melancholy reflection upon what had passed, nearly satisfied that his longer residence in Clara's vicinity could only add to her unhappiness and his own, yet unable to tear himself from that neighbourhood, or to relinquish feelings which had become entwined with his heart-strings, he returned to his lodgings in the Aultoun, in a state of mind very little to be envied.

Tyrrel, on entering his apartment, found that it was not lighted, nor were the Abigails of Mrs. Dods quite so alert as a waiter at Long's might have been, to supply him with candles. Unapt at any time to exact much personal attendance, and desirous to shun at that moment the necessity of speaking to any person whatever, even on the most trifling subject, he walked down into the kitchen to supply himself with what he wanted. He did not at first observe that Mrs. Dods herself was present in this the very centre of her empire, far less that a lofty air of indignation was seated on the worthy matron's brow. At first it only vented itself in broken soliloquy and interjections; as, for example, "Vera bonny wark this!—vera creditable wark, indeed!—a decent house to be disturbed at these hours—Keep a public—as weel keep a bedlam!"

Finding these murmurs attracted no attention, the dame placed herself betwixt her guest and the door, to which he was now retiring with his lighted candle, and demanded of him what was the meaning of such behaviour.

"Of what behaviour, madam?" said her guest, repeating her question in a tone of sternness and impatience so unusual with him, that perhaps she was sorry at the moment that she had provoked him out of his usual patient indifference; nay, she might even feel intimidated at the altercation she had provoked, for the resentment of a quiet and patient person has always in it something formidable to the professed and habitual grumbler. But her pride was too great to think of a retreat, after having sounded the signal for contest, and so she continued, though in a tone somewhat lowered.

"Maister Tirl, I wad but just ask you, that are a man of sense, whether I hae ony right to take your behaviour weel? Here have you been these ten days and mair, eating the best, and drinking the best, and taking up the best room in my house; and now to think of your gaun doun and taking up with yon idle harebrained cattle at the Waal—I maun e'en be plain wi' ye—I like nane of the fair-fashioned folk that can say My Jo, and think it no; and therefore"——

"Mrs. Dods," said Tyrrel, interrupting her, "I have no time at present for trifles. I am obliged to you for your attention while I have been in your house; but the disposal of my time, here or elsewhere, must be according to my own ideas of pleasure or business—If you are tired of me as a guest, send in your bill to-morrow."

"My bill!" said Mrs. Dods; "my bill to-morrow! And what for no wait till Saturday, when it may be cleared atween us, plack and bawbee, as it was on Saturday last?"

"Well—we will talk of it to-morrow, Mrs. Dods—Good night." And he withdrew accordingly.

Luckie Dods stood ruminating for a moment. "The deil's in him," she said, "for he winna bide being thrawn. And I think the deil's in me too for thrawing him, sic a canny lad, and sae gude a customer;—and I am judging he has something on his mind—want of siller it canna be—I am sure if I thought that, I wadna care about my small thing.—But want o' siller it canna be—he pays ower the shillings as if they were sclate stanes, and that's no the way that folk part with their siller when there's but little on't—I ken weel eneugh how a customer looks that's near the grund of the purse.—Weel! I hope he winna mind ony thing of this nonsense the morn, and I'll try to

guide my tongue something better.—Hegh, sirs! but, as the minister says, it's an unruly member—troth, I am whiles ashamed o't mysell."

CHAPTER X.

RESOURCES.

Come, let me have thy counsel, for I need it;
Thou art of those, who better help their friends
With sage advice, than usurers with gold,
Or brawlers with their swords—I'll trust to thee,
For I ask only from thee words, not deeds.
The Devil hath met his Match.

THE day of which we last gave the events chanced to be Monday, and two days therefore intervened betwixt it and that for which the entertainment was fixed, that was to assemble in the halls of the Lord of the Manor the flower of the company now at St. Ronan's Well. The interval was but brief for the preparations necessary on an occasion so unusual; since the house, though delightfully situated, was in very indifferent repair, and for years had never received any visiters, except when some blithe bachelor or fox-hunter shared the hospitality of Mr. Mowbray; an event which became daily more and more uncommon; for, as he himself almost lived at the Well, he generally contrived to receive his companions where it could be done without expense to himself. Besides, the health of his sister afforded an irresistible apology to any of those old-fashioned Scottish gentlemen, who might be too apt (in the rudeness of more primitive days) to consider a friend's house as their own. Mr. Mowbray was now, however, to the great delight of all his companions, nailed down, by invitation given and accepted, and they looked forward to the accomplishment of his promise, with the eagerness which the prospect of some entertaining novelty never fails to produce among idlers.

A good deal of trouble devolved on Mr. Mowbray, and his trusty agent Mr. Meiklewham, before any thing like decent preparation could be made for the ensuing entertainment; and they were left to their unassisted endeavours by Clara, who, during both the Tuesday and Wednesday, obstinately kept herself secluded; nor could her brother, either by threats or flattery, extort from her any light concerning her purpose on the approaching and important Thursday. To do John Mowbray justice, he loved his sister as much as he was capable of loving any thing but himself; and when, in several arguments, he had the mortification to find that she was not to be prevailed on to afford her assistance, he, without complaint, quietly set himself to do the best he could by his own unassisted judgment or opinion with regard to the necessary preparations.

This was not, at present, so easy a task as might be supposed; for Mowbray was ambitious of that character of *ton* and elegance, which masculine faculties alone are seldom capable of attaining on such momentous occasions. The more solid materials of a collation were indeed to be obtained for money from the next market-town, and were purchased accordingly; but he felt it was likely to present the vulgar plenty of a farmer's feast, instead of the elegant entertainment, which might be announced in a corner of the county paper, as given by John Mowbray, Esq. of St. Ronan's, to the gay and fashionable company assembled at that celebrated spring. There was likely to be all sorts of error and irregularity in dishing, and in sending up; for Shaws-Castle boasted neither an accomplished housekeeper, nor a kitchen-maid with a hundred pair of hands to execute her mandates. All the domestic arrangements were on the minutest system of economy consistent with ordinary decency, except in the stables, which were excellent and well kept. But can a groom of the stables perform the labours of a groom of the chambers? or can the gamekeeper arrange in tempting order the carcasses of the birds he has shot, strew them with flowers, and garnish them with piquant sauces? It would be as reasonable to expect a gallant soldier to *act as undertaker, and conduct the funeral of the enemy he has slain.*

In a word, Mowbray talked, and consulted, and advised, and squabbled, with the deaf cook, and a little old man whom he called the butler, until he at length perceived so little chance of bringing order out of confusion, or making the least advantageous impression on such obdurate understandings as he had to deal with, that he fairly committed the whole matter of the collation, with two or three hearty curses, to the charge of the officials principally concerned, and proceeded to take the state of the furniture and apartments under his consideration.

Here he found himself almost equally helpless; for what male wit is adequate to the thousand little coquetries practised in such arrangements? how can masculine eyes judge of the degree of *demi-jour* which is to be admitted into a decorated apartment, or discriminate where the broad light should be suffered to fall on a tolerable picture, where it should be excluded, lest the stiff daub of a periwigged grandsire should become too rigidly prominent? And if men are unfit for weaving such a fairy web of light and darkness as may best suit furniture, ornaments, and complexions, how shall they be adequate to the yet more mysterious office of arranging, while they disarrange, the various moveables in the apartment? so that while all has the air of negligence and chance, the seats are placed as if they had been transported by a wish to the spot most suitable for accommodation; stiffness and confusion are at once avoided, the company are neither limited to a formal circle of chairs, nor exposed to break their noses over wandering stools; but the arrangements seem to correspond to what ought to be the tone of the conversation, easy, without being confused, and regulated, without being constrained or stiffened.

Then how can a clumsy male wit attempt the arrangement of all the *chiffonerie*, by which old snuff-boxes, heads of canes, pomander boxes, lamer beads, and all the trash usually found in the pigeon-holes of the bureaus of old-fashioned ladies, may be now brought into play, by throwing them, carelessly grouped with other unconsidered trifles, such as are to be seen in the windows of a pawnbroker's shop, upon a marble *encognure*, or a mosaic work-table, thereby turning to advantage the trash and trinketry, which all the old maids or magpies, who have inhabited the mansion for a century, have contrived to accumulate. With what admiration of the ingenuity of the fair artist have I sometimes pried into these miscellaneous groups of *pseudo-bijouterie*, and seen the great grandsire's thumb-ring *couchant* with the coral and bells of the first-born—and the boatswain's whistle of some old naval uncle, or his silver tobacco-box, redolent of Oroonoko, happily grouped with the mother's ivory comb-case, still odorous of musk, and with some virgin aunt's tortoise-shell spectacle-case, and the eagle's talon of ebony, with which, in the days of long and stiff stays, our grandmothers were wont to alleviate any little irritation in their back or shoulders! Then there was the silver strainer, on which, in more economical times than ours, the lady of the house placed the tea-leaves, after the very last drop had been exhausted, that they might afterwards be hospitably divided among the company, to be eaten with sugar, and with bread and butter. Blessings upon a fashion which has rescued from the claws of abigails, and the melting-pot of the silversmith, those neglected *cimelia*, for the benefit of antiquaries and the decoration of side-tables! But who shall presume to place them there, unless under the direction of female taste? and of that Mr. Mowbray, though possessed of a large stock of such treasures, was for the present entirely deprived.

This digression upon his difficulties is already too long, or I might mention the Laird's inexperience in the art of making the worse appear the better garnishment, of hiding a darned carpet with a new flour-cloth, and flinging an Indian shawl over a faded and threadbare sofa. But I have said enough, and more than enough, to explain his dilemma to an unassisted bachelor, who, without mother, sister, or cousin, without skilful housekeeper, or experienced clerk of the kitchen, or valet of parts and figure, adventures to give an entertainment, and aspires to make it elegant and *comme il faut*.

ense of his insufficiency was the more vex-
› Mowbray, as he was aware he would find
itics in the ladies, and particularly in his con-
val, Lady Penelope Penfeather. He was,
, incessant in his exertions; and for two
ays ordered and disordered, demanded, com-
, countermanded, and reprimanded, without
cessation. The companion, for he could not
d an assistant, of his labours, was his trusty
who trotted from room to room after him,
g him exactly the same degree of sympathy
dog doth to his master when distressed in
looking in his face from time to time with a
aze, as if to assure him that he partakes of
le, though he neither comprehends the cause
ttent of it, nor has in the slightest degree the
› remove it.

ıgth when Mowbray had got some matters
l to his mind, and abandoned a great many
e would willingly have put in better order, he
n to dinner upon the Wednesday preceding the
d day, with his worthy aid-de-camp, Mr.
'ham; and after bestowing a few muttered
pon the whole concern, and the fantastic old
o had brought him into the scrape, by begging
ation, declared that all things might now go
evil their own way, for so sure as his name
ın Mowbray, he would trouble himself no
out them.

ıg this doughty resolution, he sat down to
with his counsel learned in the law; and
they despatched the dish of chops which was
re them, and the better part of the bottle of
which served for its menstruum.

:re well enough now," said Mowbray, "though
had none of their d—d kickshaws."

umefou' is a wamefou'," said the writer, swab-
greasy chops, "whether it be of the barley-
the bran."

rt-horse thinks so," said Mowbray; "but wo
as others do, and gentlemen and ladies are
rent opinion."

waur for themselves and the country baith,
an's—it's the jinketing and the jirbling wi'
wi' trumpery that brings our nobles to nine-
nd mony a het ha'-house to a hired lodging in
y."

oung gentleman paused for a few minutes—
ımper, and pushed the bottle to the senior—
l abruptly, "Do you believe in luck, Mick?"

ick?" answered the attorney; "what do you
the question?"

', because I believe in luck myself—in a good
ın of luck at cards."

wad have mair luck the day, if you had never
them," replied his confidant.

t is not the question now," said Mowbray;
at I wonder at is the wretched chance that
ıded us miserable Lairds of St. Ronan's for
ın a hundred years, that we have always been
vorse in the world, and never better. Never
e been such a backsliding generation, as the
ould say—half the country once belonged to
stors, and now the last furrows of it seem to
."

ng!" said the writer, "they are barking and
aith.—This Shaws-Castle here, I'se warrant
the chimney after the rest, were it not weel
down with your grandfather's tailzie."

n the tailzie!" said Mowbray, "if they had
o keep up their estate, they should have en-
vhen it was worth keeping: to tie a man down
ın insignificant thing as St. Ronan's, is like
a horse on six roods of a Highland moor."

ave broke weel in on the mailing by your feus
the Well," said Meiklewham, "and raxed
tether maybe a wee bit farther than ye had
t to do."

as by your advice, was it not?" said the

ne'er deny it, St. Ronan's," answered the
'but I am *such a gude-natured guse*, that I
bout pleasing you as an auld wife pleases a

"Ay," said the man of pleasure, "when she reaches it a knife to cut its own fingers with.—These acres would have been safe enough, if it had not been for your d—d advice."

"And yet you were grumbling e'en now," said the man of business, "that you have not the power to gar the whole estate flee like a wild-duck across a bog? Troth, you need care little about it; for if you have incurred an irritancy—and sae thinks Mr. Wisebehind, the advocate, upon an A. B. memorial that I laid before him—your sister, or your sister's goodman, if she should take the fancy to marry, might bring a declarator, and evict St. Ronan's frae ye in the course of twa or three sessions."

"My sister will never marry," said John Mowbray

"That's easily said," replied the writer; "but as broken a ship's come to land. If ony body kend o' the chance she has o' the estate, there's mony a weel-doing man would think little of the bee in her bonnet."

"Hark ye, Mr. Meiklewham," said the Laird, "I will be obliged to you if you will speak of Miss Mowbray with the respect due to her father's daughter, and my sister."

"Nae offence, St. Ronan's, nae offence," answered the man of law; "but ilka man maun speak sae as to be understood,—that is, when he speaks about business. Ye ken yourself, that Miss Clara is no just like other folk; and were I you—it's my duty to speak plain—I wad e'en gie in a bit scroll of a petition to the Lords, to be appointed Curator Bonis, in respect of her incapacity to manage her own affairs."

"Meiklewham," said Mowbray, "you are a"—— and then stopped short.

"What am I, Mr. Mowbray?" said Meiklewham, somewhat sternly—"What am I? I wad be glad to ken what I am."

"A very good lawyer, I dare say," replied St. Ronan's, who was too much in the power of his agent to give way to his first impulse. "But I must tell you, that rather than take such a measure against poor Clara, as you recommend, I would give her up the estate, and become an ostler or a postilion for the rest of my life."

"Ah, St. Ronan's," said the man of law, "if you had wished to keep up the auld house, you should have taken another trade, than to become an ostler or a postilion. What ailed you, man, but to have been a lawyer as weel as other folk? My auld Maister had a wee bit Latin about *rerum dominos gentemque togatam*, whilk signified, he said, that all lairds should be lawyers."

"All lawyers are likely to become lairds, I think," replied Mowbray; "they purchase our acres by the thousand, and pay us, according to the old story, with a multiplepoinding, as your learned friends call it, Mr. Meiklewham."

"Weel—and mightna you have purchased as weel as other folk?"

"Not I," replied the Laird; "I have no turn for that service, I should only have wasted bombazine on my shoulders, and flour upon my three-tailed wig—should but have lounged away my mornings in the Outer-House, and my evenings at the play-house, and acquired no more law than what would have made me a wise justice at a Small debt Court."

"If you gained little, you would have lost as little," said Meiklewham; "and albeit ye were nae great gun at the bar, ye might aye have gotten a Sheriffdom, or a Commissaryship, amang the lave, to keep the banes green; and sae ye might have saved your estate from deteriorating, if ye dinna mend it muckle."

"Yes, but I could not have had the chance of doubling it, as I might have done," answered Mowbray, "had that inconstant jade, Fortune, but stood a moment faithful to me. I tell you, Mick, that I have been, within this twelvemonth, worth a hundred thousand—worth fifty thousand—worth nothing, but the remnant of this wretched estate, which is too little to do one good while it is mine, though, were it sold, I could start again, and mend my hand a little."

"Ay, ay, just fling the helve after the hatchet," said his legal adviser—"that's a' you think of. Whare

signifies winning a hundred thousand pounds, if you win them to lose them a' again?"

"What signifies it?" replied Mowbray. "Why, it signifies as much to a man of spirit, as having won a battle signifies to a general—no matter that he is beaten afterwards in his turn, he knows there is luck for him as well as others, and so he has spirit to try it again. Here is the young Earl of Ethrington will be amongst us in a day or two—they say he is up to every thing—if I had but five hundred to begin with, I should be soon up to him."

"Mr. Mowbray," said Meiklewham, "I am sorry for ye. I have been your house's man-of-business—I may say, in some measure, your house's servant—and now I am to see an end of it all, and just by the lad that I thought maist likely to set it up again better than ever; for, to do ye justice, you have aye had an ee to your ain interest, sae far as your lights gaed. It brings tears into my auld een."

"Never weep for the matter, Mick," answered Mowbray; "some of it will stick, my old boy, in your pockets, if not in mine—your service will not be altogether gratuitous, my old friend—the labourer is worthy of his hire."

"Weel I wot is he," said the writer; "but double fees would hardly carry folk through some wark. But if ye will have siller, ye maun have siller—but, I warrant, it goes just where the rest gaed."

"No, by twenty devils!" exclaimed Mowbray, "to fail this time is impossible—Jack Wolverine was too strong for Ethrington at any thing he could name; and I can beat Wolverine from the Land's-End to Johnnie Groat's—but there must be something to go upon—the blunt must be had, Mick."

"Very likely—nae doubt—that is always provided it *can* be had," answered the legal adviser.

"That's your business, my old cock," said Mowbray. "This youngster will be here perhaps to-morrow, with money in both pockets—he takes up his rents as he comes down, Mick—think of that, my old friend."

"Weel for them that have rents to take up," said Meiklewham; "ours are lying rather ower low to be lifted at present.—But are you sure this Earl is a man to me!: with?—are you sure ye can win of him, and that if you do, he can pay his losings, Mr. Mowbray?—because I have kend mony ane come for wool, and gang hame shorn; and though ye are a clever young gentleman, and I am bound to suppose ye ken as much about life as most folk, and all that; yet some gate or other ye have aye come off at the losing hand, as ye have ower much reason to ken this day—howbeit"——

"O, the devil take your gossip, my dear Mick! If you can give no help, spare drowning me with your pother.—Why, man, I was a fresh hand—had my apprentice-fees to pay—and these are no trifles, Mick.—But what of that?—I am free of the company now, and can trade on my own bottom."

"Aweel, aweel, I wish it may be sae," said Meiklewham.

"It will be so, and it shall be so, my trusty friend," replied Mowbray, cheerily, "so you will but help me to the stock to trade with."

"The stock?—what d'ye ca' the stock? I ken nae stock that ye have left."

"But *you* have plenty, my old boy—Come, sell out a few of your three per cents; I will pay difference—interest—exchange—every thing."

"Ay, ay—every thing or naething," answered Meiklewham; "but as you are sae very pressing, I hae been thinking—Whan is the siller wanted?"

"This instant—this day—to-morrow at farthest!" exclaimed the proposed borrower.

"Wh—ew!" whistled the lawyer, with a long prolongation of the note; "the thing is impossible."

"If must be, Mick, for all that," answered Mr. Mowbray, who knew by experience that *impossible*, when uttered by his accommodating friend in this tone, meant only, when interpreted, extremely difficult, and very expensive.

"*Then it mus: be by Miss Clara selling* her stock, *now that ye speak of stock*," said Meiklewham; "I *wunder ye didna think of this before*"

"I wish you had been dumb rather than that you had mentioned it now," said Mowbray, starting, as if stung by an adder—"What, Clara's pittance!—the trifle my aunt left her for her own fanciful expenses—her own little private store, that she puts to so many good purposes—Poor Clara, that has so little!—And why not rather your own, Master Meiklewham, who call yourself the friend and servant of our family?"

"Ay, St. Ronan's," answered Meiklewham, "that is a' very true—but service is nae inheritance; and as for friendship, it begins at home, as wise folk have said lang before our time. And for that matter, I think they that are nearest sib should take maist risk. You are nearer and dearer to your sister, St. Ronan's, than you are to poor Saunders Meiklewham, that hasna sae muckle gentle blood as would supper up a hungry flea."

"I will not do this," said St. Ronan's, walking up and down with much agitation; for, selfish as he was, he loved his sister, and loved her the more on account of those peculiarities which rendered his protection indispensable to her comfortable existence—"I will not," he said, "pillage her, come on't what will. I will rather go a volunteer to the continent, and die like a gentleman."

He continued to pace the room in a moody silence, which began to disturb his companion, who had not been hitherto accustomed to see his patron take matters so deeply. At length he made an attempt to attract the attention of the silent and sullen ponderer.

"Mr. Mowbray"—no answer—"I was saying, St. Ronan's"—still no reply. "I have been thinking about this matter—and"——

"*And what*, sir?" said St. Ronan's, stopping short, and speaking in a stern tone of voice.

"And, to speak truth, I see little feasibility in the matter ony way; for if ye had the siller in your pocket to-day, it would be a' in the Earl of Etherington's the morn."

"Pshaw! you are a fool," answered Mowbray.

"That is not unlikely," said Meiklewham: "but so is Sir Bingo Binks, and yet he's had the better of you, St. Ronan's, this twa or three times."

"It is false!—he has not," answered St. Ronan's, fiercely.

"Weel I wot," resumed Meiklewham, "he took you in about the saumon fish, and some other wager ye lost to him this very day."

"I tell you once more, Meiklewham, you are a fool, and no more up to my trim than you are to the longitude.—Bingo is got shy—I must give him a little line, that is all—then I shall strike him to purpose—I am as sure of him as I am of the other—I know the fly they will both rise to—this cursed want of five hundred will do me out of ten thousand!"

"If you are so certain of being the bangster—so very certain, I mean, of sweeping stakes,—what harm will Miss Clara come to by your having the use of her siller? You can make it up to her for the risk ten times told."

"And so I can, by Heaven!" said St. Ronan's. "Mick you are right, and I am a scrupulous, chicken-hearted fool. Clara shall have a thousand for her poor five hundred—she shall, by ——. And I will carry her to Edinburgh for a season, or perhaps to London, and we will have the best advice for her case, and the best company to divert her. And if they think her a little odd—why, d—me, I am her brother, and will bear her through it. Yes—yes—you're right; there can be no hurt in borrowing five hundred of her for a few days, when such profit may be made on't, both for her and me—Here, fill the glasses, my old boy, and drink success to it, for you are right."

"Here is success to it, with all my heart," answered Meiklewham, heartily glad to see his patron's sanguine temper arrive at this desirable conclusion, and yet willing to hedge in his own credit; "but it is you are right, and not *me*, for I advise nothing except on your assurances, that you can make your ain of this English earl, and of this Sir Bingo—and if you can but do that, I am sure it would be unwise and unkind in ony ane of your friends to stand in your light."

"True, Mick, true," answered Mowbray.—"And

yet dice and cards are but bones and pasteboard, and the best horse ever started may slip a shoulder before he get to the winning-post—and so I wish Clara's venture had not been in such a bottom.—But, hang it, care killed a cat—I can hedge as well as any one, if the odds turn up against me—so let us have the cash, Mick."

"Aha! but there go two words to that bargain—the stock stands in my name, and Tam Turnpenny the banker's, as trustees for Miss Clara—Now, get you her letter to us, desiring us to sell out and to pay you the proceeds, and Tam Turnpenny will let you have five hundred pounds *instanter*, on the faith of the transaction; for I fancy you would desire a' the stock to be sold out, and it will produce more than six hundred, or seven hundred pounds either—and I reckon you will be selling out the whole—it's needless making twa bites of a cherry."

"True," answered Mowbray; "since we must be rogues, or something like it, let us make it worth our while at least; so give me a form of the letter, and Clara shall copy it—that is, if she consents; for you know she can keep her own opinion as well as any other woman in the world."

"And that," said Meiklewham, "is as the wind will keep its way, preach to it as ye like. But if I might advise about Miss Clara—I wad say naething mair than that I was stressed for the penny money; or I mistake her muckle if she would like to see you ganging to pitch and toss wi' this lord and tither baronet for her aunt's three per cents—I ken she has some queer notions—she gives away the feck of the dividends on that very stock in downright charity."

"And I am in hazard to rob the poor as well as my sister!" said Mowbray, filling once more his own glass and his friend's. "Come, Mick, no skylights—here is Clara's health—she is an angel—and I am—what I will not call myself, and suffer no other man to call me.—But I shall win this time—I am sure I shall, since Clara's fortune depends upon it."

"Now, I think, on the other hand," said Meiklewham, "that if any thing should chance wrang, (and Heaven kens that the best-laid schemes will gang ajee,) it will be a great comfort to think that the ultimate losers will only be the poor folk, that have the varish between them and absolute starvation—if your sister spent her ain siller, it would be a very different story."

"Hush, Mick—for God's sake, hush, mine honest friend," said Mowbray; "it is quite true; thou art a rare counsellor in time of need, and hast as happy a manner of reconciling a man's conscience with his necessities, as might set up a score of casuists; but beware, my most zealous counsellor and confessor, how you drive the nail too far—I promise you some of the chaffing you are at just now rather abates my luck.—Well—give me your scroll—I will to Clara with it—though I would rather meet the best shot in Britain, with ten paces of green sod betwixt us." So saying, he left the apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

FRATERNAL LOVE.

Nearest of blood should still be next in love;
And when I see these happy children playing,
While William gathers flowers for Ellen's ringlets,
And Ellen dresses flies for William's angle,
I scarce can think, that in advancing life,
Coldness, unkindness, interest, or suspicion,
Will e'er divide that unity so sacred,
Which nature bound at birth.—*Anonymous.*

When Mowbray had left his dangerous adviser, in order to steer the course which his agent had indicated, without offering to recommend it, he went to the little parlour which his sister was wont to term her own, and in which she spent great part of her time. It was fitted up with a sort of fanciful neatness; and with its perfect arrangement and good order, formed a strong contrast to the other apartments of the old and neglected mansion-house. *A number of little articles lay on the work-table, indicating the elegant, and, at the same time, the unsettled turn of the inhabitant's mind. There were unfinished drawings,* blotted music, needle-work of various kinds, and many other little female tasks; all undertaken with zeal, and so far prosecuted with art and elegance, but all flung aside before any one of them was completed.

Clara herself sat upon a little low couch by the window, reading, or at least turning over the leaves of a book, in which she seemed to read. But instantly starting up when she saw her brother, she ran towards him with the most cordial cheerfulness.

"Welcome, welcome, my dear John; this is very kind of you to come to visit your recluse sister. I have been trying to nail my eyes and my understanding to a stupid book here, because they say too much thought is not quite good for me. But, either the man's dulness, or my want of the power of attending, makes my eyes pass over the page, just as one seems to read in a dream, without being able to comprehend one word of the matter. You shall talk to me, and that will do better. What can I give you to show that you are welcome? I am afraid tea is all I have to offer, and that you set too little store by."

"I shall be glad of a cup at present," said Mowbray, "for I wish to speak with you."

"Then Jessy shall make it ready instantly," said Miss Mowbray, ringing, and giving orders to her waiting-maid—"but you must not be ungrateful, John, and plague me with any of the ceremonial for your fête—'sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' I will attend, and play my part as prettily as you can desire; but to think of it beforehand, would make both my head and my heart ache; and so I beg you will spare me on the subject."

"Why, you wild kitten," said Mowbray, "you turn every day more shy of human communication—we shall have you take the woods one day, and become as savage as the Princess Caraboo. But I will plague you about nothing if I can help it. If matters go not smooth on the great day, they must e'en blame the dull thick head that had no fair lady to help him in his need. But, Clara, I had something more material to say to you—something indeed of the last importance."

"What is it?" said Clara, in a tone of voice approaching to a scream—"In the name of God, what is it? You know not how you terrify me!"

"Nay you start at a shadow, Clara," answered her brother. "It is no such uncommon matter neither—good faith, it is the most common distress in the world, so far as I know the world—I am sorely pinched for money."

"Is that all?" replied Clara, in a tone which seemed to her brother as much to underrate the difficulty, when it was explained, as her fears had exaggerated it before she heard its nature.

"Is that all? Indeed it is all, and comprehends a great deal of vexation. I shall be hard run unless I can get a certain sum of money—and I must e'en ask you if you can help me?"

"Help you?" replied Clara; "Yes, with all my heart—but you know my purse is a light one—more than half of my last dividend is in it, however, and I am sure, John, I shall be happy if I can serve you—especially as that will at least show that your wants are but small ones."

"Alas, Clara, if you would help me," said her brother, half repentant of his purpose, "you must draw the neck of the goose which lays the golden eggs—you must lend me the whole stock."

"And why not, John," said the simple-hearted girl, "if it will do you a kindness? Are you not my natural guardian? Are you not a kind one? And is not my little fortune entirely at your disposal? You will, I am sure, do all for the best."

"I fear I may not," said Mowbray, starting from her, and more distressed by her sudden and unsuspicious compliance, than he would have been by difficulties, or remonstrance. In the latter case, he would have stifled the pangs of conscience amid the manœuvres which he must have resorted to for obtaining her acquiescence; as matters stood, there was all the difference that there is between slaughtering a tame and unresisting animal, and pursuing wild game, until the animation of the sportsman's exer-

nons overcomes the internal sense of his own cruelty. The same idea occurred to Mowbray himself.

"By G—," he said, "this is like shooting the bird sitting.—Clara," he added, "I fear this money will scarce be employed as you would wish."

"Employ it as you yourself please, my dearest brother," she replied, "and I will believe it is all for the best."

"Nay, I am doing for the best," he replied; "at least, I am doing what must be done, for I see no other way through it—so all you have to do is to copy this paper, and bid adieu to bank dividends—for a little while at least. I trust soon to double this little matter for you, if Fortune will but stand my friend."

"Do not trust to Fortune, John," said Clara, smiling, though with an expression of deep melancholy. "Alas! she has never been a friend to our family—not at least for many a day."

"She favours the bold, say my old grammatical exercises," answered her brother; "and I must trust her, were she as changeable as a weathercock.—And yet—if she should jilt me!—What will you do—what will you say, Clara, if I am unable, contrary to my hope, trust, and expectation, to repay you this money within a short time?"

"Do?" replied Clara; 'I must do without it, you know; and for saying, I will not say a word."

"True," replied Mowbray, "but your little expenses—your charities—your halt and blind—your round of paupers?"

"Well, I can manage all that too. Look you here, John, how many half-worked trifles there are. The needle or the pencil is the resource of all distressed heroines, you know; and I promise you, though I have been a little idle and unsettled of late, yet, when I do set about it, no Emmeline or Ethelinde of them all ever sent such loads of trumpery to market as I shall, or made such wealth as I will do. I dare say Lady Penelope, and all the gentry at the Well, will purchase, and will raffle, and do all sort of things to encourage the pensive performer. I will send them such lots of landscapes, with sap-green trees, and mazareen-blue rivers, and portraits that will terrify the originals themselves—and handkerchiefs and turbans, with needle-work scallopped exactly like the walks on the Belvidere—Why, I shall become a little fortune in the first season."

"No, Clara," said John, gravely, for a virtuous resolution had gained the upperhand in his bosom, while his sister ran on in this manner.—"We will do something better than all this. If this kind help of yours does not fetch me through, I am determined I will cut the whole concern. It is but standing a laugh or two, and hearing a gay fellow say, D—me, Jack, are you turned clodhopper at last?—that is the worst. Dogs, horses, and all, shall go to the hammer; we will keep nothing but your pony, and I will trust to a pair of excellent legs. There is enough left of the old acres to keep us in the way you like best, and that I will learn to like. I will work in the garden, and work in the forest, mark my own trees, and cut them myself, keep my own accounts, and send Saunders Meiklewham to the devil."

"That last is the best resolution of all, John," said Clara; "and if such a day should come round, I should be the happiest of living creatures—I should not have a grief left in the world—if I had, you should never see or hear of it—it should lie here," she said, pressing her hand on her bosom, "buried as deep as a funereal urn in a cold sepulchre. Oh! could we not begin such a life to-morrow? If it is absolutely necessary that this trifle of money should be got rid of first, throw it into the river, and think you have lost it amongst gamblers and horse-jockeys."

Clara's eyes, which she fondly fixed on her brother's face, glowed through the tears which her enthusiasm called into them, while she thus addressed him. Mowbray, on his part, kept his looks fixed on the ground, with a flush on his cheek, that expressed at once false pride and real shame.

At length he looked up:—"My dear girl," he said, "how foolishly you talk, and how foolishly I, that have twenty things to do, stand here listening to you! All will go smooth on my plan—if it should not, we have yours in reserve, and I swear to you I will e The trifle which this letter of yours enables me mand, may have luck in it, and we must not t the cards while we have a chance of the game I to cut from this moment, these few hundrec make us little better or little worse—so you have two strings to our bow. Luck is so against me, that is true—but upon true princi playing on the square, I can manage the best or my name is not Mowbray. Adieu, my Clara." So saying, he kissed her cheek with than usual degree of affection.

Ere he could raise himself from his stoop ture, she threw her arm kindly over his ne said with a tone of the deepest interest, "My brother, your slightest wish has been, and e be, a law to me—Oh! if you would but grant request in return!"

"What is it, you silly girl?" said Mowbray disengaging himself from her hold.—"What can have to ask that needs such a solemn pr Remember, I hate prefaces; and when I ha open a book, always skip them."

"Without preface, then, my dearest brot you, for my sake, avoid those quarrels in w people yonder are eternally engaged? I never there but I hear of some new brawl; and I r my head down to sleep, but I dream that you victim of it. Even last night"——

"Nay, Clara, if you begin to tell your dre shall never have done. Sleeping, to be sur most serious employment of your life—for as t you hardly match a sparrow; but I entrea sleep without dreaming, or to keep your vi yourself.—Why do you keep such fast hold o What on earth can you be afraid of?—Surel not think the blockhead Binks, or any othe good folks below yonder, dared to turn on me I wish they would pluck up a little mettle, that have an excuse for drilling them. Gad, I wo teach them to follow at heel."

"No, John," replied his sister; "it is not men as these that I have any fear—and yet, are sometimes driven to desperation, and more dangerous than better men—but it is n as these that I fear. But there are men in th whose qualities are beyond their seeming spirit and courage lie hidden, like metals in t under an unmarked or a plain exterior.—Y meet with such—you are rash and headlong, to exercise your wit without always weighi sequences, and thus"——

"On my word, Clara," answered Mowbra are in a most sermonizing humour this morn parson himself could not have been more k profound. You have only to divide your discou heads, and garnish it with conclusions for conclusions for doctrine, and it might be p before a whole presbytery, with every chanc struction and edification. But I am a ma world, my little Clara; and though I wish death's way as little as possible, I must not raw-head and bloody-bones neither.—And w devil is to put the question to me?—I must kn Clara, for you have some especial person in when you bid me take care of quarrelling."

Clara could not become paler than was h complexion; but her voice faltered as she assured her brother, that she had no particula in her thoughts.

"Clara," said her brother, do you remembe there was a report of a bogle* in the upper when we were both children?—Do you re how you were perpetually telling me to take the bogle, and keep away from its haunts?—you remember my going on purpose to de bogle, finding the cow-boy, with a shirt abo busied in pulling pears, and treating him to some drubbing?—I am the same Jack Mowb as ready to face danger, and unmask impositi your fears, Clara, will only make me wate closely, till I find out the real object of them. warn me of quarrelling with some one, it mu

* Bogle—in English, Goblin.

you know some one who is not unlikely to
l with me. You are a flighty and fanciful girl,
u have sense enough not to trouble either your-
r me on a point of honour, save when there is
good reason for it."

ra once more protested, and it was with the
st anxiety to be believed, that what she had said
only out of the general consequences which she
hended from the line of conduct her brother had
ed, and which, in her apprehension, was so likely
gage him in the broils that divided the good
any at the Spring. Mowbray listened to her ex-
tion with an air of doubt, or rather incredulity,
l a cup of tea which had for some time been
l before him, and at length replied, "Well, Clara,
ier I am right or wrong in my guess, it would be
to torment you any more, remembering what
ave just done for me. But do justice to your
er, and believe, that when you have any thing to
f him, an explicit declaration of your wishes will
er your purpose much better than any ingenious
e attempts to influence me. Give up all thoughts
:h, my dear Clara—you are but a poor manœu-
but were you the very Machiavel of your sex,
ould not turn the flank of John Mowbray."

left the room as he spoke, and did not return,
h his sister twice called upon him. It is true
he uttered the word brother so faintly, that per-
he sound did not reach his ears.—"He is gone,"
id, "and I have had no power to speak out! I
ke the wretched creatures, who, it is said, lie
a potent charm, that prevents them alike from
ing tears and from confessing their crimes—
here is a spell on this unhappy heart, and either
ust be dissolved, or this must break."

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHALLENGE.

ght note I have about me, for the delivery of which you
xcuse me. It is an office which friendship calls upon me
and no way offensive to you, as I desire nothing but
n both sides.—*King and no King.*

e intelligent reader may recollect, that Tyrrel
ted from the Fox Hotel on terms not altogether
endly towards the company as those under
he entered it. Indeed, it occurred to him, that
ght probably have heard something farther on
ubject, though, amidst matters of deeper and
anxious consideration, the idea only passed
y through his mind; and two days having gone
without any message from Sir Bingo Binks, the
affair glided entirely out of his memory.

truth was, that although never old woman
more trouble to collect and blow up with her
vs the embers of her decayed fire, than Captain
'urk kindly underwent for the purpose of puff-
to a flame the dying sparkles of the Baronet's
ge; yet two days were spent in fruitless con-
es before he could attain the desired point. He
Sir Bingo on these different occasions in all
of different moods of mind, and disposed to
the thing in all shades of light, except what the
ain thought was the true one.—He was in a
ien humour—in a sullen humour—in a thought-
nd vilipending humour—in every humour but a
ag one. And when Captain MacTurk talked
reputation of the company at the Well, Sir
pretended to take offence, said the company
go to the devil, and hinted that he "did them
ient honour by gracing them with his counte-
, but did not mean to constitute them any
s of his affairs. The fellow was a raff, and he
have nothing to do with him."

ptain MacTurk would willingly have taken
ures against the Baronet himself, as in a state of
macy, but was opposed by Winterblossom and
members of the committee, who considered Sir
as too important and illustrious a member of
society to be rashly expelled from a place not
ured by the residence of *many persons of rank*;
ually *insisted that nothing should be done in the*
r *without the advice of Mowbray*, whose pre-
parations for his solemn festival on the following Thursday had so much occupied him, that he had not lately appeared at the Well.

In the mean while the gallant Captain seemed to experience as much distress of mind, as if some stain had lain on his own most unblemished of reputations. He went up and down upon the points of his toes, rising up on his instep with a jerk which at once expressed vexation and defiance—He carried his nose turned up in the air, like that of a pig when he snuffs the approaching storm—He spoke in monosyllables when he spoke at all; and—what perhaps illustrated in the strongest manner the depth of his feelings—he refused, in face of the whole company, to pledge Sir Bingo in a glass of the Baronet's peculiar cognac.

At length, the whole Well was alarmed by the report brought by a smart outrider, that the young Earl of Etherington, reported to be rising on the horizon of fashion as a star of the first magnitude, intended to pass an hour, or a day, or a week, as it might happen, (for his lordship could not be supposed to know his own mind,) at St. Ronan's Well.

This suddenly put all in motion. Almanacks were opened to ascertain his lordship's age, inquiries were made concerning the extent of his fortune, his habits were quoted, his tastes were guessed at; and all that the ingenuity of the Managing Committee could devise was resorted to, in order to recommend their Spa to this favourite of fortune. An express was despatched to Shaws-Castle with the agreeable intelligence, which fired the train of hope that led to Mowbray's appropriation of his sister's capital. He did not, however, think proper to obey the summons to the Spring; for, not being aware in what light the Earl might regard the worthies there assembled, he did not desire to be found by his lordship in any strict connexion with them.

Sir Bingo Binks was in a different situation. The bravery with which he had endured the censure of the place began to give way, when he considered that a person of such distinction as that which public opinion attached to Lord Etherington, should find him bodily indeed at St. Ronan's, but, so far as society was concerned, on the road towards the ancient city of Coventry; and his banishment thither, incurred by that most unpardonable offence in modern morality, a solecism in the code of honour. Though sluggish and inert when called to action, the Baronet was by no means an absolute coward; or, if so, he was of that class which fights when reduced to extremity. He manfully sent for Captain MacTurk, who waited upon him with a grave solemnity of aspect, which instantly was exchanged for a radiant joy, when Sir Bingo, in a few words, empowered him to carry a message to that d—d strolling artist, by whom he had been insulted three days since.

"By Cot," said the Captain, "my exceedingly goot and excellent friend, and I am happy to do such a favour for you! And it's well you have thought of it yourself; because, if it had not been for some of our very goot and excellent friends, that would be putting their spoon into other folk's dish, I should have been asking you a civil question myself, how you came to dine with us, with all that mud and mire which Mr. Tyrrel's grasp has left upon the collar of your coat—you understand me.—But it is much better as it is, and I will go to the man with all the speed of light; and though, to be sure, it should have been sooner thought of, yet let me alone to make an excuse for that, just in my own civil way—better late thrive than never do well, you know, Sir Bingo; and if you have made him wait a little while for his morning, you must give him the better measure, my darling."

So saying, he awaited no reply, lest peradventure the commission with which he was so hastily and unexpectedly charged, should have been clogged with some condition of compromise. No such proposal, however, was made on the part of the doughty Sir Bingo, who eyed his friend as he hastily snatched up his rattan to depart, with a dogged look of obstinacy expressive, to use his own phrase, of a determined resolution to come up to the scratch; and when he heard the Captain's parting footsteps, and saw the door shut behind him, he valiantly whistled a few

bars of Jenny Sutton, in token he cared not a farthing how the matter was to end.

With a swifter pace than his half-pay leisure usually encouraged, or than his habitual dignity permitted, Captain MacTurk cleared the ground betwixt the Spring and its gay vicinity, and the ruins of the Aultoun, where reigned our friend Meg Dods, the sole asserter of its ancient dignities. To the door of the Cleikum Inn the Captain addressed himself, as one too much accustomed to war to fear a rough reception; although at the very first aspect of Meg, who presented her person at the half opened door, his military experience taught him that his entrance into the place would, in all probability, be disputed.

"Is Mr. Tyrrel at home?" was the question; and the answer was conveyed, by the counter-interrogation. "Wha may ye be that speers?"

As the most polite reply to this question, and an indulgence, at the same time, of his own taciturn disposition, the Captain presented to Luckie Dods the fifth part of an ordinary playing card, much grimed with snuff, which bore on its blank side his name and quality. But Luckie Dods rejected the information thus tendered, with contemptuous scorn.

"Nane of your deil's play-books for me," said she; "it's an ill world since sic prick-my-dainty doings came in fashion—It's a poor tongue that canna tell its ain name, and I'll hae nane of your scarts upon pasteboard."

"I am Captain MacTurk, of the —— regiment," said the Captain, disdaining further answer.

"MacTurk?" repeated Mag, with an emphasis, which induced the owner of the name to reply, "Yes, honest woman—MacTurk—Hector MacTurk—have you any objections to my name, good wife?"

"Nae objections have I," answered Meg; "it's e'en an excellent name for a heathen.—But, Captain MacTurk, since sae it be that ye are a captain, ye may e'en face about and march your ways hame again, to the tune of Dumbarton drums; for ye are ganging to have nae speech of Maister Tirl, or ony lodger of mine."

"And wherefore not?" demanded the veteran; "and is this of your own foolish head, honest woman, or has your lodger left such orders?"

"Maybe he has and maybe no," answered Meg, sturdily; "and I ken nae mair right that ye suld ca' me honest woman, than I have to ca' you honest man, whilk is as far frae my thoughts as it wad be from heaven's truth."

"The woman is deleerit!" said Captain MacTurk; "but coom, coom—a gentleman is not to be misused in this way when he comes on a gentleman's business; so make you a bit room on the door-stane, that I may pass by you, or I will make room for myself, by Cot! to your small pleasure."

And so saying he assumed the air of a man who was about to make good his passage. But Meg, without deigning farther reply, flourished around her head the hearth-broom, which she had been employing to its more legitimate purpose, when disturbed in her housewifery by Captain MacTurk.

"I ken your errand weel eneugh, Captain—and I ken yourself. Ye are ane of the folk that gang about yonder setting folk by the lugs, as callants set their collies to fight. But ye shall come to nae lodger o' mine, let a-be Maister Tirl, wi' ony sic ungodly errand; for I am ane that will keep God's peace and the King's within my dwelling."

So saying, and in explicit token of her peaceable intentions, she again flourished her broom.

The veteran instinctively threw himself under Saint George's guard, and drew two paces back, exclaiming, "That the woman was either mad, or as drunk as whisky could make her;" an alternative which afforded Meg so little satisfaction, that she fairly rushed on her retiring adversary, and began to use her weapon to fell purpose.

"Me drunk, ye scandalous blackguard!" (a blow with the broom interposed as parenthesis,) "me, that am fasting from all but sin and bohea!" (another whack.)

The Captain, swearing, exclaiming, and parrying, *caught the blows as they fell, showing* much dexterity in single-stick. The people began to gather; and how long his gallantry might have maintained itself against the spirit of self-defence and revenge, must be left uncertain, for the arrival of Tyrrel, returned from a short walk, put a period to the contest.

Meg, who had a great respect for her guest, began to feel ashamed of her own violence, and slunk into the house; observing, however, that she trewed she had made her hearth-broom and the auld heathen's pow right weel acquainted. The tranquillity which ensued upon her departure, gave Tyrrel an opportunity to ask the Captain, whom he at length recognised, the meaning of this singular affray, and whether the visit was intended for him; to which the veteran replied very discomposedly, that "he should have known that long enough ago, if he had had decent people to open his door, and answer a civil question, instead of a flyting madwoman, who was worse than an eagle," he said, "or a mastiff-bitch, or a she-bear, or any other female beast in the creation."

Half suspecting his errand, and desirous to avoid unnecessary notoriety, Tyrrel, as he showed the Captain to the parlour, which he called his own, entreated him to excuse the rudeness of his landlady, and to pass from the topic to that which had procured him the honour of this visit.

"And you are right, my good Master Tyrrel," said the Captain, pulling down the sleeves of his coat, adjusting his handkerchief and breast-ruffle, and endeavouring to recover the composure of manner becoming his mission, but still adverting indignantly to the usage he had received—"By Cot! if she had but been a man, if it were the King himself—However, Mr. Tyrrel, I am come on a civil errand—and very civilly I have been treated—the auld bitch should be set in the stocks, and be tamned!—My friend, Sir Bingo—By Cot! I shall never forget that woman's insolence—if there be a constable or a cat-o'-nine-tails within ten miles"——

"I perceive, Captain," said Tyrrel, "that you are too much disturbed at this moment to enter upon the business which has brought you here—if you will step into my bedroom, and make use of some cold water and a towel, it will give you the time to compose yourself a little."

"I shall do no such thing, Mr. Tyrrel," answered the Captain, snappishly; "I do not want to be composed at all, and I do not want to stay in this house a minute longer than to do my errand to you on my friend's behalf—And as for this tamned woman Dods"——

"You will in that case forgive my interrupting you Captain MacTurk, as I presume your errand to me can have no reference to this strange quarrel with my landlady, with which I have nothing to"——

"And if I thought that it had, sir," said the Captain, interrupting Tyrrel in his turn, "you should have given me satisfaction before you was a quarter of a hour older—Oh, I would give five pounds to the pretty fellow that would say, Captain MacTurk, the woman did right!"

"I certainly will not be that person you wish for, Captain," replied Tyrrel, "because I really do not know who was in the right or wrong; but I am certainly sorry that you should have met with ill usage, when your purpose was to visit me."

"Well, sir, if you are concerned," said the man of peace, snappishly, "so am I, and there is an end of it.—And touching my errand to you—you cannot have forgotten that you treated my friend, Sir Bingo Binks, with singular incivility?"

"I recollect nothing of the kind, Captain," replied Tyrrel. "I remember that the gentleman, so called, took some uncivil liberties in laying foolish bets concerning me, and that I treated him, from respect to the rest of the company, and the ladies in particular, with a great degree of moderation and forbearance."

"And you must have very fine ideas of forbearance," replied the Captain, "when you took my good friend by the collar of the coat, and lifted him out of your way as if he had been a puppy dog! My good Mr. Tyrrel, I can assure you he does not think that you have forborne him at all, and he has no purpose to forbear you; and I must either carry back a suffi-

cient apology, or you must meet in a quiet way, with a good friend on each side.—And this was the errand I came on, when this tamned woman, with the hearth-broom, who is an enemy to all quiet and peaceable proceedings"——

"We will forget Mrs. Dods for the present, if you please, Captain MacTurk," said Tyrrel—"and, to speak to the present subject, you will permit me to say, that I think this summons comes a little of the latest. You know best as a military man, but I have always understood that such differences are usually settled immediately after they occur—not that I intend to baulk Sir Bingo's inclinations upon the score of delay, or any other account."

"I dare say you will not—I dare say you will not, Mr. Tyrrel," answered the Captain—"I am free to think that you know better what belongs to a gentleman.—And as to time—look you, my good sir, there are different sorts of people in this world, as there are different sorts of fire-arms. There are your hair-triggered rifles, that go off just at the right moment, and in the twinkling of an eye, and that, Mr. Tyrrel, is your true man of honour;—and there is a sort of person that takes a thing up too soon, and sometimes backs out of it, like your rubbishy Birmingham pieces, that will at one time go off at half-cock, and at another time burn priming without going off at all;—then again there are pieces that hang fire—or I should rather say, that are like the matchlocks which the black fellows use in the East Indies—there must be some blowing of the match, and so forth, which occasions delay, but the piece carries true enough after all."

"And your friend Sir Bingo's valour is of this last kind, Captain—I presume that is the inference. I should have thought it more like a boy's cannon, which is fired by means of a train, and is but a popgun after all."

"I cannot allow of such comparisons, sir," said the Captain; "you will understand that I come here as Sir Bingo's friend, and a reflection on him will be an affront to me."

"I disclaim all intended offence to you, Captain—I have no wish to extend the number of my adversaries, or to add to them the name of a gallant officer like yourself," replied Tyrrel.

"You are too obliging, sir," said the Captain, drawing himself up with dignity. "By Cot! and that was said very handsomely!—Well, sir, and shall I not have the pleasure of carrying back any explanation from you to Sir Bingo?—I assure you it would give me pleasure to make this matter handsomely up."

"To Sir Bingo, Captain MacTurk, I have no apology to offer—I think I treated him more gently than his impertinence deserved."

"Och, Och!" sighed the Captain, with a strong Highland intonation; "then there is no more to be said, but just to settle time and place; for pistols I suppose must be the weapons."

"All these matters are quite the same to me," said Tyrrel; "only, in respect of time, I should wish it to be as speedy as possible.—What say you to one, afternoon, this very day?—You may name the place."

"At one, afternoon," replied the Captain deliberately, "Sir Bingo will attend you—the place may be the Buck-stane; for as the whole company go to the water-side to-day to eat a kettle of fish,* there will be no risk of interruption.—And who shall I speak to, my good friend, on your side of the quarrel?"

"Really, Captain," replied Tyrrel, "that is a puzzling question—I have no friend here—I suppose you could hardly act for both?"

"It would be totally, absolutely, and altogether out of the question, my good friend," replied MacTurk. "But if you will trust to me, I will bring up a friend on your part from the Well, who, though you have hardly seen him before, will settle matters for you as well as if you had been intimate for twenty years—and I will bring up the Doctor too, if I can get him unloosed from the petticoat of that fat widow Blower, that he has strung himself upon."

"I have no doubt you will do every thing with perfect accuracy, Captain. At one o'clock, then, we meet at the Buck-stane—stay, permit me to see you to the door."

"By Cot! and it is not altogether so unnecessary," said the Captain; "for the tamned woman with the besom might have some advantage in that long dark passage, knowing the ground better than I do—tamn her, I will have amends on her, if there be whipping-post, or ducking-stool, or a pair of stocks in the parish!" And so saying, the Captain trudged off, his spirits ever and anon agitated by recollection of the causeless aggression of Meg Dods, and again composed to a state of happy serenity by the recollection of the agreeable arrangement which he had made between Mr. Tyrrel, and his friend Sir Bingo Binks.

We have heard of men of undoubted benevolence of character and disposition, whose principal delight was to see a miserable criminal, degraded alike by his previous crimes, and the sentence which he had incurred, conclude a vicious and wretched life, by an ignominious and painful death. It was some such inconsistency of character which induced honest Captain MacTurk, who had really been a meritorious officer, and was a good-natured, honourable, and well-intentioned man, to place his chief delight in setting his friends by the ears, and then acting as umpire in the dangerous recontres, which, according to his code of honour, were absolutely necessary to restore peace and cordiality. We leave the explanation of such anomalies to the labours of craniologists, for they seem to defy all the researches of the Ethic philosopher.

CHAPTER XIII.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Evans. I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for Master Caius?

Slender. Marry, sir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way; Old Windsor way, and every way.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

SIR BINGO BINKS received the Captain's communication with the same dogged sullenness he had displayed at sending the challenge; a most ungracious *humph*, ascending, as it were, from the very bottom of his stomach, through the folds of a Belcher handkerchief, intimating his acquiescence, in a tone nearly as gracious as that with which the drowsy traveller acknowledges the intimation of the slip-shod ostler, that it is on the stroke of five, and the horn will sound in a minute. Captain MacTurk by no means considered this ejaculation as expressing a proper estimate of his own trouble and services. "Humph?" he replied; "and what does that mean, Sir Bingo? Have not I here had the trouble to put you just into the neat road; and would you have been able to make a handsome affair out of it at all, after you had let it hang so long in the wind, if I had not taken on myself to make it agreeable to the gentleman, and cooked as neat a mess out of it as I have seen a Frenchman do out of a stale sprat?"

Sir Bingo saw it was necessary to utter some intimation of acquiescence and acknowledgment, which, however inarticulate, was sufficient to satisfy the veteran, to whom the adjustment of a personal affair of this kind was a labour of love, and who now, kindly mindful of his promise to Tyrrel, hurried away as if he had been about the most charitable action upon earth, to secure the attendance of some one as a witness on the stranger's part.

Mr. Winterblossom was the person whom MacTurk had in his own mind pitched upon as the fittest person to perform this act of benevolence, and he lost no time in communicating his wish to that worthy gentleman. But Mr. Winterblossom, though a man of the world, and well enough acquainted with such matters, was by no means so passionately addicted

* A kettle of fish is a *fete-champetre* of a particular kind, which is to other *fetes-champetres* what the piscatory eclogues of Brown or Sannazario are to pastoral poetry. A large caldron is boiled by the side of a salmon river, containing a quantity of water, thickened with salt to the consistence of brine. In this the fish is plunged when taken, and eaten by the company *frondi super viridi*. This is accounted the best way of eating salmon, by those who desire to taste the fish in a state of extreme freshness. Others prefer it after being kept a day or two, when the curd melts into oil, and the fish becomes richer and more luscious. The *more judicious gastronomes* eat no other *sauce than a spoonful of the water in which the salmon is boiled, together with a little pepper and vinegar.*

to them as was the man of peace, Captain Hector MacTurk. As a *bon vivant*, he hated trouble of any kind, and the shrewd selfishness of his disposition enabled him to foresee, that a good deal might accrue to a.' concerned in the course of this business. He, therefore, coolly replied, that he knew nothing of Mr. Tyrrel—not even whether he was a gentleman or not; and besides, he had received no regular application in his behalf—he did not, therefore, feel himself at all inclined to go to the field as his second. This refusal drove the poor Captain to despair. He conjured his friend to be more public-spirited, and entreated him to consider the reputation of the Well, which was to them as a common country, and the honour of the company to which they both belonged, and of which Mr. Winterblossom was in a manner the proper representative, as being, with consent of all, the perpetual president. He reminded him how many quarrels had been nightly undertaken and departed from on the ensuing morning, without any suitable consequences—said, "that people began to talk of the place oddly; and that, for his own part, he found his own honour so nearly touched, that he had begun to think he himself would be obliged to bring somebody or other to account, for the general credit of the Well; and now, just when the most beautiful occasion had arisen to put every thing on a handsome footing, it was hard—it was cruel—it was most unjustifiable—in Mr. Winterblossom, to decline so simple a matter as was requested of him."

Dry and taciturn as the Captain was on all ordinary occasions, he proved, on the present, eloquent and almost pathetic; for the tears came into his eyes when he recounted the various quarrels which had become addled, notwithstanding his best endeavours to hatch them into an honourable meeting; and here was one, at length, just chipping the shell, like to be smothered, for want of the most ordinary concession on the part of Winterblossom. In short, that gentleman could not hold out any longer. "It was," he said, "a very foolish business, he thought; but to oblige Sir Bingo and Captain MacTurk, he had no objection to walk with them about noon as far as the Buck-stane, although he must observe the day was hazy, and he had felt a prophetic twinge or two, which looked like a visit of his old acquaintance podagra."

"Never mind that, my excellent friend," said the Captain, "a sup out of Sir Bingo's flask is like enough to put that to rights; and by my soul, it is not the thing he is like to leave behind him on this sort of occasion, unless I be far mistaken in my man."

"But," said Winterblossom, "although I comply with your wishes thus far, Captain MacTurk, I by no means undertake for certain to back this same Master Tyrrel, of whom I know nothing at all, but only agree to go to the place in hopes of preventing mischief."

"Never fash your beard about that, Mr. Winterblossom," replied the Captain; "for a little mischief, as you call it, is become a thing absolutely necessary to the credit of the place; and I am sure, whatever be the consequences, they cannot in the present instance be very fatal to any body; for here is a young fellow that, if he should have a misfortune, nobody will miss, for nobody knows him; then there is Sir Bingo, whom every body knows so well, that they will miss him all the less."

"And there will be Lady Bingo, a wealthy and handsome young widow," said Winterblossom, throwing his hat upon his head with the grace and pretension of former days, and sighing to see, as he looked in the mirror, how much time, that had whitened his hair, rounded his stomach, wrinkled his brow, and bent down his shoulders, had disqualified him, as he expressed it, "for entering for such a plate."

Secure of Winterblossom, the Captain's next anxiety was to obtain the presence of Dr. Quackleben, who, although he wrote himself M. D., did not by any means decline practice as a surgeon, when any job offered for which he was likely to be well paid, as was warranted in the present instance, the wealthy baronet being a party principally concerned. The *Doctor, therefore, like the eagle scented the carnage, snuffed, at the first word, the huge volume* of morocco leather which formed his case of portable instruments, and uncoiled before the Captain, with ostentatious display, its formidable and glittering contents, upon which he began to lecture as upon a copious and interesting text, until the man of war thought it necessary to give him a word of caution.

"Och," says he, "I do pray you, Doctor, to carry that packet of yours under the breast of your coat, or in your pocket, or somewhere out of sight, and by no means to produce or open it before the parties. For although scalpels, and tourniquets, and pincers, and the like, are very ingenious implements, and pretty to behold, and are also useful when time and occasion call for them, yet I have known the sight of them take away a man's fighting stomach, and so lose their owner a job, Dr. Quackleben."

"By my faith, Captain MacTurk," said the Doctor, "you speak as if you were graduated!—I have known these treacherous articles play their master many a cursed trick. The very sight of my forceps, without the least effort on my part, once cured an inveterate toothache of three days' duration, prevented the extraction of a curious molendinar, which it was the very end of their formation to achieve, and sent me home minus a guinea.—But hand me that great-coat, Captain, and we will place the instruments in ambuscade, until they are called into action in due time. I should think something will happen—Sir Bingo is a sure shot at a moorcock."

"Cannot say," replied MacTurk; "I have known the pistol shake many a hand that held the fowling-piece fast enough. Yonder Tyrrel looks like a devilish cool customer—I watched him the whole time I was delivering my errand, and I can promise you he is mettle to the backbone."

"Well—I will have my bandages ready *secundum artem*," replied the man of medicine. "We must guard against hæmorrhage—Sir Bingo is a plethoric subject.—One o'clock, you say—at the Buck-stane—I will be punctual."

"Will you not walk with us?" said Captain MacTurk, who seemed willing to keep his whole convoy together on this occasion, lest, peradventure, any of them had fled from under his patronage.

"No," replied the Doctor, "I must first make an apology to worthy Mrs. Blower, for I had promised her my arm down to the river-side, where they are all to eat a kettle of fish."

"By Cot! and I hope we shall make them a prettier kettle of fish than was ever seen at St. Ronan's," said the Captain, rubbing his hands.

"Don't say *we*, Captain," replied the cautious Doctor; "I for one have nothing to do with the meeting—wash my hands of it. No, no, I cannot afford to be clapt up as accessory.—You ask me to meet you at the Buck-stane—no purpose assigned—I am willing to oblige my worthy friend, Captain MacTurk—walk that way, thinking of nothing particular—hear the report of pistols—hasten to the spot—fortunately just in time to prevent the most fatal consequences—chance most opportunely to have my case of instruments with me—indeed, generally walk with them about me—*nunquam non paratus*—then give my professional definition of the wound and state of the patient. That is the way to give evidence, Captain, before sheriffs, coroners, and such sort of folk—never commit one's self—it is a rule of our profession."

"Well, well, Doctor," answered the Captain, "you know your own ways best; and so you are but there to give a chance of help in case of accident, all the laws of honour will be fully complied with. But it would be a foul reflection upon me, as a man of honour, if I did not take care that there should be somebody to come in thirdsman between Death and my principal."

At the awful hour of one, afternoon, there arrived upon the appointed spot Captain MacTurk, leading to the field the valorous Sir Bingo, not exactly straining like a greyhound in the slips, but rather looking moody like a butcher's bull-dog, which knows he must fight since his master bids him. Yet the Baronet showed no outward flinching or abatement of courage, excepting, that the tune of Jenny Sutton

which he had whistled without intermission since he left the Hotel, had, during the last half mile of their walk, sunk into silence; although, to look at the muscles of the mouth, projection of the lip, and vacancy of the eye, it seemed as if the notes were still passing through his mind, and that he whistled Jenny Sutton in his imagination. Mr. Winterblossom came two minutes after this happy pair and the Doctor was equally punctual.

"Upon my soul," said the former, "this is a mighty silly affair, Sir Bingo, and might, I think, be easily taken up, at less risk to all parties than a meeting of this kind. You should recollect, Sir Bingo, that you have much depending upon your life —you are a married man, Sir Bingo."

Sir Bingo turned the quid in his mouth and squirted out the juice in a most coachman-like manner.

"Mr. Winterblossom," said the Captain, "Sir Bingo has in this matter put himself in my hands, and unless you think yourself more able to direct his course than I am, I must frankly tell you, that I will be disobliged by your interference. You may speak to your own friend as much as you please; and if you find yourself authorized to make any proposal, I shall be desirous to lend an ear to it on the part of my worthy principal, Sir Bingo. But I will be plain with you, that I do not greatly approve of settlements upon the field, though I hope I am a quiet and peaceable man. But here is our honour to be looked after in the first place; and moreover, I must insist that every proposal for accommodation shall originate with your party or yourself."

"*My* party?" answered Winterblossom; "why really, though I came hither at your request, Captain MacTurk, yet I must see more of the matter, ere I can fairly pronounce myself second to a man I never saw but once."

"And, perhaps, may never see again," said the Doctor, looking at his watch; "for it is ten minutes past the hour, and here is no Mr. Tyrrel."

"Hey! what's that you say, Doctor?" said the Baronet, awakened from his apathy.

"He speaks tamned nonsense," said the Captain, pulling out a huge old-fashioned, turnip-shaped implement, with a blackened silver dial-plate. "It is not above three minutes after one by the true time, and I will uphold Mr. Tyrrel to be a man of his word—never saw a man take a thing more coolly."

"Not more coolly than he takes his walk this way," said the Doctor; "for the hour is as I tell you —remember I am professional—have pulses to count by the second and half-second—my time-piece must go as true as the sun."

"And I have mounted guard a thousand times by my watch," said the Captain; "and I defy the devil to say that Hector MacTurk did not always discharge his duty to the twentieth part of the fraction of a second—it was my great grandmother, Lady Killbracklin's and I will maintain its reputation against any timepiece that ever went upon wheels."

"Well, then, look at your own watch, Captain," said Winterblossom, for time stands still with no man, and while we speak the hour advances. On my word, I think this Mr. Tyrrel intends to humbug us."

"Hey! what's that you say?" said Sir Bingo, once more starting from his sullen reverie.

"I shall not look at my watch upon no such matter," said the Captain; "nor will I any way be disposed to doubt your friend's honour, Mr. Winterblossom."

"*My* friend?" said Mr. Winterblossom; "I must tell you once more, Captain, that this Mr. Tyrrel is no friend of mine—none in the world. He is your friend, Captain MacTurk; and I own, if he keeps us waiting much longer on this occasion, I will be apt to consider his friendship as of very little value."

"And how dare you, then, say that the man is my friend?" said the Captain, knitting his brows in a most formidable manner.

"Pooh! pooh! Captain," *answered Winterblossom, coolly, if not contemptuously—"keep all that for the boys; I have lived in the world too long* either to provoke quarrels, or to care about them. So, reserve your fire; it is all thrown away on such an old cock as I am. But I really wish we knew whether this fellow means to come—twenty minutes past the hour—I think it is odds that you are bilked, Sir Bingo?"

"Bilked! hey!" cried Sir Bingo; "by Gad, I always thought so—I wagered with Mowbray he was a raff—I am had, by Gad. I'll wait no longer than the half hour, by Gad, were he a field-marshal."

"You will be directed in that matter by your friend, if you please, Sir Bingo," said the Captain.

"D—n me if I will," returned the Baronet—"Friend? a pretty friend, to bring me out here on such a fool's errand! I knew the fellow was a raff—but I never thought you, with all your chaff about honour, such a d—d spoon as to bring a message from a fellow who has fled the pit!"

"If you regret so much having come here to no purpose," said the Captain, in a very lofty tone, "and if you think I have used you like a spoon, as you say, I will have no objection in life to take Mr. Tyrrel's place, and serve your occasion, my boy."

"By ——! and if you like it, you may fire away, and welcome," said Sir Bingo; "and I'll spin a crown for first shot, for I do not understand being brought here for nothing, d—n me!"

"And there was never man alive so ready as I am to give you something to stay your stomach," said the irritable Highlander.

"Oh, fie, gentlemen! fie, fie, fie!" exclaimed the pacific Mr. Winterblossom—"For shame, Captain—Out upon you, Sir Bingo, are you mad?—what, principal and second!—the like was never heard of—never."

The parties were in some degree recalled to their more cool recollections by this expostulation, yet continued a short quarter-deck walk to and fro, upon parallel lines, looking at each other sullenly as they passed, and bristling like two dogs who have a mind to quarrel, yet hesitate to commence hostilities. During this promenade, also, the perpendicular and erect carriage of the veteran, rising on his toes at every step, formed a whimsical contrast with the heavy loutish shuffle of the bulky Baronet, who had, by dint of practice, very nearly attained that most enviable of all carriages, the gate of a shambling Yorkshire ostler. His coarse spirit was now thoroughly kindled, and like iron, or any other baser metal, which is slow in receiving heat, it retained long the smouldering and angry spirit of resentment that had originally brought him to the place, and now rendered him willing to wreak his uncomfortable feelings upon the nearest object which occurred, since the first purpose of his coming thither was frustrated. In his own phrase, his pluck was up, and finding himself in a fighting humour, he thought it a pity, like Bob Acres, that so much good courage should be thrown away. As, however, that courage after all consisted chiefly in ill humour; and as, in the demeanour of the Captain, he read nothing deferential or deprecatory of his wrath, he began to listen with more attention to the arguments of Mr. Winterblossom, who entreated them not to sully, by private quarrel, the honour they had that day so happily acquired without either blood or risk.

"It was now," he said, "three quarters of an hour past the time appointed for this person, who calls himself Tyrrel, to meet Sir Bingo Binks. Now, instead of standing squabbling here, which serves no purpose, I propose we should reduce to writing the circumstances which attend this affair, for the satisfaction of the company at the Well, and that the memorandum shall be regularly attested by our subscriptions; after which, I shall farther humbly propose that it be subjected to the revision of the Committee of Management."

"I object to any revision of a statement to which my name shall be appended," said the Captain.

"Right—very true, Captain," said the complaisant Mr. Winterblossom; "undoubtedly you know best, and your signature is completely sufficient to authenticate this transaction—however, as it is the most important which has occurred since the Spring was

established, I propose we shall all sign the *procès-verbal*, as I may term it."

"Leave me out, if you please," said the Doctor, not much satisfied that both the original quarrel and the by-battle had passed over without any occasion for the offices of a Machaon; "leave me out, if you please; for it does not become me to be ostensibly concerned in any proceedings, which have had for their object a breach of the peace. And for the importance of waiting here for an hour, in a fine afternoon, it is my opinion there was a more important service done to the Well of St. Ronan's, when I, Quentin Quackleben, M. D., cured Lady Penelope Penfeather of her seventh attack upon the nerves, attended with febrile symptoms."

"No disparagement to your skill at all, Doctor," said Mr. Winterblossom; "but I conceive the lesson which this fellow has received will be a great means to prevent improper persons from appearing at the Spring hereafter; and, for my part, I shall move that no one be invited to dine at the table in future, till his name is regularly entered as a member of the company, in the lists at the public room. And I hope both Sir Bingo and the Captain will receive the thanks of the company, for their spirited conduct in expelling the intruder.—Sir Bingo, will you allow me to apply to your flask—a little twinge I feel, owing to the dampness of the grass."

Sir Bingo, soothed by the consequence he had acquired, readily imparted to the invalid a thimbleful of his cordial, which, we believe, had been prepared by some cunning chymist in the wilds of Glenlivat. He then filled a bumper, and extended it towards the veteran, as an unequivocal symptom of reconciliation. The real turbinacious flavour no sooner reached the nose of the Captain, than the beverage was turned down his throat with symptoms of most unequivocal applause.

"I shall have some hope of the young fellows of this day," he said, "now that they begin to give up their Dutch and French distilled waters, and stick to genuine Highland ware. By Cot, it is the only liquor fit for a gentleman to drink in a morning, if he can have the good fortune to come by it, you see."

"Or after dinner either, Captain," said the Doctor, to whom the glass had passed in rotation; "it is worth all the wines in France for flavour, and more cordial to the system besides."

"And now," said the Captain, "that we may not go off the ground with any thing on our stomachs worse than the whisky, I can afford to say, (as Captain Hector MacTurk's character is tolerably well established,) that I am sorry for the little difference that has occurred betwixt me and my worthy friend, Sir Bingo, here."

"And since you are so civil, Captain," said Sir Bingo, "why, I am sorry too—only it would put the devil out of temper to lose so fine a fishing day—wind south—fine air on the pool—water mettled from the flood—just in trim—and I dare say three pairs of hooks have passed over my cast before this time!"

He closed this elaborate lamentation with a libation of the same cordial which he had imparted to his companions; and they returned in a body to the Hotel, where the transactions of the morning were soon afterwards announced to the company, by the following program:—

STATEMENT.

"Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, having found himself aggrieved by the uncivil behaviour of an individual calling himself Francis Tyrrel, now or lately a resident at the Cleikum Inn, Aultoun of St. Ronan's; and having empowered Captain Hector MacTurk to wait upon the said Mr. Tyrrel to demand an apology, under the alternative of personal satisfaction, according to the laws of honour and the practice of gentlemen, the said Tyrrel voluntarily engaged to meet the said Sir Bingo Binks, baronet, at the Buck-stane near St. Ronan's Burn, upon this present day, being Wednesday —— August. In consequence of which appointment, we, the undersigned, did attend at the *place named, from one* o'clock till two, without seeing or hearing any thing whatever of the said Francis Tyrrel, or any one in his behalf—which fact we make thus publicly known, that all men, and particularly the distinguished company assembled at the Fox Hotel, may be duly apprized of the character and behaviour of the said Francis Tyrrel, in case of his again presuming to intrude himself into the society of persons of honour.

"The Fox Inn and Hotel, St. Ronan's Well, August 18—.

(Signed) "BINGO BINKS,
"HECTOR MACTURK,
"PHILIP WINTERBLOSSOM."

A little lower followed this separate attestation:

"I, Quentin Quackleben, M. D., F. R. S., D. E. B. L., X. Z., &c. &c., being called upon to attest what I know in the said matter, do hereby verify, that being by accident at the Buck-stane, near St. Ronan's Burn, on this present day, at the hour of one after noon, and chancing to remain there for the space of nearly an hour, conversing with Sir Bingo Binks, Captain MacTurk, and Mr. Winterblossom, we did not, during that time, see or hear any thing of or from the person calling himself Francis Tyrrel, whose presence at that place seemed to be expected by the gentlemen I have just named." This affidavit was dated like the former, and certified under the augmented hand of Quentin Quackleben, M. D., &c. &c. &c.

Again, and prefaced by the averment that an improper person had been lately introduced into the company of St. Ronan's Well, there came forth a legislative enactment, on the part of the Committee, declaring, "that no one shall in future be invited to the dinners, or balls, or other entertainments of the Well, until their names shall be regularly entered in the books kept for the purpose at the rooms." Lastly, there was a vote of thanks to Sir Bingo Binks and Captain MacTurk for their spirited conduct, and the pains which they had taken to exclude an improper person from the company at St. Ronan's Well.

These annunciations speedily became the magnet of the day. All idlers crowded to peruse them; and it would be endless to notice the "God bless me's"—the "Lord have a care of us"—the "Saw you ever the like's" of gossips, any more than the "Dear me's" and "Oh, lan's" of the titupping misses, and the oaths of the pantalooned or buck-skin'd beaux. The character of Sir Bingo rose like the stocks at the news of a despatch from the Duke of Wellington, and what was extraordinary, attained some consequence even in the estimation of his lady. All shook their heads at the recollection of the unlucky Tyrrel, and found out much in his manner, and address which convinced them that he was but an adventurer and swindler. A few, however, less partial to the Committee of Management, (for whenever there is an administration, there will soon arise an opposition) whispered among themselves, that, to give the fellow his due, the man, be he what he would, had only come among them, like the devil, when he was called for; and honest Dame Blower blessed herself when she heard of such blood-thirsty doings as had been intended, and "thanked God that honest Doctor Kickherben had come to nae harm amang a' the nonsense."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONSULTATION.

Clown. I hope here be proofs.—*Measure for Measure.*

THE borough of —— lies, as all the world knows, about fourteen miles distant from St. Ronan's, being the county town of that shire, which, as described in the Tourist's Guide, numbers among its objects of interest that gay and popular watering-place, whose fame, no doubt, will be greatly enhanced by the present annals of its earlier history. As it is at present unnecessary to be more particular concerning the scene of our story, we will fill up the blank left in the first name with the fictitious appellation of Marchthorn, having often found ourselves embarrassed in the course of a story, by the occurrence of an ugly hiatus, which we

cannot always at first sight fill up, with the proper reference to the rest of the narrative.

Marchthorn, then, was an old-fashioned Scottish town, the street of which, on market-day, showed a reasonable number of stout great-coated yeomen, bartering or dealing for the various commodities of their farms; and on other days of the week, only a few forlorn burghers, crawling about like half-awakened flies, and watching the town steeple till the happy sound of twelve strokes from Time's oracle should tell them it was time to take their meridian dram. The narrow windows of the shops intimated very imperfectly the miscellaneous contents of the interior, where every merchant, as the shopkeepers of Marchthorn were termed, *more Scotico*, sold every thing that could be thought of. As for manufactures, there were none, except that of the careful Town-Council, who were mightily busied in preparing the warp and woof, which, at the end of every five or six years, the town of Marchthorn contributed, for the purpose of weaving the fourth or fifth part of a member of Parliament.

In such a town, it usually happens, that the Sheriff-clerk, especially supposing him agent for several lairds of the higher order, is possessed of one of the best-looking houses; and such was that of Mr. Bindloose. None of the smartness of the brick-built and brass-hammered mansion of a southern attorney appeared indeed in this mansion, which was a tall, thin, grim-looking building, in the centre of the town, with narrow windows and projecting gables, notched into that sort of descent, called crow-steps, and having the lower casements defended by stancheons of iron; for Mr. Bindloose, as frequently happens, kept a branch of one of the two national banks, which had been lately established in the town of Marchthorn.

Towards the door of this tenement, there advanced slowly up the ancient, but empty streets of this famous borough, a vehicle, which, had it appeared in Piccadilly, would have furnished unremitted laughter for a week, and conversation for a twelve month. It was a two-wheeled vehicle, which claimed none of the modern appellations of tilbury, tandem, dennet, or the like; but aspired only to the humble name of that almost forgotten accommodation, a whiskey; or, according to some authorities, a tim-whiskey. Green was, or had been, its original colour, and it was placed sturdily and safely low upon its little old-fashioned wheels, which bore much less than the usual proportion to the size of the carriage which they sustained. It had a calash head, which had been pulled up, in consideration either to the dampness of the morning air or to the retiring delicacy of the fair form, which, shrouded by leathern curtains, tenanted this venerable specimen of antediluvian coach-building.

But, as this fair and modest dame no way aspired to the skill of a charioteer, the management of a horse, which seemed as old as the carriage he drew, was in the exclusive charge of an old fellow in a postilion's jacket, whose gray hairs escaped on each side of an old-fashioned velvet jockey-cap, and whose left shoulder was so considerably elevated above his head, that it seemed as if, with little effort, his neck might have been tucked under his arm, like that of a roasted grouse-cock. This gallant equerry was mounted on a steed as old as that which toiled betwixt the shafts of the carriage, and which he guided by a leading rein. Goading one animal with his single spur, and stimulating the other with his whip, he effected a reasonable trot upon the causeway, which only terminated when the whiskey stopped at Mr. Bindloose's door—an event of importance enough to excite the curiosity of the inhabitants of that and the neighbouring houses. Wheels were laid aside, needles left sticking in the half-finished seams, and many a nose, spectacled and unspectacled, was popped out of the adjoining windows, which had the good fortune to command a view of Mr. Bindloose's front door. The faces of two or three giggling clerks were visible at the barred casements of which we have spoken, much amused at the descent of an old lady from this respectable carriage, whose dress and appearance might possibly have been fashionable *at the time when her equipage was new. A satin cardinal, lined with gray* squirrels' skin, and a black silk bonnet, trimmed with crape, were garments which did not now excite the respect, which in their fresher days they had doubtless commanded. But there was that in the features of the wearer, which would have commanded Mr. Bindloose's best regard, though it had appeared in far worse attire; for he beheld the face of an ancient customer, who had always paid her law expenses with the ready penny, and whose accompt with the bank was balanced by a very respectable sum at her credit. It was, indeed, no other than our respected friend, Mrs. Dods of the Cleikum Inn, St. Ronan's, Aultoun.

Now her arrival intimated matter of deep import. Meg was a person of all others most averse to leave her home, where, in her own opinion at least, nothing went on well without her immediate superintendence. Limited, therefore, as was her sphere, she remained fixed in the centre thereof; and few as were her satellites, they were under the necessity of performing their revolutions around her, while she herself continued stationary. Saturn, in fact, would be scarce more surprised at a passing call from the Sun, than Mr. Bindloose at this unexpected visit of his old client. In one breath he rebuked the inquisitive impertinence of his clerks, in another stimulated his housekeeper, old Hannah—for Mr. Bindloose was a bluff bachelor—to get tea ready in the green parlour; and while yet speaking, was at the side of the whiskey, unclasping the curtains, rolling down the apron, and assisting his old friend to dismount.

"The japanned tea-caddie, Hannah—the best bohea—bid Tib kindle a spark of fire—the morning's damp—Draw in the giggling faces of ye, ye d—d idle scoundrels, or laugh at your ain toom pouches—it will be lang or your weeldoing fill them." This was spoken, as the honest lawyer himself might have said, *in transitu*, the rest by the side of the carriage. "My stars, Mrs. Dods, and is this really your ain sell, *in propria persona*?—Wha lookit for you at such a time of day?—Anthony, how's a' wi' ye, Anthony?—so ye hae taen the road again, Anthony—help us down wi' the apron, Anthony—that will do.—Lean on me, Mrs. Dods—help your mistress, Anthony—put the horses in my stable—the lads will give you the key.—Come away, Mrs. Dods—I am blithe to see you straight your legs on the causeway of our auld borough again—come in by, and we'll see to get you some breakfast, for ye hae been asteer early this morning."

"I am a sair trouble to you, Mr. Bindloose," said the old lady, accepting the offer of his arm, and accompanying him into the house; "I am e'en a sair trouble to you, but I could not rest till I had your advice on something of moment."

"Happy will I be to serve you, my gude auld acquaintance," said the Clerk; "but sit you down—sit you down—sit you down, Mrs. Dods—meat and mess never hindered wark. Ye are something overcome wi' your travel—the spirit cannot aye bear through the flesh, Mrs. Dods; ye should remember that your life is a precious one, and ye should take care of your health, Mrs. Dods."

"My life precious!" exclaimed Meg Dods; "nane o' your whullywhaing, Mr. Bindloose—Deil ane wad miss the auld girning alewife, Mr. Bindloose, unless it were here and there a puir body, and maybe the auld house-tyke, that wadna be sae weel guided, puir fallow."

"Fie, fie! Mrs. Dods," said the Clerk, in a tone of friendly rebuke; "it vexes an auld friend to hear ye speak of yourself in that respectless sort of a way; and, as for quitting us, I bless God I have not seen you look better this half score of years. But maybe you will be thinking of setting your house in order, which is the act of a carefu' and of a Christian woman—O! it's an awfu' thing to die intestate, if we had grace to consider it."

"Aweel, I daur say I'll consider that some day soon Mr. Bindloose; but that's no my present errand."

"Be it what it like, Mrs. Dods, ye are right heartily welcome here, and we have a' the day to speak of the business in hand—*festina lente*, that is the true

law language—hooly and fairly, as one may say—ill treating of business with an empty stomach—and here comes your tea, and I hope Hannah has made it to your taste."

Meg sipped her tea—confessed Hannah's skill in the mysteries of the Chinese herb—sipped again, then tried to eat a bit of bread and butter, with very indifferent success; and notwithstanding the lawyer's compliments to her good looks, seemed, in reality, on the point of becoming ill.

"In the deil's name, what is the matter?" said the lawyer, too well read in a profession where sharp observation is peculiarly necessary, to suffer these symptoms of agitation to escape him. "Ay, dame? ye are taking this business of yours deeper to heart than ever I kend you take ony thing. Ony o' your banded debtors failed, or like to fail? What then! cheer ye up—you can afford a little loss, and it canna be ony great matter, or I would doubtless have heard of it."

"In troth, but it *is* a loss, Mr. Bindloose; and what say ye to the loss of a friend?"

This was a possibility which had never entered the lawyer's long list of calamities, and he was at some loss to conceive what the old lady could possibly mean by so sentimental a prolusion. But just as he began to come out with his "Ay, ay, we are all mortal, *Vita incerta, mors certissima!*" and two or three more pithy reflections, which he was in the habit of uttering after funerals, when the will of the deceased was about to be opened,—just then Mrs. Dods was pleased to become the expounder of her own oracle.

"I see how it is, Mr. Bindloose," she said; "I maun tell my ain ailment, for you are no likely to guess it; and so, if ye will shut the door, and see that nane of your giggling callants are listening in the passage, I will e'en tell you how things stand with me.

Mr. Blindloose hastily arose to obey her commands, gave a cautionary glance into the Bank-Office, and saw that his idle apprentices were fast at their desks—turned the key upon them, as if it were in a fit of absence, and then returned, not a little curious to know what could be the matter with his old friend: and leaving off all further attempts to put cases, quietly drew his chair near hers, and awaited her own time to make her communication.

"Mr. Bindloose," said she, "I am no sure that you may mind, about six or seven years ago, that there were twa daft English callants, lodgers of mine, that had some trouble from auld St. Ronan's about shooting on the Springwell-head muirs."

"I mind it as weel as yesterday, Mistress," said the Clerk; "by the same token you gave me a note for my trouble, (which wasna worth speaking about,) and bade me no bring in a bill against the puir bairns—ye had ayo a kind heart, Mrs. Dods."

"Maybe, and maybe no, Mr. Bindloose—that is just as I find folk.—But concerning these lads, they baith left the country, and, as I think, in some ill blude wi' ane another, and now the auldest and the doucest of the twa came back again about a fortnight sin' syne, and has been my guest ever since."

"Aweel, and I trust he is not at his auld tricks again, goodwife?" answered the Clerk. "I havena sae muckle to say either wi' the new Sheriff or the Bench of Justices as I used to hae, Mrs. Dods—and the Procurator-fiscal is very severe on poaching, being borne out by the new Association—few of our auld friends of the Killnakelty are able to come to the sessions now, Mrs. Dods."

"The waur for the country, Mr. Bindloose," replied the old lady—"they were decent, considerate men, that didna plague a puir herd callant muckle about a moorfowl or a mawkin, unless he turned common fowler—Sir Robert Ringhorse used to say the herd lads shot as mony gleds and pyots as they did game.—But new lords new laws—naething but fine and imprisonment, and the game no a feather the plentier. If I wad hae a brace or twa of birds in the house, as *every body looks for them* after the twelfth—I ken *what they are like to cost me*—And what for no?—*ask maun be paid for.—There is John Pirner* himsell, that has keepit the muir-side thirty year in sp the lairds in the country, shoots, he tells me, days, as if he felt a rape about his neck."

"It wasna about ony game business, then, wanted advice?" said Bindloose, who, thoug what of a digresser himself, made little al for the excursions of others from the su hand.

"Indeed is it no, Mr. Bindloose," said Me it is e'en about this unhappy callant that I you about. Ye maun ken I have cleiket a p fancy to this lad, Francis Tirl—a fancy tha surprises my very sell, Mr. Bindloose, only t is nae sin in it."

"None—none in the world, Mrs. Dods," lawyer, thinking at the same time within h "Oho! the mist begins to clear up—the young has hit the mark, I see—winged the old bar hen!—ay, ay, a marriage-contract, no doub maun gie her line. Ye are a wise woman, Mrs he continued aloud, "and can doubtless con chances and the changes of human affairs."

"But I could never have considered what fallen this puir lad, Mr. Bindloose," said Mr "through the malice of wicked men.—He liv at the Cleikum, as I tell you, for mair than a f as quiet as a lamb on a lea-rig—a decenter l came within my door—ate and drank enou gude of the house, and nae mair than was fo gude, whether of body or soul—cleared his l Saturday at e'en, as regularly as Saturd round."

"An admirable customer, no doubt, Mrs. said the lawyer.

"Never was the like of him for that matt swered the honest dame. "But to see the r men!—Some of thae landloupers and gill-fli at the filthy puddle yonder, that they ca' th had heard of this puir lad, and the bits of pict he made fashion of drawing, and they maun c awa doun to the hottle, where mony a bon they had clecked, Mr. Bindloose, baith of Mr. of mysell."

"A Commissary Court business," said the going off again upon a false scent. "I shall t jackets for them, Mrs. Dods, if you can b tight evidence of the facts—I will soon bring fine and palinode—I will make them repent n with your good name."

"My gude name! What the sorrow is th wi' my name, Mr. Bindloose?" said the irrit ent. "I think ye hae been at the wee ca morning, for as early as it is—My gude name body touched my gude name, I would neit counsel nor commissary—I wad be down amai like a jer-falcon amang a wheen wild-geese, best amang them that dared to say ony thing Dods by what was honest and civil, I wad su her cockernonnie was made of her ain hair folk's. *My* gude name, indeed!"

"Weel, weel, Mrs. Dods, I was mista'en a'," said the writer, "I was mista'en; and I say you would haud your ain wi' your neighl weel as ony woman in the land—But let us h what the grief is, in one word."

"In one word, then, Clerk Bindloose, it short of—murder," said Meg in a low tone, a very utterance of the word startled her.

"Murder! murder, Mrs. Dods?—it cann there is not a word of it in the Sheriff-office—curator-fiscal kens nothing of it—there coul murder in the country, and me not hear c God's sake, take heed what you say, wom dinna get yourself into trouble."

"Mr. Bindloose, I can but speak accordi lights," said Mrs. Dods; "you are in a sens in Israel, at least you are one of the scribes authority—and I tell you, with a wae and heart, that this puir callant of mine that was in my house has been murdered or kidnap amang thae banditti folk down at the Nev and I'll have the law put in force against th should cost me a hundred pounds."

The Clerk stood much astonished at the

Meg's accusation, and the pertinacity with which she seemed disposed to insist upon it.

"I have this comfort," she continued, "that whatever has happened, it has been by no fault of mine, Mr. Bindloose; for weel I wot, before that bloodthirsty auld half-pay Philistine, MacTurk, got to speech of him, I clawed his cantle to some purpose with my hearth-besom.—But the poor simple bairn himsell, that had nae mair knowledge of the wickedness of human nature than a calf has of a flesher's gully, he threepit to see the auld hardened bloodshedder, and trysted wi' him to meet wi' some of the gang at an hour certain that same day, and awa he gaed to keep tryst, but since that hour naebody ever has set een on him.—And the mansworn villains now want to put a disgrace on him, and say that he fled the country rather than face them!—a likely story—fled the country for them!—and leave his bill unsettled—him that was sae regular—and his portmantie and his fishing-rod, and the pencils and pictures he held sic a wark about!—It's my faithful belief, Mr. Bindloose—and ye may trust me or no as ye like—that he had some foul play between the Cleikum and the Buck-stane. I have thought it, and I have dreamed it, and I will be at the bottom of it, or my name is not Meg Dods, and that I wad have them a' to reckon on.—Ay, ay, that's right Mr. Bindloose, tak out your pen and inkhorn, and let us set about it to purpose."

With considerable difficulty, and at the expense of much cross-examination, Mr. Bindloose extracted from his client a detailed account of the proceedings of the company at the Well towards Tyrrel, so far as they were known to, or suspected by Meg, making notes, as the examination proceeded, of what appeared to be matter of consequence. After a moment's consideration, he asked the dame the very natural question, how she came to be acquainted with the material fact, that a hostile appointment was made between Captain MacTurk and her lodger, when, according to her own account, it was made *intra parietes*, and *remotis testibus?*

"Ay, but we victuallers ken weel eneugh what goes on in our ain houses," said Meg—"And what for no?—If ye *maun* ken a' about it, I e'en listened through the keyhole of the door."

"And do you say you heard them settle an appointment for a duel?" said the Clerk; "and did you no take ony measures to hinder mischief, Mrs. Dods, having such a respect for this lad as you say you have, Mrs Dods?—I really wadna have looked for the like o' this at your hands."

"In truth, Mr. Bindloose," said Meg, putting her apron to her eyes, "and that's what vexes me mair than a' the rest, and ye needna say muckle to ane whose heart is e'en the sairer that she has been a thought to blame. But there has been mony a cnallenge as they ca' it, passed in my house when thae daft lads of the Wildfire Club and the Helterskelter were upon their rambles; and they had aye sense eneugh to make it up without fighting, sae that I really did not apprehend ony thing like mischief.—And ye maun think, moreover, Mr. Bindloose, that it would have been an unco thing if a guest, in a decent and creditable public like mine, was to have cried coward before ony of thae land-louping blackguards that live down at the hottle yonder."

"That is to say, Mrs. Dods, you were desirous your guest should fight for the honour of your house," said Bindloose.

"What for no, Mr. Bindloose?—Isna that kind of fray aye about honour? and what for should the honour of a substantial, four-nooked, sclated house of three stories, no be foughten for, as weel as the credit of ony of these feckless callants that make such a fray about their reputation?—I promise you my house, the Cleikum, stood in the Auld Town of St. Ronan's before they were born, and it will stand there after they are hanged, as I trust some of them are like to be."

"Well, but perhaps your lodger had less zeal for the honour of the house, and has *quietly taken himself out of harm's way," said Mr. Bindloose; "for if I understand your story, this meeting never took place."*

"Have less zeal!" said Meg, determined to be pleased with no supposition of her lawyer, "Mr. Bindloose, ye little ken him—I wish ye had seen him when he was angry!—I dared hardly face him mysell, and there are no mony folk that I am feared for—Meeting! there was nae meeting, I trow—they never dared to meet him fairly—but I am sure waur came of it than ever would have come of a meeting; for Anthony heard twa shots gang off as he was watering the auld naig down at the burn, and that is not far frae the footpatch that leads to the Buck-stane. I was angry at him for no making on to see what the matter was, but he thought it was auld Pirner out with the double barrel, and he wasna keen of making himself a witness, in case he suld have been ca'd on in the Poaching Court."

"Well," said the Sheriff-clerk, "and I dare say he did hear a poacher fire a couple of shots—nothing more likely. Believe me, Mrs. Dods, your guest had no fancy for the party Captain MacTurk invited him to—and being a quiet sort of man, he has just walked away to his own home, if he has one—I am really sorry you have given yourself the trouble of this long journey about so simple a matter."

Mrs. Dods remained with her eyes fixed on the ground in a very sullen and discontented posture, and when she spoke, it was in a tone of corresponding displeasure.

"Aweel—aweel—live and learn, they say—I thought I had a friend in you, Mr. Bindloose—I am sure I aye took your part when folk miscan'd ye, and said ye were this, that, and the other thing, and little better than an auld sneck-drawing loon, Mr. Bindloose.—And ye have aye keepit my penny of money, though, nae doubt, Tam Turnpenny lives nearer me, and they say he allows half a per cent mair than ye do if the siller lies, and mine is but seldom steered."

"But ye have not the Bank's security, madam," said Mr. Bindloose, reddening. "I say harm of nae man's credit—ill would it beseem me—but there is a difference between Tam Turnpenny and the Bank, I trow."

"Weel, weel, Bank here Bank there, I thought I had a friend in you, Mr. Bindloose; and here am I, come from my ain house all the way to yours for sma' comfort, I think."

"My stars, madam," said the perplexed scribe, "what would you have me to do in such a blind story as yours, Mrs. Dods?—Be a thought reasonable—consider that there is no *Corpus delicti.*"

"*Corpus delicti?* and what's that?" said Meg; "something to be paid for, nae doubt, for your hard words a' end in that.—And what for suld I no have a Corpus delicti, or a Habeas Corpus, or ony other Corpus that I like, sae lang as I am willing to lick and lay down the ready siller?"

"Lord help and pardon us, Mrs. Dods," said the distressed agent, "ye mistake the matter a'thegether! When I say there is no Corpus delicti, I mean to say there is no proof that a crime has been committed."*

"And does the man say that murder is not a crime, then?" answered Meg, who had taken her own view of the subject far too strongly to be converted to any other—"Weel I wot it's a crime, baith by the law o God and man, and mony a pretty man has been strapped for it."

"I ken all that very weel," answered the writer; "but, my stars, Mrs. Dods, there is nae evidence of murder in this case—nae proof that a man has been slain—nae production of his dead body—and that is what we call the Corpus delicti."

"Weel, than, the deil lick it out of ye," said Meg, rising in wrath, "for I will awa hame again; and as for the puir lad's body, I'll hae it fund, if it cost me turning the earth for three miles round wi' pick and shool—if it were but to give the puir bairn Christian burial, and to bring punishment on MacTurk and the murdering crew at the Waal, and to shame an auld doited fule like yoursell, John Bindloose."

She rose in wrath to call her vehicle; but it was neither the interest nor the intention of the writer that

* For example, a man cannot be tried for murder merely in the case of the non-appearance of an individual; there must be proof that the party has been murdered.

hie customer and he should part on such indifferent terms. He implored her patience, and reminded her that the horses, poor things, had just come off their stage—an argument which sounded irresistible in the ears of the old she-publican, in whose early education due care of the post-cattle mingled with the most sacred duties. She therefore resumed her seat again in a sullen mood, and Mr. Bindloose was cudgeling his brains for some argument which might bring the old lady to reason, when his attention was drawn by a noise in the passage.

CHAPTER XV.

A PRAISER OF PAST TIMES.

——— Now your traveller,
He and his toothpick at my worship's mess.
King John.

THE noise stated at the conclusion of last chapter to have disturbed Mr. Bindloose, was the rapping of one, as in haste and impatience, at the Bank-office door, which office was an apartment of the Banker's house, on the left hand of his passage, as the parlour in which he had received Mrs. Dods was upon the right.

In general, this office was patent to all having business there; but at present, whatever might be the hurry of the party who knocked, the clerks within the office could not admit him, being themselves made prisoners by the prudent jealousy of Mr. Bindloose, to prevent them from listening to his consultation with Mrs. Dods. They therefore answered the angry and impatient knocking of the stranger only with stifled giggling from within, finding it no doubt an excellent joke, that their master's precaution was thus interfering with their own discharge of duty.

With one or two hearty curses upon them, as the regular plagues of his life, Mr. Bindloose darted into the passage, and admitted the stranger into his official apartment. The doors both of the parlour and office remaining open, the ears of Luckie Dods (experienced, as the reader knows, in collecting intelligence) could partly overhear what passed. The conversation seemed to regard a cash transaction of some importance, as Meg became aware when the stranger raised a voice which was naturally sharp and high, as he did when uttering the following words, towards the close of a conversation which had lasted about five minutes—"Premium?—Not a pice, sir—not a courie—not a farthing—premium for a Bank of England bill?—d'ye take me for a fool, sir?—do not I know that you call forty days par when you give remittances to London?"

Mr. Bindloose was here heard to mutter something indistinctly about the custom of the trade.

"Custom!" retorted the stranger, "no such thing—damn'd bad custom, if it is one—don't tell me of customs—'Sbodikins, man, I know the rate of exchange all over the world, and have drawn bills from Timbuctoo—My friends in the Strand filed it along with Bruce's from Gondar—talk to me of premium on a Bank of England post-bill!—What d'ye look at the bill for?—D'ye think it doubtful?—I can change it."

"By no means necessary," answered Bindloose, "the bill is quite right; but it is usual to indorse, sir."

"Certainly—reach me a pen—d'ye think I can write with my rattan?—What sort of ink is this?—yellow as curry sauce—never mind—there is my name—Peregrine Touchwood—I got it from the Willoughbies, my Christian name—Have I my full change here?"

"Your full change, sir," answered Bindloose.

"Why, you should give *me* a premium, friend, instead of me giving you one."

"It is out of our way, I assure you, sir," said the Banker, "quite out of our way—but if you would step into the parlour and take a cup of tea"——

"Why, ay," said the stranger, his voice sounding more distinctly as (talking all the while, and ushered along by Mr. Bindloose) he left the office and moved towards the parlour, "a cup of tea were no such bad thing, if one could come by it genuine—but as for *your premium*"—— *So saying, he entered the parlour, and made his how to Mrs. Dods, who, seeing what she called a decent, purpose-like body, and* aware that his pocket was replenished with English and Scottish paper currency, returned the compliment with her best curtsey.

Mr. Touchwood, when surveyed more at leisure, was a short, stout, active man, who, though sixty years of age and upwards, retained in his sinews and frame the elasticity of an earlier period. His countenance expressed self-confidence, and something like a contempt for those who had neither seen nor endured so much as he had himself. His short black hair was mingled with gray, but not entirely whitened by it. His eyes were jet-black, deep-set, small, and sparkling, and contributed, with a short turned-up nose, to express an irritable and choleric habit. His complexion was burnt to a brick-colour by the vicissitudes of climate, to which it had been subjected; and his face, which at the distance of a yard or two seemed hale and smooth, appeared, when closely examined, to be seamed with a million of wrinkles, crossing each other in every direction possible, but as fine as if drawn by the point of a very small needle.* His dress was a blue coat and buff waistcoat, half-boots remarkably well blacked, and a silk handkerchief tied with military precision. The only antiquated part of his dress was a cocked hat of equilateral dimensions, in the button-hole of which he wore a very small cockade. Mrs. Dods, accustomed to judge of persons by their first appearance, said, that in three steps which he made from the door to the tea-table, she recognised, without the possibility of mistake, the gait of a person who was well to pass in the world; "and that," she added with a wink, "is what we victuallers are seldom deceived in. If a gold-laced waistcoat has an empty pouch, the plain swan's down will be the brawer of the twa."

"A drizzling morning, good madam," said Mr. Touchwood, as with a view of sounding what sort of company he had got into.

"A fine saft morning for the crap, sir," answered Mrs. Dods, with equal solemnity.

"Right, my good madam; *saft* is the very word, though it has been sometime since I heard it. I have cast a double hank about the round world since I last heard of a soft† morning."

"You will be from these parts, then?" said the writer, ingeniously putting a case, which, he hoped, would induce the stranger to explain himself. "And yet, sir," he added, after a pause, "I was thinking that Touchwood is not a Scottish name, at least that I ken of."

"Scottish name?—no," replied the traveller; "but a man may have been in these parts before, without being a native—or, being a native, he may have had some reason to change his name—there are many reasons why men change their names."

"Certainly, and some of them very good ones," said the lawyer; "as in the common case of an heir of entail, where deed of provision and tailzie is maist ordinarily implemented by taking up name and arms."

"Ay, or in the case of a man having made the country too hot for him under his own proper appellative," said Mr. Touchwood.

"That is a supposition, sir," replied the lawyer, "which it would ill become me to put.—But at any rate, if you knew this country formerly, ye cannot but be marvellously pleased with the change we have been making since the American war—hill-sides bearing clover instead of heather—rents doubled, trebled, quadrupled—the auld reekie dungeons pulled down, and gentlemen living in as good houses as you will see any where in England."

"Much good may it do them, for a pack of fools!" replied Mr. Touchwood, hastily.

"You do not seem much delighted with our improvements, sir?" said the banker, astonished to hear a dissentient voice where he conceived all men were unanimous.

"Pleased!" answered the stranger—"Yes, as much pleased as I am with the devil, who I believe set many

* This was a peculiarity in the countenance of the celebrated Cossack leader, Platoff.

† An epithet which expresses, in Scotland, what the barometer calls rainy.

going. Ye have got an idea that every thing changed—Unstable as water, ye shall not ill ye, there have been more changes in this of yours within the last forty years, than it empires of the East for the space of four for what I know."

"why not," replied Bindloose, "if they be or the better?"

"ey are *not* for the better," replied Mr. Touchwood. "I left your peasantry as poor as rats t honest and industrious, enduring their lot ld with firmness, and looking forward to ith hope—Now they are mere eye-servants at their watches, forsooth, every ten minhey should work for their master half an fter losing-time—And then, instead of he Bible on the work days, to kittle the with doubtful points of controversy on the they glean all their theology from Tom Voltaire."

"I wot the gentleman speaks truth," said . "I fand a bundle of their bawbee blasn my ain kitchen—But I trow I made a e of the packman loon that brought them! ent wi' turning the tawpies' heads wi' baldriving them daft wi' ribands, to cheat of their precious souls, and gie them the ire, that I suld say sae, in exchange for the suld support their puir father that's aff bedridden!"

"I madam," said the stranger; "they think f their father than Regan or Goneril."

"d troth, ye have skeel of our sect, sir," dame; "they are gomerils, every one of all them sae every hour of the day, but profiting by the doctrine."

hen the brutes are turned mercenary, said Mr. Touchwood. "I remember when man would have scorned to touch a shile had not earned, and yet was as ready to nger as an Arab of the desert. And now, lrop my cane the other day as I was riding who was working at the hedge made three t it—I thanked him, and my friend threw his head, and 'damned my thanks, if that Saint Giles could not have excelled him."

weel," said the banker, "that may be a' as r, and nae doubt wealth makes wit waver; untry's wealthy, that cannot be denied, , sir, ye ken"——

"wealth makes itself wings," answered the anger; "but I am not quite sure we have it

You make a great show, indeed, with ld cultivation; but stock is not capital, any the fat of a corpulent man is health or

Mr. Touchwood," said Bindloose, who n account in the modern improvements, andlords, living like lairds in good earnest, s with better housekeeping than the lairds e, and facing Whitsunday and Martinmas face my breakfast—if these are not signs I do not know where to seek for them."

re signs of folly, sir," replied Touchwood; is poor, and renders itself poorer by de thought rich; and how they come by the y are so ostentatious of, you, who are a haps can tell me better than I can guess."

is maybe an accommodation bill dis- ow and then, Mr. Touchwood; but men accommodation, or the world would stand mmodation is the grease that makes the "

kes them go down hill to the devil," anuchwood. "I left you bothered about one but the whole country is an Air bank now, nd who is to pay the piper?—But it's all I see little more of it—it is a perfect Babel, turn the head of a man who has spent his ople who love sitting better than running, ter than speaking, who never eat but when ngry, never *drink but when thirsty, never out a jest, and never speak but when they thing to say. But here, it is all run, ride,* and drive—froth, foam, and flippancy—no steadiness —no character."

"I'll lay the burden of my life," said Dame Dods, looking towards her friend Bindloose, "that the gentleman has been at the new Spaw-waal yonder!"

"Spaw do you call it, madam?—If you mean the new establishment that has been spawned down yonder at St. Ronan's, it is the very fountain-head of folly and coxcombry—a Babel for noise, and a Vanity-fair for nonsense—no well in your swamps tenanted by such a conceited colony of clamorous frogs."

"Sir, sir!" exclaimed Dame Dods, delighted with the unqualified sentence passed upon her fashionable rivals, and eager to testify her respect for the judicious stranger who had pronounced it,—"will you let me have the pleasure of pouring you out a dish of tea?" And so saying, she took bustling possession of the administration which had hitherto remained in the hands of Mr. Bindloose himself. "I hope it is to your taste, sir," she continued, when the traveller had accepted her courtesy with the grateful acknowledgment, which men addicted to speak a great deal usually show to a willing auditor.

"It is as good as we have any right to expect, ma'am," answered Mr. Touchwood; "not quite like what I have drunk at Canton with old Fong Qua—but the Celestial empire does not send its best tea to Leadenhall Street, nor does Leadenhall Street send its best to Marchthorn."

"That may be very true, sir," replied the dame "but I will venture to say that Mr. Bindloose's tea is muckle better than you had at the Spaw-waal yonder."

"Tea, madam!—I saw none—Ash leaves and black-thorn leaves were brought in in painted canisters, and handed about by powder-monkeys in livery, and consumed by those who liked it, amidst the chattering of parrots and the squalling of kittens. I longed for the days of the Spectator, when I might have laid my penny on the bar, and retired without ceremony—But no—this blessed decoction was circulated under the auspices of some half-crazed bluestocking or other, and we were saddled with all the formality of an entertainment, for this miserable allowance of a cockle-shell full of cat-lap per head."

"Weel, sir" answered Dame Dods, "all I can say is, that if it had been my luck to have served you at the Cleikum Inn, which our folk have kept for these twa generations, I canna pretend to say ye should have had such tea as ye have been used to in foreign parts where it grows, but the best I had I wad have gi'en it to a gentleman of your appearance, and I never charged mair than sixpence in all my time, and my father's before me."

"I wish I had known the Old Inn was still standing, madam," said the traveller; "I should certainly have been your guest, and sent down for the water every morning—the doctors insist I must use Cheltenham, or some substitute, for the bile—though, d—n them, I believe it's only to hide their own ignorance. And I thought this Spaw would have been the least evil of the two; but I have been fairly overreached—one might as well live in the inside of a bell. I think young St. Ronan's must be mad, to have established such a Vanity-fair upon his father's old property.

"Do you ken this St. Ronan's that now is?" inquired the dame.

"By report only," said Mr. Touchwood; "but I have heard of the family, and I think I have read of them, too, in Scottish history. I am sorry to understand they are lower in the world than they have been. This young man does not seem to take the best way to mend matters, spending his time among gamblers and black-legs."

"I should be sorry if it were so," said honest Meg Dods, whose hereditary respect for the family always kept her from joining in any scandal affecting the character of the young Laird—"My forbears, sir have had kindness frae his; and although maybe he may have forgotten all about it, it wad ill become me to say ony thing of him that should not be said of his father's son."

Mr. Bindloose had not the same motive for forbearance; he declaimed against Mowbray as a thoughtless dissipater of his own fortune, and that of others. "I have some reason to speak," he said, "having two of his notes for L.100 each, which I discounted out of mere kindness and respect for his ancient family, and which he thinks nae mair of retiring, than he does of paying the national debt—And here has he been raking every shop in Marchthorn, to fit out an entertainment for all the fine folk at the Well yonder; and tradesfolk are obliged to take his acceptances for their furnishings. But they may cash his bills that will; I ken ane that will never advance a bawbee on ony paper that has John Mowbray either on the back or front of it. He had mair need to be paying the debts which he has made already, than making new anes, that he may feed fules and flatterers."

"I believe he is likely to lose his preparations, too," said Mr. Touchwood, "for the entertainment has been put off, as I heard, in consequence of Miss Mowbray's illness."

"Ay, ay, puir thing!" said Dame Margaret Dods; "her health has been unsettled for this mony a day."

"Something wrong here, they tell me," said the traveller, pointing to his own forehead significantly.

"God only kens," replied Mrs. Dods; "but I rather suspect the heart than the head—the puir thing is hurried here and there, and down to the Waal, and up again, and nae society or quiet at hame; and a' thing ganging this unthrifty gait—nae wonder she is no that weel settled."

"Well," replied Touchwood, "she is worse they say than she has been, and that has occasioned the party at Shaws-Castle having been put off. Besides, now this fine young lord has come down to the Well, undoubtedly they will wait her recovery."

"A lord!" ejaculated the astonished Mrs. Dods; "a lord come down to the Waal—they will be neither to haud nor to bind now—ance wud and aye waur—a lord!—set them up and shute them forward—a lord!—the Lord have a care o'us!—a lord at the hottle!—Maister Touchwood, it's my mind he will only prove to be a Lord o' Session."

"Nay, not so, my good lady," replied the traveller, "he is an English lord, and, as they say, a lord of Parliament—but some folks pretend to say there is a flaw in the title."

"I'll warrant is there—a dozen of them!" said Meg, with alacrity—for she could by no means endure to think on the accumulation of dignity likely to accrue to the rival establishment, from its becoming the residence of an actual nobleman. "I'll warrant he'll prove a landlouping lord on their hand, and they will be e'en cheap o' the loss—And he has come down out of order it's like, and nae doubt he'll no be lang there before he will recover his health, for the credit of the Spaw."

"Faith, madam, his present disorder is one which the Spaw will hardly cure—he is shot in the shoulder with a pistol-bullet—a robbery attempted, it seems—that is one of your new accomplishments—no such thing happened in Scotland in my time—men would have sooner expected to meet with the phœnix than with a highwayman."

"And where did this happen, if you please, sir?" asked the man of bills.

"Somewhere near the old village," replied the stranger; "and if I am rightly informed, on Wednesday last."

"This explains your twa shots, I am thinking, Mrs. Dods," said Mr. Bindloose; "your groom heard them on the Wednesday—it must have been this attack on the stranger nobleman."

"Maybe it was, and maybe it was not," said Mrs. Dods; "but I'll see gude reason before I give up my ain judgment in that case.—I would like to ken if this gentleman," she added, returning to the subject from which Mr. Touchwood's interesting conversation had for a few minutes diverted her thoughts, "has heard aught of Mr. Tirl?"

"If you mean the person to whom this paper relates said the stranger, taking a printed handbill from his pocket, "I heard of little else—the whole place rang of him, till I was almost as sick of Tyrrel as William Rufus was. Some idiotical quarrel which he had engaged in, and which he had not fought out, as their wisdom thought he should have done, was the principle cause of censure. That is another folly now, which has gained ground among you. Formerly two old proud lairds, or cadets of good family, perhaps, quarrelled, and had a rencontre, or fought a duel after the fashion of their old Gothic ancestors; but men who had no grandfathers never dreamt of such folly—And here the folk denounce a trumpery dauber of canvass, for such I understand to be this hero's occupation, as if he were a field-officer, who made valour his profession; and who, if you deprived him of his honour, was like to be deprived of his bread at the same time.—Ha, ha, ha! it reminds one of Don Quixote, who took his neighbour, Samson Carrasco, for a knight-errant."

The perusal of this paper, which contained the notes formerly laid before the reader, containing the statement of Sir Bingo, and the censure which the company at the Well had thought fit to pass upon his affair with Mr. Tyrrel, induced Mr. Bindloose to say to Mrs. Dods, with as little exultation on the superiority of his own judgment as human nature would permit,—

"Ye see now that I was right, Mrs. Dods, and that there was nae earthly use in your fashing yourself wi' this lang journey—The lad had just ta'en the bent rather than face Sir Bingo; and troth, I think him the wiser of the twa for sae doing—There ye hae print for it."

Meg answered somewhat sullenly, "Ye may be mista'en, for a' that, your ainsell, for as wise as ye are, Mr. Bindloose; I shall hae that matter mair strictly inquired into."

This led to a renewal of the altercation concerning the probable fate of Tyrrel, in the course of which the stranger was induced to take some interest in the subject.

At length Mrs. Dods, receiving no countenance from the experienced lawyer for the hypothesis she had formed, rose, in something like displeasure, to order her whiskey to be prepared. But hostess as she was herself, when in her own dominions, she reckoned without her host in the present instance; for the humpbacked postilion, as absolute in his department as Mrs. Dods herself, declared that the cattle would not be fit for the road these two hours yet. The good lady was therefore obliged to wait his pleasure, bitterly lamenting all the while the loss which a house of public entertainment was sure to sustain by the absence of the landlord or landlady, and anticipating a long list of broken dishes, miscalculated reckonings, unarranged chambers, and other disasters, which she was to expect at her return. Mr. Bindloose, zealous to recover the regard of his good friend and client, which he had in some degree forfeited by contradicting her on a favourite subject, did not choose to offer the unpleasing, though obvious topic of consolation, that an unfrequented inn is little exposed to the accidents she apprehended. On the contrary, he condoled with her very cordially, and went so far as to hint, that if Mr. Touchwood had come to Marchthorn with post-horses, as he supposed from his dress, she could have the advantage of them to return with more despatch to St. Ronan's.

"I am not sure," said Mr. Touchwood, suddenly, "but I may return there myself. In that case I will be glad to set this good lady down, and to stay a few days at her house if she will receive me.—I respect a woman like you, ma'am, who pursue the occupation of your father—I have been in countries, ma'am, where people have followed the same trade, from father to son, for thousands of years—And I like the fashion—it shows a steadiness and sobriety of character."

Mrs. Dods put on a joyous countenance at this proposal, protesting that all should be done in her power to make things agreeable; and while her good friend, Mr. Bindloose, expatiated upon the comfort her new guest would experience at the Cleikum, she silently contemplated with delight the prospect of a speedy and dazzling triumph, by carrying off a customer

mstomer from her showy and successful rival at the Well.

"I shall be easily accommodated, ma'am," said the stranger; "I have travelled too much and too far to be troublesome. A Spanish venta, a Persian khan, or a Turkish caravanserail, is all the same to me—only, as I have no servant—indeed, never can be plagued with one of these idle loiterers,—I must beg you will send to the Well for a bottle of the water on such mornings as I cannot walk there myself—I find it is really of some service to me."

Mrs. Dods readily promised compliance with this reasonable request; graciously conceding, that there 'could be nae ill in the water itsell, but may be some gude—it was only the New Inn, and the daft haverils that they can'd the Company, that she misliked. Folk had a jest that St. Ronan dookit the Deevil in heWast, which garr'd it taste aye since of brimstane —but she dared to say that was a' papist nonsense, for she was tell't by him that kend weel, and that was the minister himsell, that St. Ronan was nane of your idolatrous Roman saunts, but a Chaldee," meaning probably a Culdee,) "whilk was doubtless a very different story."

Matters being thus arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, the post-chaise was ordered, and speedily appeared at the door of Mr. Bindloose's mansion. It was not without a private feeling of reluctance, that honest Meg mounted the step of a vehicle, on the door of which was painted, "Fox Inn and Hotel, St. Ronan's Well;" but it was too late to start such scruples.

"I never thought to have entered ane o' their hursy-hackets," she said, as she seated herself; "and sic a like thing as it is—scarce room for twa folk!—Weel I wot, Mr. Touchwood, when I was in the hiring time, our twa chaises wad hae carried, ilk ane o' them, our grown folk and as mony bairns. I trust that doited creature Anthony will come awa back wi' my whiskey and the cattle, as soon as they have had their feed.—Are ye sure ye hae room eneugh, sir?—I wad fain hotch myself farther yont."

"O, ma'am," answered the Oriental, "I am accustomed to all sorts of conveyances—a dooly, a litter, a cart, a palanquin, or a post-chaise, are all alike to me—I think I could be an inside with Queen Mab in a nutshell, rather than not get forward.—Begging you many pardons, if you have no particular objections, I will light my sheroot," &c. &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CLERGYMAN.

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year.
GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*.

Mrs. Dods's conviction, that her friend Tyrrel had been murdered by the sanguinary Captain MacTurk, remained firm and unshaken; but some researches for the supposed body having been found fruitless, as well as expensive, she began to give up the matter in despair. "She had done her duty"—"she left the matter to them that had a charge anent such things"—and "Providence would bring the mystery to light in his own fitting time"—such were the moralities with which the good dame consoled herself; and, with less obstinacy than Mr. Bindloose had expected, she retained her opinion without changing her banker and man of business.

Perhaps Meg's acquiescent inactivity in a matter which she had threatened to probe so deeply, was partly owing to the place of poor Tyrrel being supplied in her blue chamber, and in her daily thoughts and cares, by her new guest, Mr. Touchwood; in possessing whom, a deserter as he was from the Well, she obtained, according to her view of the matter, a decided triumph over her rivals. It sometimes required, however, the full force of this reflection, to induce Meg, old and crabbed as she was, to submit to the various caprices and exactions of attention which were displayed by *her new lodger. Never any man talked so much as Touchwood, of his habitual indifference to food, and accommodation in travelling;* and probably there never was any traveller who gave more trouble in a house of entertainment. He had his own whims about cookery; and when these were contradicted, especially if he felt at the same time a twinge of incipient gout, one would have thought he had taken his lessons in the pastry-shop of Bedreddin Hassan, and was ready to renew the scene of the unhappy cream-tart, which was compounded without pepper. Every now and then he started some new doctrine in culinary matters, which Mrs. Dods deemed a heresy; and then the very house rang with their disputes. Again, his bed must necessarily be made at a certain angle from the pillow to the footposts; and the slightest deviation from this disturbed, he said, his nocturnal rest, and did certainly ruffle his temper. He was equally whimsical about the brushing of his clothes, the arrangement of the furniture of his apartment, and a thousand minutiæ, which, in conversation, he seemed totally to contemn.

It may seem singular, but such is the inconsistency of human nature, that a guest of this fanciful and capricious disposition gave much more satisfaction to Mrs. Dods, than her quiet and indifferent friend, Mr. Tyrrel. If her present lodger could blame, he could also applaud; and no artist, conscious of such skill as Mrs. Dods possessed, is indifferent to the praises of such a connoisseur as Mr. Touchwood. The pride of art comforted her for the additional labour; nor was it a matter unworthy of this most honest publican's consideration, that the guests who give most trouble, are usually those who incur the largest bills, and pay them with the best grace. On this point Touchwood was a jewel of a customer. He never denied himself the gratification of the slightest whim, whatever expense he might himself incur, or whatever trouble he might give to those about him; and all was done under protestation, that the matter in question was the most indifferent thing to him in the world. "What the devil did he care for Burgess's sauces, he that had eat his kouscousou, spiced with nothing but the sand of the desert? only it was a shame for Mrs. Dods to be without what every decent house, above the rank of an alehouse, ought to be largely provided with."

In short, he fussed, fretted, commanded, and was obeyed; kept the house in hot water, and yet was so truly good-natured when essential matters were in discussion, that it was impossible to bear him the least ill-will; so that Mrs. Dods, though in a moment of spleen she sometimes wished him at the top of Tintock, always ended by singing forth his praises. She could not, indeed, help suspecting that he was a Nabob, as well from his conversation about foreign parts, as from his freaks of indulgence to himself, and generosity to others,—attributes which she understood to be proper to most "Men of Ind." But although the reader has heard her testify a general dislike to this species of Fortune's favourites, Mrs. Dods had sense enough to know, that a Nabob living in the neighbourhood, who raises the price of eggs and poultry upon the good housewives around, was very different from a Nabob residing within her own gates, drawing all his supplies from her own larder, and paying, without hesitation or question, whatever bills her conscience permitted her to send in. In short, to come back to the point at which we perhaps might have stopped some time since, landlady and guest were very much pleased with each other.

But Ennui finds entrance into every scene, when the gloss of novelty is over; and the fiend began to seize upon Mr. Touchwood just when he had got all matters to his mind in the Cleikum Inn—had instructed Dame Dods in the mysteries of curry and mulligatawny—drilled the chambermaid into the habit of making his bed at the angle recommended by Sir John Sinclair—and made some progress in instructing the humpbacked postilion in the Arabian mode of grooming. Pamphlets and newspapers, sent from London and Edinburgh by loads, proved inadequate to rout this invader of Mr. Touchwood's comfort; and, at last, he bethought himself of company. The natural resource would have been the Well—but the traveller had a holy shivering of awe, which crossed him at the very recollection of Lady Penelope, who had

worked him rather hard during his former brief residence; and although Lady Binks's beauty might have charmed an Asiatic, by the plump graces of its contour, our senior was past the thoughts of a Sultana and a haram. At length a bright idea crossed his mind, and he suddenly demanded of Mrs. Dods, who was pouring out his tea for breakfast, into a large cup of a very particular species of china, of which he had presented her with a service on condition of her rendering him this personal good office,—

"Pray, Mrs. Dods, what sort of a man is your minister?"

"He's just a man like other men, Maister Touchwood," replied Meg; "what sort of a man should he be?"

"A man like other men?—ay—that is to say, he has the usual complement of legs and arms, eyes and ears—but is he a sensible man?"

"No muckle o' that, sir," answered Dame Dods; "for if he was drinking this very tea that ye got doun from London wi' the mail, he wad mistake it for common bohea."

"Then he has not all his organs—wants a nose, or the use of one at least," said Mr. Touchwood; "the tea is right gunpowder—a perfect noseguy."

"Aweel, that may be," said the landlady; "but I have gi'en the minister a dram frae my ain best bottle of real Coniac brandy, and may I never stir frae the bit, if he didna commend my whisky when he set down the glass! There is no ane o' them in the Presbytery but himsell—ay, or in the Synod either—but wad hae kend whisky frae brandy."

"But what *sort* of man is he?—Has he learning?" demanded Touchwood.

"Learning?—eneugh o' that," answered Meg; "just dung donnart wi' learning—lets a' things about the Manse gang whilk gate they will, see they dinna plague him upon the score. An awfu' thing it is to see sic an ill-red-up house!—If I had the twa tawpies that sorn upon the honest man ae week under my drilling, I think I wad show them how to sort a lodging!"

"Does he preach well?" asked the guest.

"Oh, weel eneugh, weel eneugh—sometimes he will fling in a lang word or a bit of learning that our farmers and bannet lairds canna sae weel follow—But what of that, as I am aye telling them?—them that pay stipend get aye the mair for their siller."

"Does he attend to his parish?—Is he kind to the poor?"

"Ower muckle o' that, Maister Touchwood—I am sure he makes the Word gude, and turns not away from those that ask o' him—his very pocket is picked by a wheen ne'er-do-weel blackguards, that gae sorning through the country."

"Sorning through the country, Mrs. Dods?—what would you think if you had seen the Fakirs, the Dervises, the Bonzes, the Imauns, the monks, and the mendicants, that I have seen?—But go on, never mind—Does this minister of yours come much into company?"

"Company?—gae wa'," replied Meg, "he keeps nae company at a', neither in his ain house or ony gate else. He comes down in the morning in a lang ragged nightgown, like a potato bogle, and down he sits amang his books; and if they dinna bring him something to eat, the puir demented body has never the heart to cry for aught, and he has been kend to sit for ten hours thegither, black fasting, whilk is a' mere papistrie, though he does it just out o' forget."

"Why, landlady, in that case, your parson is any thing but the ordinary kind of man you described him—Forget his dinner!—the man must be mad—he shall dine with me to-day—he shall have such a dinner as I'll be bound he won't forget in a hurry."

"Ye'll maybe find that easier said than dune," said Mrs. Dods; "the honest man hasna, in a sense, the taste of his mouth—forby, he never dines out of his ain house—that is, when he dines at a'—A drink of milk and a bit of bread serves his turn, or maybe a sauld potato.—It's a heathenish fashion of him, for as good a man as he is, for surely there is nae Christian *man but loves his own bowels.*"

"*Why, that may be,*" *answered Touchwood*; "but I have known many who took so much care of their own bowels, my good dame, as to have none for any one else.—But come—bustle to the work—get us a good a dinner for two as you can set out—have it ready at three to an instant—get the old hock I had sent me from Cockburn—a bottle of the particular Indian Sherry—and another of your own old claret—fourth bin, you know, Meg.—And stay, he is a priest, and must have port—have all ready, but don't bring the wine into the sun, as that silly fool Beck did the other day.—I can't go down to the larder myself, but let us have no blunders."

"Nae fear, nae fear," said Meg, with a toss of the head, "I need naebody to look into my larder but mysell, I trow—but it's an unco order of wine for twa folk, and ane o' them a minister."

"Why, you foolish person, is there not the woman up the village that has just brought another fool into the world, and will she not need sack and caudle, if we leave some of our wine?"

"A gude ale-posset wad set her better," said Meg; "however, if it's your will, it shall be my pleasure.—But the like of sic a gentleman as yourself never entered my doors!"

The traveller was gone before she had completed the sentence; and, leaving Meg to bustle and maunder at her leisure, away he marched, with the haste that characterized all his motions when he had any new project in his head, to form an acquaintance with the minister of St. Ronan's, whom, while he walks down the street to the Manse, we will endeavour to introduce to the reader.

The Rev. Josiah Cargill was the son of a small farmer in the south of Scotland; and a weak constitution, joined to the disposition for study which frequently accompanies infirm health, induced his parents, though at the expense of some sacrifices, to educate him for the ministry. They were the rather led to submit to the privations which were necessary to support this expense, because they conceived, from their family traditions, that he had in his veins some portion of the blood of that celebrated Boanerges of the Covenant, Donald Cargill, who was slain by the persecutors at the town of Queensferry, in the melancholy days of Charles II., merely because, in the plenitude of his sacerdotal power, he had cast out of the church, and delivered over to Satan by a formal excommunication, the King and Royal Family, with all the ministers and courtiers thereunto belonging. But if Josiah was really derived from this uncompromising champion, the heat of the family spirit which he might have inherited was qualified by the sweetness of his own disposition, and the quiet temper of the times in which he had the good fortune to live. He was characterized by all who knew him as a mild, gentle, and studious lover of learning, who, in the quiet prosecution of his own sole object, the acquisition of knowledge, and especially of that connected with his profession, had the utmost indulgence for all whose pursuits were different from his own. His sole relaxations were those of a retiring, mild, and pensive temper, and were limited to a ramble, almost always solitary, among the woods and hills, in praise of which he was sometimes guilty of a sonnet, but rather because he could not help the attempt, than as proposing to himself the fame or the rewards which attend the successful poet. Indeed, far from seeking to insinuate his fugitive pieces into magazines and newspapers, he blushed at his poetical attempts even while alone, and, in fact, was rarely so indulgent to his vein as to commit them to paper.

From the same maid-like modesty of disposition, our student suppressed a strong natural turn towards drawing, although he was repeatedly complimented upon the few sketches which he made, by some whose judgment was generally admitted. It was, however, this neglected talent, which, like the swift feet of the stag in the fable, was fated to render him a service which he might in vain have expected from his worth and learning.

My Lord Bidmore, a distinguished connoisseur, chanced to be in search of a private tutor for his son and heir, the Honourable Augustus Bidmore, and for this purpose had consulted the Professor of Theology

who passed before him in review several favourite students, any of whom he conceived well suited for the situation; but still his answer to the important and unlooked-for question, "Did the candidate understand drawing?" was answered in the negative. The Professor, indeed, added his opinion, that such an accomplishment was neither to be desired nor expected in a student of theology; but, pressed hard with this condition as a *sine qua non*, he at length did remember a dreaming lad about the Hall, who seldom could be got to speak above his breath, even when delivering his essays, but was said to have a strong turn for drawing. This was enough for my Lord Bidmore, who contrived to obtain a sight of some of young Cargill's sketches, and was satisfied that, under such a tutor, his son could not fail to maintain that character for hereditary taste which his father and grandfather had acquired at the expense of a considerable estate, the representative value of which was now the painted canvass in the great gallery at Bidmore-House.

Upon following up the inquiry concerning the young man's character, he was found to possess all the other necessary qualifications of learning and morals, in a greater degree than perhaps Lord Bidmore might have required; and, to the astonishment of his fellow-students, but more especially to his own, Josiah Cargill was promoted to the desired and desirable situation of private tutor to the Honourable Mr. Bidmore.

Mr. Cargill did his duty ably and conscientiously, by a spoiled though good-humoured lad, of weak health and very ordinary parts. He could not, indeed, inspire into him any portion of the deep and noble enthusiasm which characterizes the youth of genius; but his pupil made such progress in each branch of his studies as his capacity enabled him to attain. He understood the learned languages, and could be very profound on the subject of various readings—he pursued science, and could class shells, pack mosses, and arrange minerals—he drew without taste, but with much accuracy; and although he attained no commanding height in any pursuit, he knew enough of many studies, literary and scientific, to fill up his time, and divert from temptation a head, which was none of the strongest in point of resistance.

Miss Augusta Bidmore, his lordship's only other child, received also the instructions of Cargill in such branches of science as her father chose she should acquire, and her tutor was capable to teach. But her progress was as different from that of her brother, as the fire of heaven differs from that grosser element which the peasant piles upon his smouldering hearth. Her acquirements in Italian and Spanish literature, in history, in drawing, and in all elegant learning, were such as to enchant her teacher, while at the same time it kept him on the stretch, lest, in her successful career, the scholar should outstrip the master.

Alas! such intercourse, fraught as it is with dangers arising out of the best and kindest, as well as the most natural feelings on either side, proved in the present, as in many other instances, fatal to the peace of the preceptor. Every feeling heart will excuse a weakness, which we shall presently find carried with it its own severe punishment. Cadenus, indeed, believe him who will, has assured us, that, in such a perilous intercourse, he himself preserved the limits which were unhappily transgressed by the unfortunate Vanessa, his more impassioned pupil:—

> "The innocent delight he took
> To see the virgin mind her book,
> Was but the master's secret joy,
> In school to hear the truest boy."

But Josiah Cargill was less fortunate, or less cautious. He suffered his fair pupil to become inexpressibly dear to him, before he discovered the precipice towards which he was moving under the direction of a blind and misplaced passion. He was indeed utterly incapable of availing himself of the opportunities afforded by his situation, to involve his pupil in the toils of a mutual passion. Honour and gratitude alike forbade such a line of conduct, even had it been consistent with the natural bashfulness, simplicity, and innocence of his disposition. To sigh and suffer in secret, to form resolutions of separating himself from a situation so fraught with danger, and to postpone from day to day the accomplishment of a resolution so prudent, was all to which the tutor found himself equal; and it is not improbable, that the veneration with which he regarded his patron's daughter, with the utter hopelessness of the passion which he nourished, tended to render his love yet more pure and disinterested.

At length, the line of conduct which reason had long since recommended, could no longer be the subject of procrastination. Mr. Bidmore was destined to foreign travel for a twelvemonth, and Mr. Cargill received from his patron the alternative of accompanying his pupil, or retiring upon a suitable provision, the reward of his past instructions. It can hardly be doubted which he preferred; for while he was with young Bidmore, he did not seem entirely separated from his sister. He was sure to hear of Augusta frequently, and to see some part, at least, of the letters which she was to write to her brother; he might also hope to be remembered in these letters as her "good friend and tutor;" and to these consolations his quiet, contemplative, and yet enthusiastic disposition clung as to a secret source of pleasure, the only one which life seemed to open to him.

But fate had a blow in store, which he had not anticipated. The chance of Augusta's changing her maiden condition for that of a wife, probable as her rank, beauty, and fortune rendered such an event, had never once occurred to him; and although he had imposed upon himself the unwavering belief that she could never be his, he was inexpressibly affected by the intelligence that she had become the property of another.

The Honourable Mr. Bidmore's letters to his father soon after announced that poor Mr. Cargill had been seized with a nervous fever, and again, that his reconvalescence was attended with so much debility, it seemed both of mind and body, as entirely to destroy his utility as a travelling companion. Shortly after this the travellers separated, and Cargill returned to his native country alone, indulging upon the road in a melancholy abstraction of mind, which he had suffered to grow upon him since the mental shock which he had sustained, and which in time became the most characteristical feature in his demeanour. His meditations were not even disturbed by any anxiety about his future subsistence, although the cessation of his employment seemed to render that precarious. For this, however, Lord Bidmore had made provision; for, though a coxcomb where the fine arts were concerned, he was in other particulars a just and honourable man, who felt a sincere pride in having drawn the talents of Cargill from obscurity, and entertained due gratitude for the manner in which he had achieved the important task intrusted to him in his family.

His lordship had privately purchased from the Mowbray family the patronage or advowson of the living of St. Ronan's, then held by a very old incumbent, who died shortly afterwards; so that upon arriving in England Cargill found himself named to the vacant living. So indifferent, however, did he feel himself towards this preferment, that he might possibly not have taken the trouble to go through the necessary steps previous to his ordination, had it not been on account of his mother, now a widow, and unprovided for, unless by the support which he afforded her. He visited her in her small retreat in the suburbs of Marchthorn, heard her pour out her gratitude to Heaven, that she should have been granted life long enough to witness her son's promotion to a charge, which in her eyes was more honourable and desirable than an Episcopal see—heard her chalk out the life which they were to lead together in the humble independence which had thus fallen on him—he heard all this, and had no power to crush her hopes and her triumph by the indulgence of his own romantic feelings. He passed almost mechanically through the usual forms, and was inducted into the living of St. Ronan's.

Although fanciful and romantic, it was not in Josiah Cargill's nature to yield to unavailing melancholy; yet he sought relief, not in society, but in

solitary study. His seclusion was the more complete, that his mother, whose education had been as much confined as her fortunes, felt awkward under her new dignities, and willingly acquiesced in her son's secession from society, and spent her whole time in superintending the little household, and in her way providing for all emergencies, the occurrence of which might call Josiah out of his favourite book-room. As old age rendered her inactive, she began to regret the incapacity of her son to superintend his own household, and talked something of matrimony, and the mysteries of the muckle wheel. To these admonitions Mr. Cargill returned only slight and evasive answers; and when the old lady slept in the village churchyard, at a reverend old age, there was no one to perform the office of superintendent in the minister's family. Neither did Josiah Cargill seek for any, but patiently submitted to all the evils with which a bachelor estate is attended, and which were at least equal to those which beset the renowned Mago-Pico during his state of celibacy.* His butter was ill churned, and declared by all but himself and the queen who made it, altogether uneatable; his milk was burnt in the pan, his fruit and vegetables were stolen, and his black stockings mended with blue and white thread.

For all these things the minister cared not, his mind ever bent upon far different matters. Do not let my fair readers do Josiah more than justice, or suppose that, like Belteneebros in the desert, he remained for years the victim of an unfortunate and misplaced passion. No—to the shame of the male sex be it spoken, that no degree of hopeless love, however desperate and sincere, can ever continue for years to imbitter life. There must be hope—there must be uncertainty—there must be reciprocity, to enable the tyrant of the soul to secure a dominion of very long duration over a manly and well-constituted mind, which is itself desirous to *will* its freedom. The memory of Augusta had long faded from Josiah's thoughts, or was remembered only as a pleasing, but melancholy and unsubstantial dream, while he was straining forward in pursuit of a yet nobler and coyer mistress, in a word, of Knowledge herself.

Every hour that he could spare from his parochial duties, which he discharged with zeal honourable to his heart and head, was devoted to his studies, and spent among his books. But this chase of wisdom, though in itself interesting and dignified, was indulged to an excess which diminished the respectability, nay, the utility, of the deceived student; and he forgot, amid the luxury of deep and dark investigations, that society has its claims, and that the knowledge which is unimparted, is necessarily a barren talent, and is lost to society, like the miser's concealed hoard, by the death of the proprietor. His studies were also under the additional disadvantage, that, being pursued for the gratification of a desultory longing after knowledge, and directed to no determined object, they turned on points rather curious than useful, and while they served for the amusement of the student himself, promised little utility to mankind at large.

Bewildered amid abstruse researches, metaphysical and historical, Mr. Cargill, living only for himself and his books, acquired many ludicrous habits, which exposed the secluded student to the ridicule of the world, and which tinged, though they did not altogether obscure, the natural civility of an amiable disposition, as well as the acquired habits of politeness which he had learned in the good society that frequented Lord Bidmore's mansion. He not only indulged in neglect of dress and appearance, and all those ungainly tricks which men are apt to acquire by living very much alone, but besides, and especially, he became probably the most abstracted and absent man of a profession peculiarly liable to cherish such habits. No man fell so regularly into the painful dilemma of mistaking, or, in Scottish phrase, *miskenning*, the person he spoke to, or more frequently inquired of an old maid for her husband, of a childless wife about her young people, of the distressed widower for the spouse at whose funeral he himself had assisted but a fortnight before; and none was ever more familiar with strangers whom he had never seen, or seemed more estranged from those who had a title to think themselves well known to him. The worthy man perpetually confounded sex, age, and calling; and when a blind beggar extended his hand for charity, he has been known to return the civility by taking off his hat, making a low bow, and hoping his worship was well.

Among his brethren, Mr. Cargill alternately commanded respect by the depth of his erudition, and gave occasion to laughter from his odd peculiarities. On the latter occasions he used abruptly to withdraw from the ridicule he had provoked; for notwithstanding the general mildness of his character, his solitary habits had engendered a testy impatience of contradiction, and a keener sense of pain arising from the satire of others, than was natural to his unassuming disposition. As for his parishioners, they enjoyed, as may reasonably be supposed, many a hearty laugh at their pastor's expense, and were sometimes, as Mrs. Dods hinted, more astonished than edified by his learning; for in pursuing a point of biblical criticism, he did not altogether remember that he was addressing a popular and unlearned assembly, not delivering a *concio ad clerum*—a mistake not arising from any conceit of his learning, or wish to display it, but from the same absence of mind which induced an excellent divine, when preaching before a party of criminals condemned to death, to break off by promising the wretches, who were to suffer next morning, "the rest of the discourse at the first proper opportunity." But all the neighbourhood acknowledged Mr. Cargill's serious and devout discharge of his ministerial duties; and the poorer parishioners forgave his innocent peculiarities, in consideration of his unbounded charity; while the heritors, if they ridiculed the abstractions of Mr. Cargill on some subjects, had the grace to recollect that they had prevented him from suing an augmentation of stipend, according to the fashion of the clergy around him, or from demanding at their hands a new manse, or the repair of the old one. He once, indeed, wished that they would amend the roof of his book-room, which "rained in"* in a very pluvious manner; but receiving no direct answer from our friend Meiklewham, who neither relished the proposal nor saw means of eluding it, the minister quietly made the necessary repairs at his own expense, and gave the heritors no farther trouble on the subject.

Such was the worthy divine whom our *bon vivant* at the Cleikum Inn hoped to conciliate by a good dinner and Cockburn's particular; an excellent menstruum in most cases, but not likely to be very efficacious on the present occasion.

* This satire, very popular even in Scotland, at least with one party, was composed at the expense of a reverend presbyterian divine, of whom many stories are preserved, being Mr. Pyet, the Mago-Pico of the Tale, minister of Dunbar. The work is now little known in Scotland, and not at all in England, though written with much strong and coarse humour, resembling the style of Arbuthnot. It was composed by Mr. Haliburton, a military chaplain. The distresses attending Mago-Pico's bachelor life, are thus stated:—

"At the same time I desire you will only figure out to yourself his situation during his celibacy in the ministerial charge—a house lying all heaps upon heaps; his bed ill-made, swarming with fleas, and very cold on the winter nights; his sheep's-head not to be eaten for wool and hair, his broth singed, his bread mouldy, his lamb and pig all scouthered, his house neither washed nor plastered; his black stockings darned with white worsted above the shoes; his butter made into cat's barns; his cheese one heap of mites and maggots, and full of large avenues for rats and mice to play at hide-and-seek and make their nests in. Frequent were the admonitions he had given his maid-servants on this score, and every now and then he was turning them off; but still the last was the worst, and in the mean while the poor man was the sufferer. At any rate, therefore, matrimony must turn to his account, though his wife should prove to be nothing but a creature of the feminine gender, with a tongue in her head, and ten fingers on her hands, to clear out the papers of the housemaid, not to mention the convenience of a man's having it in his power lawfully to beget sons and daughters in his own house."—*Memoirs of Mago-Pico. Second edition. Edinburgh*, 1761, p. 19.

* *Scottice*, for "admitted the rain."

CHAPTER XVI

THE ACQUAINTANCE.

'Twixt us thus the difference trime:—
Using head instead of limbs,
You have read what I have seen;
Using limbs instead of heed,
I have seen what you have read—
Which way does the balance lean? BUTLER.

Our traveller, rapid in all his resolutions and motions, strode stoutly down the street, and arrived at the Manse, which was, as we have already described it, all but absolutely ruinous. The total desolation and want of order about the door, would have argued the place uninhabited, had it not been for two or three miserable tubs with suds, or such like sluttish contents, which were left there, that those who broke their shins among them might receive a sensible proof, that "here the hand of woman had been." The door being half off its hinges, the entrance was for the time protected by a broken harrow, which must necessarily be removed before entry could be obtained. The little garden, which might have given an air of comfort to the old house had it been kept in any order, was abandoned to a desolation, of which that of the sluggard was only a type; and the minister's man, an attendant always proverbial for doing half work, and who seemed in the present instance to do none, was seen among docks and nettles, solacing himself with the few gooseberries which remained on some moss-grown bushes. To him Mr. Touchwood called loudly, inquiring after his master; but the clown, conscious of being taken in flagrant delict, as the law says, fled from him like a guilty thing, instead of obeying his summons, and was soon heard *hupping* and *geeing* to the cart, which he had left on the other side of the broken wall.

Disappointed in his application to the man-servant, Mr. Touchwood knocked with his cane, at first gently, then harder, hollowed, bellowed, and shouted, in the hope of calling the attention of some one within doors, but received not a word in reply. At length, thinking that no trespass could be committed upon so forlorn and deserted an establishment, he removed the obstacles to entrance with such a noise as he thought must necessarily have alarmed some one, if there was any live person about the house at all. All was still silent; and, entering a passage where the damp walls and broken flags corresponded to the appearance of things out of doors, he opened a door to the left, which, wonderful to say, still had a latch remaining, and found himself in the parlour, and in the presence of the person whom he came to visit.

Amid a heap of books and other literary lumber, which had accumulated around him, sat, in his well-worn leather elbow chair, the learned minister of St. Ronan's; a thin, spare man, beyond the middle age, of a dark complexion, but with eyes which, though now obscured and vacant, had been once bright, soft, and expressive, and whose features seemed interesting, the rather that, notwithstanding the carelessness of his dress, he was, in the habit of performing his ablutions with Eastern precision; for he had forgot neatness, but not cleanliness. His hair might have appeared much more disorderly, had it not been thinned by time, and disposed chiefly around the sides of his countenance and the back part of his head; black stockings, ungartered, marked his professional dress, and his feet were thrust into the old slipshod shoes, which served him instead of slippers. The rest of his garments, as far as visible, consisted in a plain night-gown wrapt in long folds round his stooping and emaciated length of body, and reaching down to the slippers aforesaid. He was so intently engaged in studying the book before him, a folio of no ordinary bulk, that he totally disregarded the noise which Mr. Touchwood made in entering the room, as well as the coughs and hems with which he thought it proper to announce his presence.

No notice being taken of these inarticulate signals, Mr. Touchwood, however great an enemy he was to ceremony, saw the necessity of introducing his business, as an apology for his intrusion.

"Hem! sir—Hn, hem!—You see before you a person in some distress for want of society, who has taken the liberty to call on you as a good pastor, who may be, in Christian charity, willing to afford him a little of your company, since he is tired of his own."

Of this speech Mr. Cargill only understood the words "distress" and "charity," sounds with which he was well acquainted, and which never failed to produce some effect on him. He looked at his visiter with lack-lustre eye, and, without correcting the first opinion which he had formed, although the stranger's plump and sturdy frame, as well as his nicely-brushed coat, glancing cane, and, above all, his upright and self-satisfied manner, resembled in no respect the dress, form, or bearing of a mendicant, he quietly thrust a shilling into his hand, and relapsed into the studious contemplation which the entrance of Touchwood had interrupted.

"Upon my word, my good sir," said his visiter, surprised at a degree of absence of mind which he could hardly have conceived possible, "you have entirely mistaken my object."

"I am sorry my mite is insufficient, my friend," said the clergyman, without again raising his eyes, it is all I have at present to bestow."

"If you will have the kindness to look up for a moment, my good sir," said the traveller, "you may possibly perceive that you labour under a considerable mistake."

Mr. Cargill raised his head, recalled his attention, and, seeing that he had a well-dressed, respectable looking person before him, he exclaimed in much confusion, "Ha!—yes—on my word, I was so immersed in my book—I believe—I think I have the pleasure to see my worthy friend, Mr. Lavender?"

"No such thing, Mr. Cargill," replied Mr. Touchwood. "I will save you the trouble of trying to recollect me—you never saw me before.—But do not let me disturb your studies—I am in no hurry, and my business can wait your leisure."

"I am much obliged," said Mr. Cargill; "have the goodness to take a chair, if you can find one—I have a train of thought to recover—a slight calculation to finish—and then I am at your command."

The visiter found among the broken furniture, not without difficulty, a seat strong enough to support his weight, and sat down, resting upon his cane, and looking attentively at his host, who very soon became totally insensible of his presence. A long pause of total silence ensued, only disturbed by the rustling leaves of the folio from which Mr. Cargill seemed to be making extracts, and now and then by a little exclamation of surprise and impatience, when he dipped his pen, as happened once or twice, into his snuff-box, instead of the inkstandish which stood beside it. At length, just as Mr. Touchwood began to think the scene as tedious as it was singular, the abstracted student raised his head, and spoke as if in soliloquy, "From Acon, Accor, or St. John d'Acre, to Jerusalem, how far?"

"Twenty-three miles north north-west," answered his visiter, without hesitation.

Mr. Cargill expressed no more surprise at a question which he had put to himself being answered by the voice of another, than if he had found the distance on the map, and indeed, was not probably aware of the medium through which his question had been solved; and it was the tenor of the answer alone which he attended to in his reply.—"Twenty-three miles—Ingulphus," laying his hand on the volume, "and Jeffrey Vinesauf, do not agree in this."

"They may both be d—d, then, for lying blockheads," answered the traveller.

"You might have contradicted their authority, sir, without using such an expression," said the divine, gravely.

"I cry you mercy, Doctor," said Mr. Touchwood; "but would you compare these parchment fellows with me, that have made my legs my compasses over great part of the inhabited world?"

"You have been in Palestine, then?" said Mr. Cargill, drawing himself upright in his chair, and speaking with eagerness and with interest.

"You may swear that, Doctor, and at Acre too. Why, I was there the month after Bonev had found it too hard a nut to crack.—I dined with Sir Sydney's

trumpet as yourself in the land, Mr. Cargill; and if ye will take a fule's advice, ye winna let the multure be ta'en by your ain mill, Mr. Cargill."

"True, true, good Mother Dods," said the Nabob; "gloves and hathands are things to be looked after, and Mr. Cargill had better go down to this cursed festivity with me, in order to see after his own interest."

"I must speak with the young lady," said the clergyman, still in a brown study.

"Right, right, my boy of black-letter," said the Nabob; "with me you shall go; and we'll bring them to submission to mother-church, I warrant you—Why, the idea of being cheated in such a way, would scare a Santon out of his trance.—What dress will you wear?"

"My own, to be sure," said the divine, starting from his reverie.

"True, thou art right again—they may want to knit the knot on the spot, and who would be married by a parson in masquerade?—We go to the entertainment though—it is a done thing."

The clergyman assented, provided he should receive an invitation; and as that was found at the Manse, he had no excuse for retracting, even if he had seemed to desire one.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FORTUNE'S FROLICS.

Count Basset. We gentleman, whose carriages run on the four aces, are apt to have a wheel out of order.

The Provoked Husband.

Our history must now look a little backwards; and although it is rather foreign to our natural style of composition, it must speak more in narrative, and less in dialogue, rather telling what happened, than its effects upon the actors. Our purpose, however, is only conditional, for we foresee temptations which may render it difficult for us exactly to keep it.

The arrival of the young Earl of Etherington at the salutiferous fountain of St. Ronan's had produced the strongest sensation; especially, as it was joined with the singular accident of the attempt upon his lordship's person, as he took a short cut through the woods on foot, at a distance from his equipage and servants. The gallantry with which he beat off the highwayman, was only equal to his generosity; for he declined making any researches after the poor devil, although his lordship had received a severe wound in the scuffle.

Of the "three black Graces," as they have been termed by one of the most pleasant companions of our time, Law and Physic hastened to do homage to Lord Etherington, represented by Mr. Meiklewham and Dr. Quackleben; while Divinity, as favourable, though more coy, in the person of the Reverend Mr. Simon Chatterly, stood on tiptoe to offer any service in her power.

For the honourable reason already assigned, his lordship, after thanking Mr. Meiklewham, and hinting, that he might have different occasion for his services, declined his offer to search out the delinquent by whom he had been wounded; while to the care of the Doctor he subjected the cure of a smart flesh-wound in the arm, together with a slight scratch on the temple; and so very genteel was his behaviour on the occasion, that the Doctor, in his anxiety for his safety, enjoined him a month's course of the waters, if he would enjoy the comfort of a complete and perfect recovery. Nothing so frequent, he could assure his lordship as the opening of cicatrized wounds; and the waters of St. Ronan's Spring being, according to Dr. Quackleben, a remedy for all the troubles which flesh is heir to, could not fail to equal those of Barege, in facilitating the discharge of all splinters or extraneous matter, which a bullet may chance to incorporate with the human frame, to its great annoyance. For he was wont to say, that although he could not declare the waters which he patronised to be an absolute *panpharmacon*, yet he would with *word and pen maintain, that they possessed the principal virtues of the most celebrated medicinal springs* in the known world. In short, the love of Alpheus for Arethusa was a mere jest, compared to that which the Doctor entertained for his favourite fountain.

The new and noble guest, whose arrival so much illustrated these scenes of convalescence and of gayety, was not at first seen so much at the ordinary, and other places of public resort, as had been the hope of the worthy company assembled. His health and his wound proved an excuse for making his visits to the society few and far between.

But when he did appear, his manners and person were infinitely captivating; and even the carnation-coloured silk handkerchief, which suspended his wounded arm, together with the paleness and languor which loss of blood had left on his handsome and open countenance, gave a grace to the whole person which many of the ladies declared irresistible. All contended for his notice, attracted at once by his affability, and piqued by the calm and easy *nonchalance* with which it seemed to be blended. The scheming and selfish Mowbray, the coarse-minded and brutal Sir Bingo, accustomed to consider themselves, and to be considered, as the first men of the party, sunk into comparative insignificance. But chiefly Lady Penelope threw out the captivations of her wit and her literature; while Lady Binks, trusting to her natural charms, endeavoured equally to attract his notice. The other nymphs of the Spa held a little back, upon the principle of that politeness, which, at continental hunting parties, affords the first shot at a fine piece of game, to the person of the highest rank present; but the thought throbbed in many a fair bosom, that their ladyships might miss their aim, in spite of the advantages thus allowed them, and that there might then be room for less exalted, but perhaps not less skilful, markswomen, to try their chance.

But while the Earl thus withdrew from public society, it was necessary, at least natural, that he should choose some one with whom to share the solitude of his own apartment; and Mowbray, superior in rank to the half-pay whisky-drinking Captain MacTurk in dash to Winterblossom, who was broken down, and turned twaddler; and in tact and sense to Sir Bingo Binks, easily manœuvred himself into his lordship's more intimate society; and internally thanking the honest footpad, whose bullet had been the indirect means of secluding his intended victim from all society but his own, he gradually began to feel the way, and prove the strength of his antagonist, at the various games of skill and hazard which he introduced, apparently with the sole purpose of relieving the tedium of a sick-chamber.

Meiklewham, who felt, or affected, the greatest possible interest in his patron's success, and who watched every opportunity to inquire how his schemes advanced, received at first such favourable accounts as made him grin from ear to ear, rub his hands, and chuckle forth such bursts of glee as only the success of triumphant roguery could have extorted from him. Mowbray looked grave, however, and checked his mirth.

"There was something in it, after all," he said "that he could not perfectly understand. Etherington, a used hand—d—d sharp—up to every thing, and yet he lost his money like a baby."

"And what the matter how he loses it, so you win it like a man?" said his legal friend and adviser.

"Why, hang it, I cannot tell," replied Mowbray—"were it not that I think he has scarce the impudence to propose such a thing to succeed, curse me but I should think he was coming the old soldier over me, and keeping up his game.—But no—he can scarce have the impudence to think of that—I find, however, that he has done Wolverine—cleaned out poor Tom—though Tom wrote to me the precise contrary, yet the truth has since come out—Well, I shall avenge him, for I see his lordship is to be had as well as other folk."

"Weel, Mr. Mowbray," said the lawyer, in a tone of affected sympathy, "ye ken your own ways best—but the heavens will bless a moderate mind. I would not like to see you ruin this poor lad, *funditus*, that is to say, out and out. To lose some of the ready will do him no great harm, and maybe give

im a lesson he may be the better of as long as he res—but I wad not, as an honest man, wish you to deeper—you should spare the lad, Mr. Mowbray."

"Who spared *me*, Meiklewham?" said Mowbray, ith a look and tone of deep emphasis—"No, no— must go through the mill—money and money's orth.—His seat is called Oakendale—think of at, Mick—Oakendale! Oh, name of thrice happy gury!—Speak not of mercy, Mick—the squirrels of akendale must be dismounted, and learn to go foot.—What mercy can the wandering lord of Troy pect among the Greeks?—The Greeks!—I am a ry Suliote—the bravest of Greeks.

'I think not of pity, I think not of fear,
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier.'

nd necessity, Mick," he concluded, with a tone mething altered, "necessity is as unrelenting a ader as any Vizier or Pacha, whom Scanderbeg ever ught with, or Byron has sung."

Meiklewham echoed his patron's ejaculation with a und betwixt a whine, a chuckle, and a groan; the st being designed to express his pretended pity for e destined victim; the second his sympathy with his atron's's prospects of success; and the third being a histle admonitory of the dangerous courses through hich his object was to be pursued.

Suliote as he boasted himself, Mowbray had soon ter this conversation, some reason to admit that,

"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war."

he light skirmishing betwixt the parties was ended, nd the serious battle commenced with some caution n either side; each perhaps desirous of being master f his opponent's system of tactics, before exposing s own. Piquet, the most beautiful game at which man can make sacrifice of his fortune, was one with hich Mowbray had, for his misfortune perhaps, been ecounted, from an early age, a great proficient, and which the Earl of Etherington, with less experience, proved no novice. They now played for such akes as Mowbray's state of fortune rendered conderable to him, though his antagonist appeared not to gard the amount. And they played with various uccess; for, though Mowbray at times returned with smile of confidence the inquiring looks of his friend eiklewham, there were other occasions on which he eemed to evade them, as if his own had a sad conession to make in reply.

These alterations, though frequent, did not occupy, ter all, many days; for Mowbray, a friend of all ours, spent much of his time in Lord Etherington's partment, and these few days were days of battle. n the mean time, as his lordship was now sufficiently covered to join the party at Shaws-Castle, and Miss lowbray's health being announced as restored, that roposal was renewed, with the addition of a dramatic entertainment, the nature of which we shall terwards have occasion to explain. Cards were ew issued to all those who had been formerly includ in the invitation, and of course to Mr. Touchood, as formerly a resident at the Well, and now in e neighbourhood; it being previously agreed among e ladies, that a Nabob, though sometimes a dingy damaged commodity, was not to be rashly or unecessarily neglected. As to the parson, he had been ked, of course, as an old acquaintance of the Mowray house, not to be left out when the friends of the mily were invited on a great scale; but his habits ere well known, and it was no more expected that would leave his manse on such an occasion, than at the kirk should loosen itself from its foundations. It was after these arrangements had been made, at the Laird of St. Ronan's suddenly entered eiklewham's private apartment with looks of exitation. The worthy scribe turned his spectacled nose wards his patron, and holding in one hand the inch of papers which he had been just perusing, d in the other the tape with which he was about to them up again, suspended that operation to await ith open eyes and ears the communication of Mowray.

"I have *done him!*" *he said, exultingly, yet in a ne of voice lowered almost to a whisper;* "cupotted his lordship for this bout—doubled my capital, Mick, and something more.—Hush, don't interrupt me—we must think of Clara now—she must share the sunshine, should it prove but a blink before a storm.—You know, Mick, these twod—d women, Lady Penelope and the Binks, have settled that they will have something like a *bal paré* on this occasion, a sort of theatrical exhibition, and that those who like it shall be dressed in character.—I know their meaning—they think Clara has no dress fit for such foolery, and so they hope to eclipse her; Lady Pen, with her old-fashioned, ill-set diamonds, and my Lady Binks, with the new-fashioned finery which she swopt her character for. But Clara shan't be borne down so, by——! I got that affected slut, Lady Binks's maid, to tell me what her mistress had set her mind on, and she is to wear a Grecian habit, forsooth, like one of Will Allan's Eastern subjects.—But here's the rub—there is only one shawl for sale in Edinburgh that is worth showing off in, and that is at the Gallery of Fashion.—Now, Mick, my friend, that shawl must be had for Clara, with the other trankums of muslin and lace, and so forth, which you will find marked in the paper there.—Send instantly and secure it, for, as Lady Binks writes by to-morrow's post your order can go by to-night's mail—There is a note for L.100."

From a mechanical habit of never refusing any thing, Meiklewham readily took the note, but having looked at it through his spectacles, he continued to hold it in his hand as he remonstrated with his patron.—"This is a' very kindly meant, St. Ronan's—very kindly meant; and I wad be the last to say that Miss Clara does not merit respect and kindness at your hand; but I doubt mickle if she wad care a bodle for thae braw things. Ye ken yoursell, she seldom alters her fashions. Od, she thinks her riding-habit dress enough for ony company; and if you were ganging by good looks, so it is—if she had a thought mair colour, poor dear."

"Well, well," said Mowbray, impatiently, "let me alone to reconcile a woman and a fine dress."

"To be sure, ye ken best," said the writer; "but after a,' now, wad it no be better to lay by this hundred pound in Tam Turnpenny's, in case the young lady should want it afterhend, just for a sair foot?"

"You are a fool, Mick; what signifies healing a sore foot, when there will be a broken heart in the case?—No, no—get the things as I desire you—we will blaze them down for one day at least; perhaps it will be the beginning of a proper dash."

"Weel, weel, I wish it may be so," answered Meiklewham; "but this young Earl—has ye found the weak point?—Can ye get a decerniture against him, with expenses?—that is the question."

"I wish I could answer it," said Mowbray, thoughtfully.—"Confound the fellow—he is a cut above me in rank and in society too—belongs to the great clubs, and is in with the Superlatives and Inaccessibles, and all that sort of folk.—My training has been a peg lower—but, hang it, there are better dogs bred in the kennel than in the parlour. I am up to him, I think—at least I will soon know, Mick, whether I am or no, and that is always one comfort. Never mind—do you execute my commission, and take care you name no names—I must save my little Abigail's reputation."

They parted, Meiklewham to execute his patron's commission—his patron to bring to the test those hopes, the uncertainty of which he could not disguise from his own sagacity.

Trusting to the continuance of his run of luck, Mowbray resolved to bring affairs to a crisis that same evening. Every thing seemed in the outset to favour his purpose. They had dined together in Lord Etherington's apartments—his state of health interfered with the circulation of the bottle, and a drizzly autumnal evening rendered walking disagreeable, even had they gone no farther than the private stable where Lord Etherington's horses were kept, under the care of a groom of superior skill. Cards were naturally, almost necessarily, resorted to, as the only alternative for helping away the evening, and piquet was, as formerly, chosen for the game.

Lord Etherington seemed at first indolently care-

less and indifferent about his play, suffering advantages to escape him, of which, in a more attentive state of mind, he could not have failed to avail himself. Mowbray upbraided him with his inattention, and proposed a deeper stake, in order to interest him in the game. The young nobleman complied; and in the course of a few hands, the gamesters became both deeply engaged in watching and profiting by the changes of fortune. These were so many, so varied, and so unexpected, that the very souls of the players seemed at length centred in the event of the struggle; and, by dint of doubling stakes, the accumulated sum of a thousand pounds and upwards, upon each side, came to be staked in the issue of the game.—So large a risk included all those funds which Mowbray commanded by his sister's kindness, and nearly all his previous winnings, so to him the alternative was victory or ruin. He could not hide his agitation, however desirous to do so. He drank wine to supply himself with courage—he drank water to cool his agitation; and at length bent himself to play with as much care and attention as he felt himself enabled to command.

In the first part of the game their luck appeared tolerably equal, and the play of both befitting gamesters who had dared to place such a sum on the cast. But, as it drew towards a conclusion, fortune altogether deserted him who stood most in need of her favour, and Mowbray, with silent despair, saw his fate depend on a single trick, and that with every odds against him, for Lord Etherington was elder hand. But how can fortune's favour secure any one who is not true to himself?—By an infraction of the laws of the game, which could only have been expected from the veriest bungler that ever touched a card, Lord Etherington called a point without showing it, and, by the ordinary rule, Mowbray was entitled to count his own—and in the course of that and the next hand, gained the game and swept the stakes. Lord Etherington showed chagrin and displeasure, and seemed to think that the rigour of the game had been more insisted upon than in courtesy it ought to have been, when men were playing for so small a stake. Mowbray did not understand this logic. A thousand pounds, he said, were in his eyes no mutshells; the rules of piquet were insisted on by all but boys and women; and for his part, he had rather not play at all than not play the game.

"So it would seem, my dear Mowbray," said the Earl; "for on my soul, I never saw so disconsolate a visage as thine during that unlucky game—it withdrew all my attention from my hand; and I may safely say, your rueful countenance has stood me in a thousand pounds. If I could transfer thy long visage to canvass, I should have both my revenge and my money; for a correct resemblance would be worth not a penny less than the original has cost me."

"You are welcome to your jest, my lord," said Mowbray; "it has been well paid for; and I will serve you in ten thousand at the same rate. What say you?" he proceeded, taking up and shuffling the cards, "will you do yourself more justice in another game?—Revenge, they say, is sweet."

"I have no appetite for it this evening," said the Earl, gravely; "if I had, Mowbray, you might come by the worse. I do not *always* call a point without showing it."

"Your lordship is out of humour with yourself for a blunder that might happen to any man—it was as much my good luck as a good hand would have been, and so fortune be praised."

"But what if with this Fortune had naught to do?" replied Lord Etherington.—"What if, sitting down with an honest fellow and a friend like yourself, Mowbray, a man should rather choose to lose his own money, which he could afford, than to win what it might distress his friend to part with?"

"Supposing a case so far out of supposition, my lord," answered Mowbray, who felt the question ticklish—"for, with submission, the allegation is easily made, and is totally incapable of proof—I should say, no one had a right to think for me in such a particular, *or to suppose that I played for a higher stake than was convenient.*"

"And thus your friend, poor devil," replied Lord Etherington, "would lose his money, and run the risk of a quarrel into the bootⁱ—We will try it another way—Suppose this good-humoured and simple minded gamester had a favour of the deepest import to ask of his friend, and judged it better to prefer his request to a winner than to a loser?"

"If this applies to me, my lord," replied Mowbray, "it is necessary I should learn how I can oblige your lordship."

"That is a word soon spoken, but so difficult to be recalled, that I am almost tempted to pause—but yet it must be said.—Mowbray, you have a sister."

Mowbray started.—"I have indeed a sister, my lord; but I can conceive no case in which her name can enter with propriety into our present discussion."

"Again in the menacing mood!" said Lord Etherington, in his former tone; "now, here is a pretty fellow—he would first cut my throat for having won a thousand pounds from me, and then for offering to make his sister a countess!"

"A countess, my lord?" said Mowbray; "you are but jesting—you have never even seen Clara Mowbray."

"Perhaps not—but what then?—I may have seen her picture, as Puff says in the Critic, or fallen in love with her from rumour—or, to save farther suppositions, as I see they render you impatient, I may be satisfied with knowing that she is a beautiful and accomplished young lady, with a large fortune."

"What fortune do you mean, my lord?" said Mowbray, recollecting with alarm some claims, which, according to Meiklewham's view of the subject, his sister might form upon his property.—"What estate?—there is nothing belongs to our family, save these lands of St. Ronan's, or what is left of them; and of these I am, my lord, an undoubted heir of entail in possession."

"Be it so," said the Earl, "for I have no claim on your mountain realms here, which are, doubtless,

> ——' renown'd of old
> For knights, and squires, and barons bold;'

my views respect a much richer, though less romantic domain—a large manor, height Nettlewood. House old, but standing in the midst of such glorious oaks—three thousand acres of land, arable, pasture, and woodland, exclusive of the two closes, occupied by Widow Hodge and Goodman Trampclod—manorial rights—mines and minerals—and the devil knows how many good things besides, all lying in the vale of Bever."

"And what has my sister to do with all this?" asked Mowbray, in great surprise.

"Nothing; but that it belongs to her when she becomes Countess of Etherington."

"It is, then, your lordship's property already?"

"No, by Jove! nor can it, unless your sister honours me with her approbation of my suit," replied the Earl.

"This is a sorer puzzle than one of Lady Penelope's charades, my lord," said Mr. Mowbray; "I must call in the assistance of the Reverend Mr. Chatterly."

"You shall not need," said Lord Etherington; "I will give you the key, but listen to me with patience.—You know that we nobles of England, less jealous of our sixteen quarters than those on the continent, do not take scorn to line our decayed ermines with a little cloth of gold from the city; and my grandfather was lucky enough to get a wealthy wife, with a halting pedigree,—rather a singular circumstance, considering that her father was a countryman of yours. She had a brother, however, still more wealthy than herself, and who increased his fortune by continuing to carry on the trade which had first enriched his family. At length he summed up his books, washed his hands of commerce, and retired to Nettlewood, to become a gentleman; and here my much respected granduncle was seized with the rage of making himself a man of consequence. He tried what marrying a woman of family would do; but he soon found that whatever advantage his family might derive from his doing so, his own condition was but little illustrated. He next resolved to become a man of family himself. His father had left Scotland when

very young, and bore, I blush to say, the vulgar name of Scrogie. This hapless dissyllable my uncle carried in person to the herald office in Scotland; but neither Lyon, nor Marchmont, nor Islay, nor Snadoun, neither herald nor pursuivant, would patronise Scrogie.—Scrogie!—there could nothing be made out of it—so that my worthy relative had recourse to the surer side of the house, and began to found his dignity on his mother's name of Mowbray. In this he was much more successful, and I believe some sly fellow stole for him a slip from your own family tree, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, which, I daresay, you have never missed. At any rate, for his *argent* and *or*, he got a handsome piece of parchment, blazoned with a white lion for Mowbray, to be borne quarterly, with three stunted or scrog-bushes for Scrogie, and became thenceforth Mr. Scrogie Mowbray, or rather, as he subscribed himself, Reginald (his former Christian name was Ronald) S. Mowbray. He had a son who most undutifully laughed at all this, refused the honours of the high name of Mowbray, and insisted on retaining his father's original appellative of Scrogie, to the great annoyance of his said father's ears, and damage of his temper."

"Why, faith, betwixt the two," said Mowbray, "I own I should have preferred my own name, and I think the old gentleman's taste rather better than the young one's."

"True; but both were wilful, absurd originals, with a nappy obstinacy of temper, whether derived from Mowbray or Scrogie I know not, but which led them so often into opposition, that the offended father, Reginald S. Mowbray, turned his recusant son Scrogie fairly out of doors; and the fellow would have paid for his plebeian spirit with a vengeance, had he not found refuge with a surviving partner of the original Scrogie of all, who still carried on the lucrative branch of traffic by which the family had been first enriched. I mention these particulars to account, in so far as I can, for the singular predicament in which I now find myself placed."

"Proceed, my lord," said Mr. Mowbray; "there is no denying the singularity of your story, and I presume you are quite serious in giving me such an extraordinary detail."

"Entirely so, upon my honour—and a most serious matter it is, you will presently find. When my worthy uncle, Mr. S. Mowbray, (for I will not call him Scrogie even in the grave,) paid his debt to nature, every body concluded he would be found to have disinherited his son, the unfilial Scrogie, and so far every body was right—But it was also generally believed that he would settle the estate on my father, Lord Etherington, the son of his sister, and therein every one was wrong. For my excellent grand-uncle had pondered with himself, that the favoured name of Mowbray would take no advantage, and attain no additional elevation, if his estate of Nettlewood (otherwise called Mowbray-Park) should descend to our family without any condition; and with the assistance of a sharp attorney, he settled it on me, then a schoolboy, *on condition* that I should, before attaining the age of twenty-five complete, take unto myself in holy wedlock a young lady of good fame, of the name of Mowbray, and, by preference, of the house of St. Ronan's should a damsel of that house exist.—Now my riddle is read."

And a very extraordinary one it is," replied Mowbray, thoughtfully.

"Confess the truth," said Lord Etherington, laying his hand on his shoulder; "you think the story will bear a grain of a scruple of doubt, if not a whole scruple itself?"

"At least, my lord," answered Mowbray, "your lordship will allow, that, being Miss Mowbray's only near relation, and sole guardian, I may, without offence, pause upon a suit for her hand, made under such odd circumstances."

"If you have the least doubt either respecting my rank or fortune, I can give, of course, the most satisfactory references," said the Earl of Etherington.

"That I can *easily believe, my lord*," said Mowbray; "*nor do I in the least fear deception*, where *detection would be so easy. Your lordship's* proceedings towards me, too," (with a conscious glance at the bills he still held in his hand,) "have, I admit, been such as to intimate some such deep cause of interest as you have been pleased to state. But it seems strange that your lordship should have permitted years to glide away, without so much as inquiring after the young lady, who, I believe, is the only person qualified as your grand-uncle's will requires, with whom you can form an alliance. It appears to me, that long before now, this matter ought to have been investigated; and that, even now, it would have been more natural and more decorous to have at least seen my sister before proposing for her hand."

"On the first point, my dear Mowbray," said Lord Etherington, "I am free to own to you, that, without meaning your sister the least affront, I would have got rid of this clause if I could; for every man would fain choose a wife for himself, and feel I no hurry to marry at all. But the rogue-lawyers, after taking fees, and keeping me in hand for years, have at length roundly told me the clause must be complied with, or Nettlewood must have another master. So I thought it best to come down here in person, in order to address the fair lady; but as accident has hitherto prevented my seeing her, and as I found in her brother a man who understands the world, I hope you will not think the worse of me, that I have endeavoured in the outset to make you my friend. Truth is, I shall be twenty-five in the course of a month; and without your favour, and the opportunities which only you can afford me, that seems a short time to woo and win a lady of Miss Mowbray's merit."

"And what is the alternative if you do not form this proposed alliance, my lord?" said Mowbray.

"The bequest of my grand-uncle lapses," said the Earl, "and fair Nettlewood, with its old house, and older oaks, manorial rights, Hodge Trampclod, and all, devolves on a certain cousin-german of mine, whom Heaven of his mercy confound!"

"You have left yourself little time to prevent such an event, my lord," said Mowbray; "but things being as I now see them, you shall have what interest I can give you in the affair.—We must stand, however, on more equal terms, my lord—I will condescend so far as to allow it would have been inconvenient for me at this moment to have lost that game, but I cannot in the circumstances think of acting as if I had fairly won it. We must draw stakes, my lord."

"Not a word of that, if you really mean me kindly, my dear Mowbray. The blunder was a real one, for I was indeed thinking, as you may suppose, on other things than the showing my point—All was fairly lost and won.—I hope I shall have opportunities of offering real services, which may perhaps give me some right to your partial regard—at present we are on equal footing on all sides—perfectly so."

"If your lordship think so," said Mowbray,—and then passing rapidly to what he felt he could say with more confidence,—"Indeed, at any rate, no personal obligation to myself could prevent my doing my full duty as guardian to my sister."

"Unquestionably, I desire nothing else," replied the Earl of Etherington.

"I must therefore understand that your lordship is quite serious in your proposal; and that it is not to be withdrawn, even if upon acquaintance with Miss Mowbray, you should not perhaps think her so deserving of your lordship's attentions, as report may have spoken her."

"Mr. Mowbray," replied the Earl, "the treaty between you and me shall be as definite as if I were a sovereign prince, demanding in marriage the sister of a neighbouring monarch, whom, according to royal etiquette, he neither has seen nor could see. I have been quite frank with you, and I have stated to you that my present motives for entering upon negotiation are not personal, but territorial; when I know Miss Mowbray, I have no doubt they will be otherwise. I have heard she is beautiful."

"Something of the palest, my lord," answered Mowbray.

"A fine complexion is the first attraction which is lost in the world of fashion, and that which it is easiest to replace."

"Dispositions, my lord, may differ," said Mowbray, "without faults on either side. I presume your lordship has inquired into my sister's. She is amiable, accomplished, sensible, and high-spirited; but yet"——

"I understand you, Mr. Mowbray, and will spare you the pain of speaking out. I have heard Miss Mowbray is in some respects—particular; to use a broader word—a little whimsical.—No matter. She will have the less to learn when she becomes a countess, and a woman of fashion."

"Are you serious, my lord?" said Mowbray.

"I am—and I will speak my mind still more plainly. I have good temper, and excellent spirits, and can endure a good deal of singularity in those I live with. I have no doubt your sister and I will live happily together—But in case it should prove otherwise, arrangements may be made previously, which will enable us in certain circumstances to live happily apart. My own estate is large, and Nettlewood will bear dividing."

"Nay, then," said Mowbray, "I have little more to say—nothing indeed remains for inquiry, so far as your lordship is concerned. But my sister must have free liberty of choice—so far as I am concerned, your lordship's suit has my interest."

"And I trust we may consider it as a done thing?"

"With Clara's approbation—certainly," answered Mowbray.

"I trust there is no chance of personal repugnance on the young lady's part?" said the young peer.

"I anticipate nothing of the kind, my lord," answered Mowbray, "as I presume there is no reason for any; but young ladies will be capricious, and if Clara, after I have done and said all that a brother ought to do, should remain repugnant, there is a point in the exertion of my influence which it would be cruelty to pass."

The Earl of Etherington walked a turn through the apartment, then paused, and said, in a grave and doubtful tone, "In the mean while, I am bound, and the young lady is free, Mowbray. Is this quite fair?"

"It is what happens in every case, my lord, where a gentleman proposes for a lady," answered Mowbray; "he must remain, of course, bound by his offer, until, within a reasonable time, it is accepted or rejected. It is not my fault that your lordship has declared your wishes to me, before ascertaining Clara's inclination. But while as yet the matter is between ourselves—I make you welcome to draw back if you think proper. Clara Mowbray needs not push for a catch-match."

"Nor do I desire," said the young nobleman, "any time to reconsider the resolution which I have confided to you. I am not in the least fearful that I shall change my mind on seeing your sister, and I am ready to stand by the proposal which I have made to you.—If, however, you feel so extremely delicately on my account," he continued, "I can see and even converse with Miss Mowbray at this fête of yours, without the necessity of being at all presented to her—The character which I have assumed in a manner obliges me to wear a mask."

"Certainly," said the Laird of St. Ronan's, "and I am glad, for both our sakes, your lordship thinks of taking a little law upon this occasion."

"I shall profit nothing by it," said the Earl; "my doom is fixed before I start—but if this mode of managing the matter will save your conscience, I have no objection to it—it cannot consume much time, which is what I have to look to."

They then shook hands and parted, without any farther discourse which could interest the reader.

Mowbray was glad to find himself alone, in order to think over what had happened, and to ascertain the state of his own mind, which at present was puzzling even to himself. He could not but feel that much greater advantages of every kind might accrue to himself and his family from the alliance of the wealthy young Earl, than could have been derived from any share of his spoils which he had proposed *to gain by superior address in play, or greater skill on the turf. But his pride was hurt when he recollected that he had placed himself entirely in* Lord Etherington's power; and the escape from absolute ruin which he had made, solely by the sufferance of his opponent, had nothing in it consolatory to his wounded feelings. He was lowered in his own eyes, when he recollected how completely the proposed victim of his ingenuity had seen through his schemes, and only abstained from baffling them entirely, because to do so suited best with his own. There was a shade of suspicion, too, which he could not entirely eradicate from his mind.—What occasion had this young nobleman to preface, by the voluntary loss of a brace of thousands, a proposal which must have been acceptable in itself, without any such sacrifice? And why should he, after all, have been so eager to secure his accession to the proposed alliance, before he had even seen the lady who was the object of it? However hurried for time, he might have waited the event at least of the entertainment at Shaws-Castle, at which Clara was necessarily obliged to make her appearance.—Yet such conduct, however unusual, was equally inconsistent with any sinister intentions; since the sacrifice of a large sum of money, and the declaration of his views upon a portionless young lady of family, could scarcely be the preface to any unfair practice. So that, upon the whole, Mowbray settled, that what was uncommon in the Earl's conduct arose from the hasty and eager disposition of a rich young English man, to whom money is of little consequence, and who is too headlong in pursuit of the favourite plan of the moment, to proceed in the most rational or most ordinary manner. If, however, there should prove any thing further in the matter than he could at present discover, Mowbray promised himself that the utmost circumspection on his part could not fail to discover it, and that in full time to prevent any ill consequences to his sister or himself.

Immersed in such cogitations, he avoided the inquisitive presence of Mr. Meiklewham, who, as usual, had been watching for him to learn how matters were going on; and although it was now late, he mounted his horse, and rode hastily to Shaws-Castle. On the way, he deliberated with himself whether to mention to his sister the application which had been made to him, in order to prepare her to receive the young Earl as a suitor, favoured with her brother's approbation. "But no, no, no;" such was the result of his contemplation. "She might take it into her head that his thoughts were bent less upon having her for a countess, than on obtaining possession of his grand-uncle's estate.—We must keep quiet," concluded he, "until her personal appearance and accomplishments may appear at least to have some influence upon his choice.—We must say nothing till this blessed entertainment has been given and received."

CHAPTER XIX.

A LETTER.

"Has he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath?—Well—Be it so."
Richard III.

MOWBRAY had no sooner left the Earl's apartment, than the latter commenced an epistle to a friend and associate, which we lay before the reader, as best calculated to illustrate the views and motives of the writer. It was addressed to Captain Jekyl, of the —— regiment of Guards, at the Green Dragon, Harrowgate, and was of the following tenor:—

"DEAR HARRY,

"I have expected you here these ten days past, anxiously as ever man was looked for; and have now to charge your absence as high treason to your sworn allegiance. Surely you do not presume, like one of Napoleon's new-made monarchs, to grumble for independence, as if your greatness were of your own making, or as if I had picked you out of the whole of St. James's coffee-house to hold my back-hand, for your sake, forsooth, not for my own? Wherefore, lay aside all your own proper business, be it the pursuit of dowagers, or the plucking of pigeons, and instantly repair to this place, where I may speedily want your assistance.—*May* want it, said I? Why, most negligent of friends and allies, I have wanted it already,

and that when it might have done me yeoman's service. Know that I have had an affair since I came hither—have got hurt myself, and have nearly shot my friend; and if I had, I might have been hanged for it, for want of Harry Jekyl to bear witness in my favour. I was so far on my road to this place, when, not choosing, for certain reasons, to pass through the old village, I struck by a footpath into the woods which separate it from the new Spa, leaving my carriage and people to go the carriage-way. I had not walked half a mile when I heard the footsteps of some one behind, and, looking round, what should I behold but the face in the world which I most cordially hate and abhor—I mean that which stands on the shoulders of my right trusty and well beloved cousin and counsellor, Saint Francis. He seemed as much confounded as I was at our unexpected meeting; and it was a minute ere he found breath to demand what I did in Scotland, contrary to my promise, as he was pleased to express it.—I retaliated, and charged him with being here, in contradiction to his.—He justified, and said he had only come down upon the express information that I was upon my road to St. Ronan's. Now, Harry, how the devil should he have known this hadst thou been quite faithful? for I am sure, to no ear but thine own did I breathe a whisper of my purpose.—Next, with the insolent assumption of superiority, which he founds on what he calls the rectitude of his purpose, he proposed we should both withdraw from a neighbourhood into which we could bring nothing but wretchedness.—I have told you how difficult it is to cope with the calm and resolute manner that the devil gifts him with on such occasions; but I was determined he should not carry the day this time. I saw no chance for it, however, but to put myself into a towering passion, which, thank Heaven, I can always do on short notice.—I charged him with having imposed formerly on my youth, and made himself judge of my rights; and I accompanied my defiance with the strongest terms of irony and contempt, as well as with demand of instant satisfaction. I had my travelling pistols with me, (*et pour cause,*) and, to my surprise, my gentleman was equally provided.—For fair play's sake, I made him take one of my pistols—right Kuchenritters—a brace of balls in each, but that circumstance I forgot.—I would fain have argued the matter a little longer; but I thought at the time, and think still, that the best arguments which he and I can exchange, must come from the point of the sword, or the muzzle of the pistol.—We fired nearly together, and I think both dropped—I am sure I did, but recovered in a minute, with a damaged arm and a scratch on the temple—it was the last which stunned me—so much for double-loaded pistols.—My friend was invisible, and I had nothing for it but to walk to the Spa, bleeding all the way like a calf, and tell a raw-head-and-bloody-bone story about a footpad, which, but for my earldom, and my gory locks, no living soul would have believed.

"Shortly after, when I had been installed in a sick room, I had the mortification to learn, that my own impatience had brought all this mischief upon me, at a moment when I had every chance of getting rid of my friend without trouble, had I but let him go on his own errand; for it seems he had an appointment that morning with a booby Baronet, who is said to be a bullet-slitter, and would perhaps have rid me of Saint Francis without any trouble or risk on my part. Mean time, his non-appearance at this rendezvous has placed Master Francis Tyrrel, as he chooses to call himself, in the worst odour possible with the gentry at the Spring, who have denounced him as a coward and no gentleman.—What to think of the business myself, I know not; and I much want your assistance to see what can have become of this fellow, who, like a spectre of ill omen, has so often thwarted and baffled my best plans. My own confinement renders me inactive, though my wound is fast healing. Dead he cannot be; for had he been mortally wounded, we should have heard of him somewhere or other—he could not have vanished from the earth *like a bubble of the elements.* Well *and sound he cannot be; for, besides that I am sure I saw him stagger and drop, firing his pistol as he* fell, I know him well enough to swear, that, had he not been severely wounded, he would have first pestered me with his accursed presence and assistance, and then walked forward with his usual composure to settle matters with Sir Bingo Binks. No—no—Saint Francis is none of those who leave such jobs half finished—it is but doing him justice to say, he has the devil's courage to back his own deliberate impertinence. But then, if wounded severely, he must be still in this neighbourhood, and probably in concealment—this is what I must discover, and I want your assistance in my inquiries among the natives.—Haste hither, Harry, as ever you look for good at my hand.

"A good player, Harry, always studies to make the best of bad cards—and so I have endeavoured to turn my wound to some account; and it has given me the opportunity to secure Monsieur le Frere in my interests. You say very truly, that it is of consequence to me to know the character of this new actor on the disordered scene of my adventures.—Know, then, he is that most incongruous of all monsters—a Scotch Buck—how far from being buck of the season you may easily judge. Every point of national character is opposed to the pretensions of this luckless race, when they attempt to take on them a personage which is assumed with so much facility by their brethren of the Isle of Saints. They are a shrewd people, indeed, but so destitute of ease, grace, pliability of manners, and insinuation of address, that they eternally seem to suffer actual misery in their attempts to look gay and careless. Then their pride heads them back at one turn, their poverty at another, their pedantry at a third, their *mauvaise honte* at a fourth; and with so many obstacles to make them bolt off the course, it is positively impossible they should win the plate. No, Harry, it is the grave folk in Old England who have to fear a Caledonian invasion—they will make no conquests in the world of fashion. Excellent bankers the Scots may be, for they are eternally calculating how to add interest to principal;—good soldiers, for they are, if not such heroes as they would be thought, as brave, I suppose, as their neighbours, and much more amenable to discipline;—lawyers they are born; indeed every country gentleman is bred one, and their patient and crafty disposition enables them in other lines, to submit to hardships which other natives could not bear, and avail themselves of advantages which others would let pass under their noses unavailingly. But assuredly Heaven did not form the Caledonian for the gay world; and his efforts at ease, grace, and gayety, resemble only the clumsy gambols of the ass in the fable. Yet the Scot has his sphere too, (in his own country only,) where the character which he assumes is allowed to pass current. This Mowbray, now—this brother-in-law of mine—might do pretty well at a Northern Meeting, or the Leith races, where he could give five minutes to the sport of the day, and the next half hour to country politics, or to farming; but it is scarce necessary to tell you, Harry, that this half fellowship will not pass on the better side of the Tweed.

"Yet, for all I have told you, this trout was not easily tickled; nor should I have made much of him, had he not, in the plenitude of his northern conceit, entertained that notion of my being a good subject of plunder, which you had contrived (blessings on your contriving brain!) to insinuate into him by means of Wolverine. He commenced this hopeful experiment, and, as you must have anticipated, caught a Tartar with a vengeance. Of course, I used my victory only so far as to secure his interest in accomplishing my principal object; and yet, I could see my gentleman's pride was so much injured in the course of the negotiation, that not all the advantages which the match offered to his damned family, were able entirely to subdue the chagrin arising from his defeat. He did gulp it down, though, and we are friends and allies, for the present at least—not so cordially so, however, as to induce me to trust him with the whole of the strangely complicated tale. The circumstance of the will it was necessary

to communicate, as affording a sufficiently strong reason for urging my suit; and this partial disclosure enabled me for the present to dispense with farther confidence.

"You will observe, that I stand by no means secure; and besides the chance of my cousin's reappearance—a certain event, unless he is worse than I dare hope for—I have perhaps to expect the fantastic repugnance of Clara herself, or some sulky freak on her brother's part.—In a word—and let it be such a one as conjurers raise the devil with—Harry Jekyl, I *want* you.

"As well knowing the nature of my friend, I can assure you that his own interest, as well as mine, may be advanced by his coming hither on duty. Here is a blockhead, whom I already mentioned, Sir Bingo Binks, with whom something may be done worth *your* while, though scarce worth *mine*. The Baronet is a perfect buzzard, and when I came here he was under Mowbray's training. But the awkward Scot had plucked half-a-dozen penfeathers from his wig with so little precaution, that the Baronet has become frightened and shy, and is now in the act of rebelling against Mowbray, whom he both hates and fears—the least backing from a knowing hand like you, and the bird becomes your own, feathers and all.—Moreover,

——— 'by my life,
This Bingo hath a mighty pretty wife.'

A lovely woman, Harry—rather plump, and above the middle size—quite your taste—A Juno in beauty, looking with such scorn on her husband, whom she despises and hates, and seeming, as if she *could* look so differently on any whom she might like better, that, on my faith, 'twere sin not to give her occasion. If you please to venture your luck, either with the knight or the lady, you shall have fair play, and no interference—that is, provided you appear upon this summons; for, otherwise, I may be so placed, that the affairs of the knight and the lady may fall under my own immediate cognizance. And so, Harry, if you wish to profit by these hints, you had best make haste, as well for your own concerns, as to assist me in mine.—Yours, Harry, as you behave yourself,

"ETHERINGTON."

Having finished this eloquent and instructive epistle, the young Earl demanded the attendance of his own valet Solmes, whom he charged to put it into the post-office without delay, and with his own hand.

CHAPTER XX.

THEATRICALS.

——— The play's the thing.—*Hamlet.*

THE important day had now arrived, the arrangement for which had for some time occupied all the conversation and thoughts of the good company at the Well of St. Ronan's. To give it, at the same time, a degree of novelty and consequence, Lady Penelope Penfeather had long since suggested to Mr. Mowbray, that the more gifted and accomplished part of the guests might contribute to furnish out entertainment for the rest, by acting a few scenes of some popular drama; an accomplishment in which her self-conceit assured her that she was peculiarly qualified to excel. Mr. Mowbray, who seemed on this occasion to have thrown the reins entirely into her ladyship's hands, made no objection to the plan which she proposed, excepting that the old-fashioned hedges and walks of the garden at Shaws-Castle must necessarily serve for stage and scenery, as there was no time to fit up the old hall for the exhibition of the proposed theatricals.* But upon inquiry among the company, this plan was wrecked upon the ordinary shelve, to wit, the difficulty of finding performers who would consent to assume the lower characters of the drama. For the first parts there were candidates more than enough; but most of these were greatly too high-spirited to play the fool, except they were permitted to top the part. Then amongst the few unambitious underlings, who could be coaxed or cajoled to undertake subordinate characters, there were so many bad memories, and short memories, and treacherous memories, that at length the plan was resigned in despair.

A substitute, proposed by Lady Penelope, was next considered. It was proposed to act what the Italians call a Comedy of Character; that is, not an exact drama, in which the actors deliver what is set down for them by the author; but one, in which the plot having been previously fixed upon, and a few striking scenes adjusted, the actors are expected to supply the dialogue extempore, or, as Petruchio says, from their mother wit. This is an amusement which affords much entertainment in Italy, particularly in the state of Venice, where the characters of their drama have been long since all previously fixed, and are handed down by tradition; and this species of drama, though rather belonging to the mask than the theatre, is distinguished by the name of Commedia dell' Arte.* But the shame-faced character of Britons is still more alien from a species of display, where there is a constant and extemporaneous demand for wit, or the sort of ready small-talk which supplies its place, than from the regular exhibitions of the drama, where the author, standing responsible for language and sentiment, leaves to the personators of the scenes only the trouble of finding enunciation and action.

But the ardent and active spirit of Lady Penelope, still athirst after novelty, though baffled in her two first projects, brought forward a third, in which she was more successful. This was the proposal to combine a certain number, at least, of the guests, properly dressed for the occasion, as representing some well-known historical or dramatic characters, in a group, having reference to history, or to a scene of the drama. In this representation, which may be called playing a picture, action, even pantomimical action, was not expected; and all that was required of the performers, was to throw themselves into such a group as might express a marked and striking point of an easily remembered scene, but where the actors are at a pause, and without either speech or motion. In this species of representation there was no tax, either on the invention or memory of those who might undertake parts; and, what recommended it still farther to the good company, there was no marked difference betwixt the hero and heroine of the group, and the less distinguished characters by whom they were attended on the stage; and every one who had confidence in a handsome shape and a becoming dress, might hope, though standing in not quite so broad and favourable a light as the principal personages, to draw, nevertheless, a considerable portion of attention and applause. This motion, therefore, that the company, or such of them as might choose to appear properly dressed for the occasion, should form themselves into one or more groups, which might be renewed and varied as often as they pleased, was hailed and accepted as a bright idea, which assigned to every one a share of the importance attached to its probable success.

Mowbray, on his side, promised to contrive some arrangement which should separate the actors in this mute drama from the spectators, and enable the former to vary the amusement, by withdrawing themselves from the scene, and again appearing upon it under a different and new combination. This plan of exhibition, where fine clothes and affected attitudes, supplied all draughts upon fancy or talent, was highly agreeable to most of the ladies present; and even Lady Binks, whose discontent seemed proof against every effort that could be proposed to soothe it, acquiesced in the project, with perfect indifference indeed, but with something less of sullenness than usual.

* At Kilruddery, the noble seat of Lord Meath, in the county of Wicklow, there is a situation for private theatrical exhibitions in the open air, planted out with the evergreens which arise there in the most luxuriant magnificence. It has a wild *and romantic effect, reminding one of the scene* in which Bottom rehearsed *his pageant, with a green plot for a stage, and a hawthorn brake for a tiringroom.*

* See Mr. William Stewart Rose's very interesting Letters from the North of Italy, Vol. I. Letter XXX., where this curious subject is treated with the information and precision which distinguish that accomplished author.

It now only remained to rummage the circulating library, for some piece of sufficient celebrity to command attention, and which should be at the same time suited to the execution of their project. Bell's British Theatre, Miller's Modern and Ancient Drama, and about twenty odd volumes, in which stray tragedies and comedies were associated, like the passengers in a mail-coach, without the least attempt at selection or arrangement, were all examined in the course of their researches. But Lady Penelope declared loftily and decidedly for Shakspeare, as the author whose immortal works were fresh in every one's recollection. Shakspeare was therefore chosen, and from his works the Midsummer Night's Dream was selected, as the play which afforded the greatest variety of characters, and most scope of course for the intended representation. An active competition presently occurred among the greater part of the company, for such copies of the Midsummer Night's Dream, or the volume of Shakspeare containing it, as could be got in the neighbourhood; for, notwithstanding Lady Penelope's declaration, that every one who could read had Shakspeare's plays by heart, it appeared that such of his dramas as have not kept possession of the stage were very little known at St. Ronan's, save among those people who are emphatically called readers.

The adjustment of the parts was the first subject of consideration, so soon as those who intended to assume characters had refreshed their recollection on the subject of the piece. Theseus was unanimously assigned to Mowbray, the giver of the entertainment, and therefore justly entitled to represent the Duke of Athens. The costume of an Amazonian crest and plume, a tucked-up vest, and a tight buskin of sky-blue silk, buckled with diamonds, reconciled Lady Binks to the part of Hippolyta. The superior stature of Miss Mowbray to Lady Penelope, made it necessary that the former should perform the part of Helena, and her ladyship rest contented with the shrewish character of Hermia. It was resolved to compliment the young Earl of Etherington with the part of Lysander, which, however, his lordship declined, and, preferring comedy to tragedy, refused to appear in any other character than that of the magnanimous Bottom; and he gave them such a humorous specimen of his quality in that part, that all were delighted at once with his condescension in assuming, and his skill in performing, the presenter of Pyramus.

The part of Egeus was voted to Captain MacTurk, whose obstinacy in refusing to appear in any other than the full Highland garb, had nearly disconcerted the whole affair. At length this obstacle was got over, on the authority of Childe Harold, who remarks the similarity betwixt the Highland and Grecian costume,* and the company, dispensing with the difference of colour, voted the Captain's variegated kilt, of the MacTurk tartan, to be the kirtle of a Grecian mountaineer,—Egeus to be an Arnout, and the Captain to be Egeus. Chatterly and the painter, walking gentlemen by profession, agreed to walk through the parts of Demetrius and Lysander, the two Athenian lovers; and Mr. Winterbloesom, loath and lazy, after many excuses, was bribed by Lady Penelope with an antique, or supposed antique cameo, to play the part of Philostratus, master of the revels, provided his gout would permit him to remain so long upon the turf, which was to be their stage.

Muslin trowsers, adorned with spangles, a voluminous turban of silver gauze, and wings of the same, together with an embroidered slipper, converted at once Miss Digges into Oberon, the King of Shadows, whose sovereign gravity, however, was somewhat indifferently represented by the silly gayety of Miss in her Teens, and the uncontrolled delight which she felt in her fine clothes. A younger sister represented Titania; and two or three subordinate elves were selected, among families attending the salutiferous fountain, who were easily persuaded to let their children figure in fine clothes at so juvenile an age, though they shook their head at Miss Digges and her pantaloons, and no less at the liberal display of Lady Binks's right leg, with which the Amazonian garb gratified the public of St. Ronan's.

Dr. Quackleben was applied to to play Wall, by the assistance of such a wooden horse, or screen, as clothes are usually dried upon; the old Attorney stood for Lion; and the other characters of Bottom's drama were easily found among the unnamed frequenters of the Spring. Dressed rehearsals, and so forth, went merrily on—all voted there was a play fitted.

But even the Doctor's eloquence could not press Mrs. Blower into the scheme, although she was particularly wanted to represent Thisbe.

"Truth is," she replied, "I dinna greatly like stage-plays. John Blower, honest man, as sailors are aye for some spree or another, wad take me ance to see ane Mrs. Siddons—I thought we should hae been crushed to death before we gat in—a' my things riven aff my back, forby the four lily-white shillings that it cost us—and then in came three frightsome carlines wi' besoms, and they wad bewitch a sailor's wife—I was lang eneugh there—and out I wad be, and out John Blower gat me, but wi' nae sma' fight and fend. —My Lady Penelope Penfitter, and the great folk, may just take it as they like; but in my mind, Dr. Cacklehen, it's a mere blasphemy for folk to gar themselves look otherwise than their Maker made them; and then the changing the name which was given them at baptism, is, I think, an awful falling away from our vows; and though Thisby, which I take to be Greek for Tibbie, may be a very good name, yet Margaret was I christened, and Margaret will I die."

"You mistake the matter entirely, my dear Mrs. Blower," said the Doctor; "there is nothing serious intended—a mere *placebo*—just a divertisement to cheer the spirits, and assist the effect of the waters—cheerfulness is a great promoter of health."

"Dinna tell me o' health, Dr. Kittlepin!—Can it be for the puir body M'Durk's health to major about in the tartans like a tobacconist's sign in a frosty morning, wi' his poor wizzened houghs as blue as a blawort?—weel I wot he is a humbling spectacle. Or can it gie ony body health or pleasure either to see your ainsell, Doctor, gauging about wi' a claise screen tied to your back, covered wi' paper, and painted like a stane and lime wa'?—I'll gang to see nane o' their vanities, Dr. Kittlehen; and if there is nae other decent body to take care o' me, as I dinna like to sit a haill afternoon by myself, I'll e'en gae down to Mr. Sowerbrowst the maltster's—he is a pleasant, sensible man, and a sponsible man in the world, and his sister's a very decent woman."

"Confound Sowerbrowst," thought the Doctor; "if I had guessed he was to come across me thus, he should not have got the better of his dyspepsy so early.—My dear Mrs. Blower," he continued, but aloud, "it is a foolish affair enough, I must confess; but every person of style and fashion at the Well has settled to attend this exhibition; there has been nothing else talked of for this month through the whole country, and it will be a year before it is forgotten. And I would have you consider how ill it will look, my dear Mrs. Blower, to stay away—nobody will believe you had a card—no, not though you were to hang it round your neck like a label round a vial of tincture, Mrs. Blower."

"If ye thought *that*, Doctor Kickherben," said the widow, alarmed at the idea of losing cast, "I wad e'en gang to the show, like other folk; sinful and shameful if it be, let them that make the sin bear the shame. But then I will put on nane of their Popish disguises—me that has lived in North Leith, baith wife and lass, for I shanna say how many years, and has a character to keep up baith with saint and sinner.—And then, wha's to take care of me, since you are gaun to make a lime-and-stane wa' of yourself Dr. Kickinben?"

"My dear Mrs. Blower if such is your determination, I will not make a wall of myself. Have [illegible]

* "The Arnaouts or Albanese," (says Lord Byron,) "struck me forcibly by their resemblance to the Highlanders of Scotland, in dress, figure, and manner of living. Their very mountains seem Caledonian, with a kinder climate. The kilt, though white; the spare, active form; their dialect Celtic, in the sound, and their hardy habits, all carried me back to Morven."—*Notes to the Second Chapter of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

must consider, my profession—she must understand it is my function to look after my patients, in preference to all the stage-plays in this world—and to attend on a case like yours, Mrs. Blower, it is my duty to sacrifice, were it called for, the whole drama from Shakspeare to O'Keefe."

On hearing this magnanimous resolution, the widow's heart was greatly cheered; for, in fact, she might probably have considered the Doctor's perseverance in the plan, of which she had expressed such high disapprobation, as little less than a symptom of absolute defection from his allegiance. By an accommodation, therefore, which suited both parties, it was settled that the Doctor should attend his loving widow to Shaws-Castle, without mask or mantle; and that the painted screen should be transferred from Quackleben's back to the broad shoulders of a briefless barrister, well qualified for the part of Wall, since the composition of his skull might have rivalled in solidity the mortar and stone of the most approved builder.

We must not pause to dilate upon the various labours of body and spirit which preceded the intervening space, betwixt the settlement of this gay scheme, and the time appointed to carry it into execution. We will not attempt to describe how the wealthy, by letter and by commissioners, urged their researches through the stores of the Gallery of Fashion for specimens of Oriental finery—how they that were scant of diamonds supplied their place with paste and Bristol stones—how the country dealers were driven out of patience by the demand for goods of which they had never before heard the name—and, lastly, how the busy fingers of the more economical damsels twisted handkerchiefs into turbans, and converted petticoats into pantaloons, shaped and sewed, cut and clipped, and spoiled many a decent gown and petticoat, to produce something like a Grecian habit. Who can describe the wonders wrought by active needles and scissors, aided by thimbles and thread, upon silver gauze, and sprigged muslin? or who can show how, if the fair nymphs of the Spring did not entirely succeed in attaining the desired resemblance to heathen Greeks, they at least contrived to get rid of all similitude to sober Christians?

Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the various schemes of conveyance which were resorted to, in order to transfer the beau monde of the Spa to the scene of revelry at Shaws-Castle. These were as various as the fortunes and pretensions of the owners; from the lordly curricle, with its outriders, to the humble taxed cart, nay, untaxed cart, which conveyed the personages of lesser rank. For the latter, indeed, the two post-chaises at the Inn seemed converted into hourly stages, so often did they come and go between the Hotel and the Castle—a glad day for the postilions, and a day of martyrdom for the poor post-horses; so seldom is it that every department of any society, however constituted, can be injured or benefited by the same occurrence.

Such, indeed, was the penury of vehicular conveyance, that applications were made in manner most humble, even to Meg Dods herself, entreating she would permit her old whiskey to *ply* (for such might have been the phrase) at St. Ronan's Well, for that day only, and that upon good cause shown. But not for sordid lucre would the undaunted spirit of Meg compound her feud with her neighbours of the detested Well. "Her carriage," she briefly replied, "was engaged for her ain guest and the minister, and deil anither body's fit should gang intill't. Let every herring hing by its ain head." And, accordingly, at the duly appointed hour, creaked forth the leathern convenience, in which, carefully screened by the curtain from the gaze of the fry of the village, sat Nabob Touchwood, in the costume of an Indian merchant, or Shroff, as they are termed. The clergyman would not, perhaps, have been so punctual, had not a set of notes and messages from his friend at the Cleikum, ever following each other as thick as the papers which decorate the tail of a schoolboy's kite, kept him so *continually on the alert from* daybreak till noon, that *Mr. Touchwood found him completely* dressed; and *the whiskey was only delayed for about* ten minutes before the door of the manse, a space emplo Mr. Cargill in searching for the spectacles, w last were happily discovered upon his own nos

At length seated by the side of his new frie Cargill arrived safe at Shaws-Castle, the which mansion was surrounded by a screamin of children, so extravagantly delighted at see strange figures to whom each successive carria birth, that even the stern brow and well-know of Johnie Tirlsneck, the beadle, though statio the court on express purpose, was not equal task of controlling them. These noisy intruder ever, who, it was believed, were somewhat fa by Clara Mowbray, were excluded from th which opened before the house, by a couple of or helpers armed with their whips, and could n salute, with their shrill and wondering hailii various personages, as they passed down a avenue leading from the exterior gate.

The Cleikum nabob and the minister were with shouts not the least clamorous; which mer merited by the ease with which he wore th turban, and the latter, by the infrequency of pearance in public, and both, by the singula cination of a decent clergyman of the church o land, in a dress more old-fashioned than cou be produced in the General Assembly, walking arm, and seemingly in the most familiar term a Parsee merchant. They stopped a moment gate of the court-yard to admire the front of mansion, which had been disturbed with so un scene of gayety.

Shaws-Castle, though so named, presented pearance of defence; and the present edifice ha been designed for more than the accommodati peaceful family, having a low, heavy front, with some of that meretricious ornament, uniting, or rather confounding, the Gothic an cian architecture, was much used during the r James VI. of Scotland, and his unfortunate so court formed a small square, two sides of whic occupied by such buildings as were required family, and the third by the stables, the only which much attention had been paid, the pres Mowbray having put them into excellent order fourth side of the square was shut up by a scree through which a door opened to the avenu whole being a kind of structure, which may found on those old Scottish properties, where to render their place *Parkish*, as was at one t prevailing phrase, has not induced the owners down the venerable and sheltering appendag which their wiser fathers had screened their m and to lay the whole open to the keen nort much after the fashion of a spinster of fift chills herself to gratify the public by an expo her thin red elbows, and shrivelled neck and

A double door, thrown hospitably open on t sent occasion, admitted the company into a de low hall, where Mowbray himself, wearing th dress of Theseus, but not having yet assun ducal cap and robes, stood to receive his gues due courtesy, and to indicate to each the road to him. Those who were to take a share in presentation of the morning, were conducted old saloon, destined for a green-room, and whic municated with a series of apartments on th hastily fitted with accommodations for arrang completing their toilet; while others, who t part in the intended drama, were ushered to into a large, unfurnished, and long disused parlour, where a sashed door opened into the g crossed with yew and holly hedges, still t and clipped by the old gray-headed gardene those principles which a Dutchman thought of commemorating in a didactic poem upon *Topiaria*.

A little wilderness, surrounding a beautiful the smoothest turf, and itself bounded by su hedges as we have described, had been selected stage most proper for the exhibition of the n dramatic picture. It afforded many facilities rising bank exactly in front was accommodat seats for the spectators, who had a complete

the silvan theatre, the bushes and shrubs having been cleared away, and the place supplied with a temporary screen, which, being withdrawn by the domestics appointed for that purpose, was to serve for the rising of the curtain. A covered trellis, which passed through another part of the garden, and terminated with a private door opening from the right wing of the building, seemed as if it had been planted on purpose for the proposed exhibition, as it served to give the personages of the drama a convenient and secret access from the green-room to the place of representation. Indeed, the dramatis personæ, at least those who adopted the management of the matter, were, induced, by so much convenience, to extend, in some measure, their original plan, and, instead of one group, as had been at first proposed, they now found themselves able to exhibit to the good company a succession of three or four, selected and arranged from different parts of the drama; thus giving some duration, as well as some variety, to the entertainment, besides the advantage of separating and contrasting the tragic and the comic scenes.

After wandering about amongst the gardens, which contained little to interest any one, and endeavouring to recognise some characters, who, accommodating themselves to the humours of the day, had ventured to appear in the various disguises of ballad-singers, pellars, shepherds, Highlanders, and so forth, the company began to draw together towards the spot where the seats prepared for them, and the screen drawn in front of the bosky stage, induced them to assemble, and excited expectation, especially as a scroll in front of the esplanade set forth, in the words of the play, "This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house, and we will do it in action." A delay of about ten minutes began to excite some suppressed murmurs of impatience among the audience, when the touch of Gow's fiddle suddenly burst from a neighbouring hedge, behind which he had established his little orchestra. All were of course silent,

"As through his dear strathspeys he bore with Highland rage."

And when he changed his strain to an adagio, and suffered his music to die away in the plaintive notes of Roslin Castle, the echoes of the old walls were after a long slumber, awakened by that enthusiastic burst of applause, with which the Scots usually received and rewarded their country's gifted minstrel.

"He is his father's own son," said Touchwood to the clergyman, for both had gotten seats near about the centre of the place of audience. "It is many a long year since I listened to old Neil at Inver, and, to say truth, spent a night with him over pancakes and Athole brose; and I never expected to hear his match again in my lifetime. But stop—the curtain rises."

The screen was indeed withdrawn, and displayed Hermia, Helena, and their lovers, in attitudes corresponding to the scene of confusion occasioned by the error of Puck.

Messrs. Chatterly and the Painter played their parts neither better nor worse than amateur actors in general; and the best that could be said of them was, that they seemed more than half ashamed of their exotic dresses, and of the public gaze.

But against this untimely weakness Lady Penelope was guarded, by the strong shield of self-conceit. She minced, ambled, and, notwithstanding the slight appearance of her person, and the depredations which time had made on a countenance that had never been very much distinguished for beauty, seemed desirous to top the part of the beautiful daughter of Egeus. The sullenness which was proper to the character of Hermia, was much augmented by the discovery that Miss Mowbray was so much better dressed than herself,—a discovery which she had but recently made, as that young lady had not attended on the regular rehearsals at the Well, but once, and then without her stage habit. Her ladyship, however, did not permit this painful sense of inferiority, where she had expected triumph, so far to prevail over her desire of shining, as to interrupt materially the manner in which she had settled to represent her portion of the scene. The nature of the exhibition precluded much action, but Lady Penelope made amends by such a succession of grimaces, as might rival, in variety at least, the singular display which Garrick used to call "going his rounds." She twisted her poor features into looks of most desperate love towards Lysander; into those of wonder and offended pride, when she turned them upon Demetrius; and finally settled them on Helena, with the happiest possible imitation of an incensed rival, who feels the impossibility of relieving her swollen heart by tears alone, and is just about to have recourse to her nails.

No contrast could be stronger in looks, demeanour, and figure, than that between Hermia and Helena. In the latter character, the beautiful form and foreign dress of Miss Mowbray attracted all eyes. She kept her place on the stage, as a sentinel does that which his charge assigns him; for she had previously told her brother, that though she consented, at his importunity, to make part of the exhibition, it was as a piece of the scene, not as an actor, and accordingly a painted figure could scarce be more immoveable. The expression of her countenance seemed to be that of deep sorrow and perplexity, belonging to her part, over which wandered at times an air of irony or ridicule, as if she were secretly scorning the whole exhibition, and even herself for condescending to become part of it. Above all, a sense of bashfulness had cast upon her cheek a colour, which, though sufficiently slight, was more than her countenance was used to display; and when the spectators beheld, in the splendour and grace of a rich Oriental dress, her whom they had hitherto been accustomed to see attired only in the most careless manner, they felt the additional charms of surprise and contrast; so that the bursts of applause which were vollied towards the stage, might be said to be addressed to her alone, and to vie in sincerity with those which have been forced from an audience by the most accomplished performer.

"Oh, that puir Lady Penelope!" said honest Mrs. Blower, who, when her scruples against the exhibition were once got over, began to look upon it with particular interest,—"I am really sorry for her puir face, for she gars it work like the sails of John Blower's vessel in a stiff breeze.—Oh, Doctor Cacklehen, dinna ye think she wad need, if it were possible, to rin ower her face wi' a gusing iron, just to take the wrunkles out o't?"

"Hush, hush! my good dear Mrs. Blower," said the Doctor; "Lady Penelope is a woman of quality, and my patient, and such people always act charmingly—you must understand there is no hissing at a private theatre—Hem!"

"Ye may say what ye like, Doctor, but there is nae sule like an auld sule—To be sure, if she was as young and beautiful as Miss Mowbray—hegh me, and I didna use to think her sae bonny neither—but dress—dress makes an unco difference—That shawl o' hers—I daur say the like o't was ne'er seen in braid Scotland—It will be real Indian, I'se warrant."

"Real Indian!" said Mr. Touchwood, in an accent of disdain, which rather disturbed Mrs. Blower's equanimity,—"why, what do you suppose it should be, madam?"

"I didna ken, sir," said she, edging somewhat nearer the Doctor, not being altogether pleased, as she afterwards allowed, with the outlandish appearance and sharp tone of the traveller; then pulling her own drapery round her shoulders, she added, courageously, "There are braw shawls made at Paisley, that ye will scarce ken frae foreign."

"Not know Paisley shawls from Indian, madam?" said Touchwood; "why, a blind man could tell by the slightest touch of his little finger. Yon shawl, now, is the handsomest I have seen in Britain—and at this distance I can tell it to be a real *Tozie*."

"Cozie may she weel be that wears it," said Mrs. Blower. "I declare, now I look on't again, it's a perfect beauty."

"It is called Tozie, ma'am, not cozie," continued the traveller; "the Shroffs at Surat told me in 1801, that it is made out of the inner coat of a goat."

"Of a sheep, sir, I am thinking you mean, for goats has nae woo'."

"Not much of it, indeed, madam; but you are to understand they use only the inmost coat; and then their dyes—that Tozie now will keep its colour while there is a rag of it left—men bequeath them in legacies to their grandchildren."

"And a very bonny colour it is," said the dame; "something like a mouse's back, only a thought redder—I wonder what they ca' that colour."

"The colour is much admired, madam," said Touchwood, who was now on a favourite topic; "the Musulmans say the colour is betwixt that of an elephant and the breast of the *faughta*."

"In troth, I am as wise as I was," said Mrs. Blower.

"The *faughta*, madam, so called by the Moors, (for the Hindhus call it *hollah*,) is a sort of pigeon, held sacred among the Moslem of India, because they think it dyed its breast in the blood of Ali.—But I see they are closing the scene.—Mr. Cargill, are you composing your sermon, my good friend, or what can you be thinking of?"

Mr. Cargill had, during the whole scene, remained with his eyes fixed, in intent and anxious, although almost unconscious gaze, upon Clara Mowbray; and when the voice of his companion startled him out of his reverie, he exclaimed, "Most lovely—most unhappy—yes—I must and will see her!"

"See her?" replied Touchwood, too much accustomed to his friend's singularities to look for much reason or connexion in any thing he said or did; "Why, you shall see her and talk to her too, if that will give you pleasure.—They say now," he continued, lowering his voice to a whisper, "that this Mowbray is ruined. I see nothing like it, since he can dress out his sister like a Begum. Did you ever see such a splendid shawl?"

"Dearly purchased splendour," said Mr. Cargill, with a deep sigh; "I wish that the price be yet fully paid!"

"Very likely not," said the traveller; "very likely it's gone to the book; and for the price, I have known a thousand rupees given for such a shawl in the country.—But hush, hush, we are to have another tune from Nathaniel—faith, and they are withdrawing the screen—well, they have some mercy—they do not let us wait long between the acts of their follies at least—I love a quick and rattling fire in these vanities—Folly walking a funeral pace, and clinking her bells to the time of a passing knell, makes sad work indeed."

A strain of music, beginning slowly, and terminating in a light and wild allegro, introduced on the stage those delightful creatures of the richest imagination that ever teemed with wonders, the Oberon and Titania of Shakspeare. The pigmy majesty of the captain of the fairy band had no unapt representative in Miss Digges, whose modesty was not so great an intruder as to prevent her desire to present him in all his dignity, and she moved, conscious of the graceful turn of a pretty ankle, which, encircled with a string of pearls, and clothed in flesh-coloured silk, of the most cobweb texture, rose above the crimson sandal. Her jewelled tiara, too, gave dignity to the frown with which the offended King of Shadows greeted his consort, as each entered upon the scene at the head of their several attendants.

The restlessness of the children had been duly considered; and, therefore, their part of the exhibition had been contrived to represent dumb show, rather than a stationary picture. The little Queen of Elves was not inferior in action to her moody lord, and repaid, with a look of female impatience and scorn, the haughty air which seemed to express his sullen greeting,

"I'll met by moonlight, proud Titania."

The other children were, as usual, some clever and forward, some loutish and awkward enough; but the gambols of childhood are sure to receive applause, paid, perhaps, with a mixture of pity and envy, by *those in advanced life; and* besides, there were in the *company several fond papas and mamas*, whose *clamorous approbation, though given* apparently to the whole performers, was especially dedicated in their hearts to their own little Jackies and Marias,—for *Mary*, though the prettiest and most classical of Scottish names, is now unknown in the land. The elves, therefore, played their frolics, danced a measure, and vanished with good approbation.

The anti-mask, as it may be called, of Bottom, and his company of actors, next appeared on the stage, and a thunder of applause received the young Earl, who had, with infinite taste and dexterity, transformed himself into the similitude of an Athenian clown; observing the Grecian costume, yet so judiciously discriminated from the dress of the higher characters, as at once to fix the character of a thick-skinned mechanic on the wearer. Touchwood, in particular, was loud in his approbation, from which the correctness of the costume must be inferred; for that honest gentleman, like many other critics, was indeed not very much distinguished for good taste, but had a capital memory for petty matters of fact; and, while the most impressive look or gesture of an actor might have failed to interest him, would have censured most severely the fashion of a sleeve, or the colour of a shoe-tie.

But the Earl of Etherington's merits were not confined to his external appearance; for, had his better fortunes failed him, his deserts, like those of Hamlet, might have got him a fellowship in a cry of players. He presented, though in dumb show, the pragmatic conceit of Bottom, to the infinite amusement of all present, especially of those who were well acquainted with the original; and when he was "translated" by Puck, he bore the ass's head, his newly-acquired dignity, with an appearance of conscious greatness, which made the metamorphosis, though in itself sufficiently farcical, irresistibly comic. He afterwards displayed the same humour in his frolics with the fairies, and the intercourse which he held with Messrs. Cobweb, Mustard-seed, Pease-blossom, and the rest of Titania's cavaliers, who lost all command of their countenances at the gravity with which he invited them to afford him the luxury of scratching his hairy snout. Mowbray had also found a fitting representative for Puck in a queer-looking, small-eyed boy of the Altoun of St. Ronan's, with large ears projecting from his head like turrets from a Gothic building. This exotic animal personified the merry and mocking spirit of Hobgoblin with considerable power, so that the group bore some resemblance to the well-known and exquisite delineation of Puck by Sir Joshua, in the select collection of the Bard of Memory. It was, however, the ruin of the St. Ronan's Robin Goodfellow, who did no good afterwards,—"gaed an ill gate," as Meg Dods said, and "took on" with a party of strolling players.

The entertainment closed with a grand parade of all the characters that had appeared, during which Mowbray concluded that the young lord himself, unremarked, might have time enough to examine the outward form, at least, of his sister Clara, whom, in the pride of his heart, he could not help considering superior in beauty, dressed as she now was, with every advantage of art, even to the brilliant Amazon, Lady Binks. It is true, Mowbray was not a man to give preference to the intellectual expression of poor Clara's features over the Sultana-like beauty of the haughty dame, which promised to an admirer all the vicissitudes that can be expressed by a countenance lovely in every change, and changing as often as ardent and impetuous disposition, unused to constraint, and despising admonition, should please to dictate. Yet, to do him justice, though his preference was perhaps dictated more by fraternal partiality than by purity of taste, he certainly, on the present occasion, felt the full extent of Clara's superiority; and there was a proud smile on his lip, as, at the conclusion of the divertisement, he asked the Earl how he had been pleased. The rest of the performers had separated, and the young lord remained on the stage, employed in disembarrassing himself of his awkward visor, when Mowbray put this question, to which, though general in terms, he naturally gave a particular meaning.

"I could wear my ass's head for ever," he said, "on condition my eyes were to be so delightfully employed as they have been during the last scene.—Mowbray, your sister is an angel!"

"Have a care that that headpiece of yours has not perverted your taste, my lord," said Mowbray. "But why did you wear that disguise on your last appearance? You should, I think, have been uncovered."

"I am ashamed to answer you," said the Earl; "but truth is, first impressions are of consequence, and I thought I might do as wisely not to appear before your sister, for the first time, in the character of Bully Bottom."

"Then you change your dress, my lord, for dinner, if we call our luncheon by that name?" said Mowbray.

"I am going to my room this instant for that very purpose," replied the Earl.

"And I," said Mowbray, "must step in front, and dismiss the audience; for I see they are sitting gaping there, waiting for another scene."

They parted upon this; and Mowbray, as Duke Theseus, stepped before the screen, and announcing the conclusion of the dramatic pictures which they had had the honour to present before the worshipful company, thanked the spectators for the very favourable reception which they had afforded; and intimated to them, that if they could amuse themselves by strolling for an hour among the gardens, a bell would summon to the house at the expiry of that time, when some refreshments would wait their acceptance. This announciation was received with the applause due to the *Amphitryon ou l'on dine;* and the guests, arising from before the temporary theatre, dispersed through the gardens, which were of some extent, to seek for or create amusement to themselves. The music greatly aided them in this last purpose, and it was not long ere a dozen of couples and upwards, were "tripping it on the light fantastic toe," (I love a phrase that is not hackneyed,) to the tune of Monymusk.

Others strolled through the grounds, meeting some quaint disguise at the end of every verdant alley, and communicating to others the surprise and amusement which they themselves were receiving. The scene, from the variety of dresses, the freedom which it gave to the display of humour amongst such as possessed any, and the general disposition to give and receive pleasure, rendered the little masquerade more entertaining than others of the kind for which more ample and magnificent preparations have been made. There was also a singular and pleasing contrast between the fantastic figures who wandered through the gardens, and the quiet scene itself, to which the old clipt hedges, the formal distribution of the ground, and the antiquated appearance of one or two fountains and artificial cascades, in which the naiads had been for the nonce compelled to resume their ancient frolics, gave an appearance of unusual simplicity and seclusion, and which seemed rather to belong to the last than to the present generation.

CHAPTER XXI.

PERPLEXITIES.

For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love, strewing his way with flowers.
Love's Labour's Lost.

Worthies, away—the scene begins to cloud.
Ibidem.

MR. TOUCHWOOD, and his inseparable friend, Mr. Cargill, wandered on amidst the gay groups we have described, the former censuring with great scorn the frequent attempts which he observed towards an imitation of the costume of the East, and appealing with self-complacence to his own superior representation, as he greeted, in Moorish and in Persic, the several turban'd figures who passed his way; while the clergyman, whose mind seemed to labour with some weighty and important project, looked in every direction for the fair representative of Helena, but in vain. At length he caught a glimpse of the memorable shawl, which had drawn forth so learned a discussion from his companion; and, starting from Touchwood's side with a degree of anxious alertness totally foreign to his usual habits, he endeavoured to join the person by whom it was worn.

"By the Lord," said his companion, "the Doctor is beside himself!—the parson is mad!—the divine is out of his senses, that is clear; and how the devil can he, who scarce can find his road from the Cleikum to his own manse, venture himself unprotected into such a scene of confusion?—he might as well pretend to cross the Atlantic without a pilot—I must push off in chase of him, lest worse come of it."

But the traveller was prevented from executing his friendly purpose by a sort of crowd which came rushing down the alley, the centre of which was occupied by Captain MacTurk, in the very act of bullying two pseudo Highlanders, for having presumed to lay aside their breeches before they had acquired the Gaelic language. The sounds of contempt and insult with which the genuine Celt was overwhelming the unfortunate impostors, were not, indeed, intelligible otherwise than from the tone and manner of the speaker; but these intimated so much displeasure, that the plaided forms whose unadvised choice of a disguise had provoked it—two raw lads from a certain great manufacturing town—heartily repented their temerity, and were in the act of seeking for the speediest exit from the gardens; rather choosing to resign their share of the dinner, than to abide the farther consequences that might follow from the displeasure of this highland Termagant.

Touchwood had scarcely extricated himself from this impediment, and again commenced his researches after the clergyman, when his course was once more interrupted by a sort of pressgang, headed by Sir Bingo Binks, who, in order to play his character of a drunken boatswain to the life, seemed certainly drunk enough, however little of a seaman. His cheer sounded more like a view-halloo than a hail, when, with a volley of such oaths as would have blown a whole fleet of the Bethel union out of the water, he ordered Touchwood "to come under his lee, and be d—d; for, smash his old timbers, he must go to sea again, for as weatherbeaten a hulk as he was."

Touchwood answered instantly, "To sea with all my heart, but not with a land-lubber for commander.—Harkye, brother, do you know how much of a horse's furniture belongs to a ship?"

"Come, none of your quizzing, my old buck," said Sir Bingo—"What the devil has a ship to do with horse's furniture?—Do you think we belong to the horse-marines?—ha! ha! I think you're matched, brother."

"Why, you son of a fresh-water gudgeon," replied the traveller, "that never in your life sailed farther than the Isle of Dogs, do you pretend to play a sailor, and not know the bridle of the bowline, and the saddle of the boltsprit, and the bit for the cable, and the girth to hoist the rigging, and the whip to serve for small tackle?—There is a trick for you to find out an Abram-man, and save sixpence when he begs of you as a disbanded seamen.—Get along with you! or the constable shall be charged with the whole pressgang to man the workhouse."

A general laugh arose at the detection of the swaggering boatswain; and all that the Baronet had for it was to sneak off, saying, "D—n the old quiz, who the devil thought to have heard so much slang from an old muslin nightcap!"

Touchwood being now an object of some attention, was followed by two or three stragglers, whom he endeavoured to rid himself of the best way he could, testifying an impatience a little inconsistent with the decorum of his Oriental demeanour, but which arose from his desire to rejoin his companion, and some apprehension of inconvenience which he feared Cargill might sustain during his absence. For, being in fact as good-natured a man as any in the world, Mr. Touchwood was at the same time one of the most conceited, and was very apt to suppose, that his presence, advice, and assistance, were of the most indispensable consequence to those with whom he lived; and that not only on great emergencies, but even in the most ordinary occurrences of life.

Mean time, Mr. Cargill, whom he sought in vain, was, on his part, anxiously keeping in sight of the beautiful Indian shawl, which served as a flag to announce to him the vessel which he held in chase. At length he approached so close as to say, in an anxious whisper, "Miss Mowbray—Miss Mowbray—I must speak with you."

"And what would you have with Miss Mowbray?" said the fair wearer of the beautiful shawl, but without turning round her head.

"I have a secret—an important secret, of which to make you aware; but it is not for this place.—Do not turn from me!—Your happiness in this, and perhaps in the next life, depends on your listening to me."

The lady led the way, as if to give him an opportunity of speaking with her more privately, to one of those old-fashioned and deeply-embowered recesses, which are commonly found in such gardens as that of Shaws-Castle; and, with her shawl wrapped around her head, so as in some degree to conceal her features, she stood before Mr. Cargill in the doubtful light and shadow of a huge platanus tree, which formed the canopy of the arbour, and seemed to await the communication he had promised.

"Report says," said the clergyman, speaking in an eager and hurried manner, yet with a low voice, and like one desirous of being heard by her whom he addressed, and by no one else,—"Report says that you are about to be married."

"And is report kind enough to say to whom?" answered the lady, with a tone of indifference which seemed to astound her interrogator.

"Young lady," he answered, with a solemn voice, "had this levity been sworn to me, I could never have believed it! Have you forgot the circumstances in which you stand?—Have you forgotten that my promise of secrecy, sinful perhaps even in that degree, was but a conditional promise?—or did you think that a being so sequestered as I am was already dead to the world, even while he was walking upon its surface?—Know, young lady, that I am indeed dead to the pleasures and the ordinary business of life, but I am even therefore the more alive to its duties."

"Upon my honour, sir, unless you are pleased to be more explicit, it is impossible for me either to answer or understand you," said the lady; "you speak too seriously for a masquerade pleasantry, and yet not clearly enough to make your earnest comprehensible."

"Is this sullenness, Miss Mowbray?" said the clergyman, with increased animation; "Is it levity?—Or is it alienation of mind?—Even after a fever of the brain, we retain a recollection of the causes of our illness.—Come, you must and do understand me, when I say, that I will not consent to your committing a great crime to attain temporal wealth and rank, no, not to make you an empress. My path is a clear one; and should I hear a whisper breathed of your alliance with this Earl, or whatever he may be, rely upon it, that I will withdraw the veil, and make your brother, your bridegroom, and the whole world, acquainted with the situation in which you stand, and the impossibility of your forming the alliance which you propose to yourself, I am compelled to say, against the laws of God and man."

"But, sir—sir," answered the lady, rather eagerly than anxiously, "you have not yet told me what business you have with my marriage, or what arguments you can bring against it."

"Madam," replied Mr. Cargill, "in your present state of mind, and in such a scene as this, I cannot enter upon a topic for which the season is unfit, and you, I am sorry to say, are totally unprepared. It is enough that you know the grounds on which you stand. At a fitter opportunity, I will, as it is my duty, lay before you the enormity of what you are said to have meditated, with the freedom which becomes one, who, however humble, is appointed to explain to his fellow-creatures the laws of his *Maker. In the mean time, I am not afraid that you will take any hasty step, after such a warning as this.*"

So saying, he turned from the lady with that dignity which a conscious discharge of duty confers, yet at the same time, with a sense of deep pain, inflicted by the careless levity of her whom he addressed. She did not any longer attempt to detain him, but made her escape from the arbour by one alley, as she heard voices which seemed to approach it from another. The clergyman, who took the opposite direction, met in full encounter a whispering and tittering pair, who seemed, at his sudden appearance, to check their tone of familiarity, and assume an appearance of greater distance towards each other. The lady was no other than the fair Queen of the Amazons, who seemed to have adopted the recent partiality of Titania towards Bully Bottom, being in conference such and so close as we have described, with the late representative of the Athenian weaver, whom his recent visit to his chamber had metamorphosed into the more gallant disguise of an ancient Spanish cavalier. He now appeared with cloak and drooping plume, sword, poniard, and guitar, richly dressed at all points, as for a serenade beneath his mistress's window; a silk mask at the breast of his embroidered doublet hung ready to be assumed in case of intrusion, as an appropriate part of the national dress.

It sometimes happened to Mr. Cargill, as we believe it may chance to other men much subject to absence of mind, that, contrary to their wont, and much after the manner of a sunbeam suddenly piercing a deep mist, and illuminating one particular object in the landscape, some sudden recollection rushes upon them, and seems to compel them to act under it, as under the influence of complete certainty and conviction. Mr. Cargill had no sooner set eyes on the Spanish cavalier, in whom he neither knew the Earl of Etherington, nor recognised Bully Bottom, than with hasty emotion he seized on his reluctant hand, and exclaimed, with a mixture of eagerness and solemnity, "I rejoice to see you!—Heaven has sent you here in its own good time."

"I thank you, sir," replied Lord Etherington, very coldly, "I believe you have the joy of the meeting entirely on your side, as I cannot remember having seen you before."

"Is not your name Bulmer?" said the clergyman. "I—I know—I am sometimes apt to make mistakes—But I am sure your name is Bulmer?"

"Not that ever I or my godfathers heard of—my name was Bottom half an hour ago—perhaps that makes the confusion," answered the Earl, with very cold and distant politeness;—"Permit me to pass, sir, that I may attend the lady."

"Quite unnecessary," answered Lady Binks; "I leave you to adjust your mutual recollections with your new old friend, my lord—he seems to have something to say." So saying, the lady walked on, not perhaps sorry of an opportunity to show apparent indifference for his lordship's society in the presence of one who had surprised them in what might seem a moment of exuberant intimacy.

"You detain me, sir," said the Earl of Etherington to Mr. Cargill, who, bewildered and uncertain, still kept himself placed so directly before the young nobleman, as to make it impossible for him to pass without absolutely pushing him to one side. "I must really attend the lady," he added, making another effort to walk on.

"Young man," said Mr. Cargill, you cannot disguise yourself from me. I am sure—my mind assures me, that you are that very Bulmer whom Heaven hath sent here to prevent crime."

"And you," said Lord Etherington, "whom my mind assures me I never saw in my life, are sent hither by the devil, I think, to create confusion."

"I beg pardon, sir," said the clergyman, staggered by the calm and pertinacious denial of the Earl—"I beg pardon if I am in a mistake—that is, if I am *really* in a mistake—but I am not—I am sure I am not!—That look—that smile—I am NOT mistaken. You *are* Valentine Bulmer—the very Valentine Bulmer whom I—but I will not make your private affairs any part of this exposition—enough, you are Valentine Bulmer."

"Valentine?—Valentine?" answered Lord Eth-

mgton, impatiently,—"I am neither Valentine nor Orson—I wish you good-morning, sir."

"Stay, sir, stay, I charge you," said the clergyman; "if you are unwilling to be known yourself, it may be because you have forgotten who I am—Let me name myself as the Reverend Josiah Cargill, minister of St. Ronan's."

"If you bear a character so venerable, sir," replied the young nobleman,—"in which, however, I am not in the least interested,—I think when you make your morning draught a little too potent, it might be as well for you to stay at home and sleep it off, before coming into company."

"In the name of Heaven, young gentleman," said Mr. Cargill, "lay aside this untimely and unseemly jesting! and tell me if you be not—as I cannot but still believe you to be—that same youth, who, seven years since, left in my deposit a solemn secret, which, if I should unfold to the wrong person, wo would be my own heart, and evil the consequences which might ensue!"

"You are very pressing with me, sir, said the Earl; "and, in exchange, I will be equally frank with you. —I am not the man whom you mistake me for, and you may go seek him where you will—It will be still more lucky for you if you chance to find your own wits in the course of your researches; for I must tell you plainly, I think they are gone somewhat astray." So saying, with a gesture expressive of a determined purpose to pass on, Mr. Cargill had no alternative but to make way, and suffer him to proceed.

The worthy clergyman stood as if rooted to the ground, and, with his usual habit of thinking aloud, exclaimed to himself, "My fancy has played me many a bewildering trick, but this is the most extraordinary of them all!—What can this young man think of me? It must have been my conversation with that unhappy young lady that has made such an impression upon me as to deceive my very eye-sight, and causes me to connect with her history the face of the next person that I met—What *must* the stranger think of me!"

"Why, what every one thinks of thee that knows thee, prophet," said the friendly voice of Touchwood, accompanying his speech with an awakening slap on the clergyman's shoulder; "and that is, that thou art an unfortunate philosopher of Laputa, who has lost his flapper in the throng.—Come along—having me once more by your side, you need fear nothing. Why, now I look at you closer, you look as if you had seen a basilisk—not that there is any such thing, otherwise I must have seen it myself, in the course of my travels—but you seem pale and frightened—What the devil is the matter?"

"Nothing," answered the clergyman, "except that I have even this very moment made an egregious fool of myself."

"Pooh, pooh, that is nothing to sigh over, prophet. —Every man does so at least twice in the four-and-twenty hours," said Touchwood.

"But I had nearly betrayed to a stranger, a secret deeply concerning the honour of an ancient family."

"That was wrong, Doctor," said Touchwood; "take care of that in future; and, indeed, I would advise you not to speak even to your beadle, Johnie Tirlsneck, until you have assured yourself, by at least three pertinent questions and answers, that you have the said Johnie corporeally and substantially in presence before you, and that your fancy has not invested some stranger with honest Johnie's singed periwig and threadbare brown jeseph—Come along—come along."

So saying, he hurried forward the perplexed clergyman, who in vain made all the excuses he could think of in order to effect his escape from the scene of gayety, in which he was so unexpectedly involved. He pleaded headache; and his friend assured him that a mouthful of food, and a glass of wine, would mend it. He stated he had business; and Touchwood replied that he could have none but composing his next sermon, and reminded him that it was two days till Sunday. At length, Mr. Cargill confessed that he had some reluctance again to see the stranger, on whom he had endeavoured with such pertinacity to fix an acquaintance, which he was now well assured existed only in his own imagination. The traveller treated his scruples with scorn, and said, that guests meeting in this general manner, had no more to do with each other than if they were assembled in a caravansary.

"So that you need not say a word to him in the way of apology or otherwise—or, what will be still better, I, who have seen so much of the world, will make the pretty speech for you." As they spoke, he dragged the divine towards the house, where they were now summoned by the appointed signal, and where the company were assembling in the old saloon already noticed, previous to passing into the dining-room, where the refreshments were prepared. "Now, Doctor," continued the busy friend of Mr. Cargill, "let us see which of all these people has been the subject of your blunder. Is it you animal of a Highlandman?—or the impertinent brute that wants to be thought a boatswain?—or which of them all is it?—Ay, here they come, two and two, Newgate fashion—the young Lord of the Manor with old Lady Penelope—does he set up for Ulysses, I wonder?—The Earl of Etherington with Lady Bingo—methinks it should have been with Miss Mowbray."

"The Earl of what, did you say?" quoth the clergyman, anxiously. "How is it you titled that young man in the Spanish dress?"

"Oho!" said the traveller; "what, I have discovered the goblin that has scared you?—Come along—come along—I will make you acquainted with him." So saying, he dragged him towards Lord Etherington; and before the divine could make his negative intelligible, the ceremony of introduction had taken place. "My Lord Etherington, allow me to present Mr. Cargill, minister of this parish—a learned gentleman, whose head is often in the Holy Land, when his person seems present among his friends. He suffers extremely, my lord, under the sense of mistaking your lordship for the Lord knows who; but when you are acquainted with him, you will find that he can make a hundred stranger mistakes than that, so we hope that your lordship will take no prejudice or offence."

"There can be no offence taken where no offence is intended," said Lord Etherington, with much urbanity. "It is I who ought to beg the reverend gentleman's pardon, for hurrying from him without allowing him to make a complete eclaircissement. I beg his pardon for an abruptness which the place and the time—for I was immediately engaged in a lady's service—rendered unavoidable."

Mr. Cargill gazed on the young nobleman as he pronounced these words, with the easy indifference of one who apologizes to an inferior in order to maintain his own character for politeness, but with perfect indifference whether his excuses are or are not held satisfactory. And as the clergyman gazed, the belief which had so strongly clung to him that the Earl of Etherington and young Valentine Bulmer were the same individual person, melted away like frostwork before the morning sun, and that so completely, that he marvelled at himself for having ever entertained it. Some strong resemblance of features there must have been to have led him into such a delusion; but the person, the tone the manner of expression, were absolutely different; and his attention being now especially directed towards these particulars, Mr. Cargill was inclined to think the two personages almost totally dissimilar.

The clergyman had now only to make his apology, and fall back from the head of the table to some lower seat, which his modesty would have preferred, when he was suddenly seized upon by the Lady Penelope Penfeather, who, detaining him in the most elegant and persuasive manner possible, insisted that they should be introduced to each other by Mr. Mowbray, and that Mr. Cargill should sit beside her at table.—She had heard so much of his learning—so much of his excellent character—desired so much to make his acquaintance, that she could not think of losing an opportunity, which Mr. Cargill's learned seclusion rendered so very rare—in a word, catching the Black Lion was the order of the day; and her ladyship having trapped her prey, soon sat triumphant with him by her side.

A second separation was thus effected between

Touchwood and his friend; for the former, not being included in the invitation, or, indeed, at all noticed by Lady Penelope, was obliged to find room at a lower part of the table, where he excited much surprise by the dexterity with which he despatched boiled rice with chop-sticks.

Mr. Cargill being thus exposed, without a consort, to the fire of Lady Penelope, speedily found it so brisk and incessant, as to drive his complaisance, little tried as it had been for many years by small talk, almost to extremity. She began by begging him to draw his chair close, for an instinctive terror of fine ladies had made him keep his distance. At the same time, she hoped "he was not afraid of her as an Episcopalian; her father had belonged to that communion; for," she added, with what was intended for an arch smile, "we were somewhat naughty in the forty-five, as you may have heard; but all that was over, and she was sure Mr. Cargill was too liberal to entertain any dislike or shyness on that score.—She could assure him she was far from disliking the Presbyterian form—indeed she had often wished to hear it, where she was sure to be both delighted and edified" (here a gracious smile) "in the church of St. Ronan's—and hoped to do so whenever Mr. Mowbray had got a stove, which he had ordered from Edinburgh, on purpose to air his pew for her accommodation."

All this, which was spoken with wreathed smiles and nods, and so much civility as to remind the clergyman of a cup of tea over-sweetened to conceal its want of strength and flavour, required and received no farther answer than an accommodating look and acquiescent bow.

"Ah, Mr. Cargill," continued the inexhaustible Lady Penelope, "your profession has so many demands on the heart as well as the understanding—is so much connected with the kindnesses and charities of our nature—with our best and purest feelings, Mr. Cargill! You know what Goldsmith says:—

> —'to his duty prompt at every call,
> He watch'd, and wept, and felt, and pray'd for all.'

And then Dryden has such a picture of a parish priest, so inimitable, one would think, did we not hear now and then of some living mortal presuming to emulate its features," (here another insinuating nod and expressive smile.)

> "'Refined himself to soul to curb the sense,
> And almost made a sin of abstinence,
> Yet had his aspect nothing of severe,
> But such a face as promised him sincere;
> Nothing reserved or sullen was to see,
> But sweet regard and pleasing sanctity.'"

While her ladyship declaimed, the clergyman's wandering eye confessed his absent mind; his thoughts travelling, perhaps, to accomplish a truce betwixt Saladin and Conrade of Mountserrat, unless they chanced to be occupied with some occurrences of that very day, so that the lady was obliged to recall her indocile auditor with the leading question, "You are well acquainted with Dryden, of course, Mr. Cargill?"

"I have not the honour, madam," said Mr. Cargill, starting from his reverie, and but half understanding the question he replied to.

"Sir!" said the lady in surprise.

"Madam!—my lady!" answered Mr. Cargill, in embarrassment.

"I asked you if you admired Dryden; but you learned men are so absent—perhaps you thought I said Leyden."

"A lamp too early quenched, madam," said Mr. Cargill; "I knew him well."

"And so did I," eagerly replied the lady of the cerulean buskin; "he spoke ten languages—how mortifying to poor me, Mr. Cargill, who could only boast of five!—but I have studied a little since that time—I must have you to help me in my studies, Mr. Cargill—it will be charitable—but perhaps you are afraid of a female pupil?"

A thrill, arising from former recollections, passed through poor Cargill's mind, with as much acuteness *as the pass of a rapier might have done through his body; and we cannot help remarking, that a forward orator in society, like a busy bustler in a crowd, besides* all other general points of annoyance, is eternally rubbing upon some tender point, and galling men's feelings, without knowing or regarding it.

"You must assist me, besides, in my little charities, Mr. Cargill, now that you and I are become so well acquainted.—There is that Anne Heggie—I sent her a trifle yesterday, but I am told—I should not mention it, but only one would not have the little they have to bestow lavished on an improper object—I am told she is not quite proper—an unwedded mother, in short Mr. Cargill—and it would be especially unbecoming in me to encourage profligacy."

"I believe, madam," said the clergyman, gravely, "the poor woman's distress may justify your ladyship's bounty, even if her conduct has been faulty."

"O, I am no prude, neither, I assure you, Mr. Cargill," answered the Lady Penelope. "I never withdraw my countenance from any one but on the most irrefragable grounds. I could tell you of an intimate friend of my own, whom I have supported against the whole clamour of the people at the Well, because I believe, from the bottom of my soul, she is only thoughtless—nothing in the world but thoughtless—O Mr. Cargill, how can you look across the table so intelligently?—who would have thought it of you?—Oh fie, to make such personal applications!"

"Upon my word, madam, I am quite at a loss to comprehend"——

"Oh fie, fie, Mr. Cargill," throwing in as much censure and surprise as a confidential whisper can convey—"you looked at my Lady Binks—I know what you think, but you are quite wrong, I assure you; you are entirely wrong.—I wish she would not flirt quite so much with that young Lord Etherington though, Mr. Cargill—her situation is particular.—Indeed, I believe she wears out his patience; for see he is leaving the room before we sit down—how singular!—And then, do you not think it very odd, too, that Miss Mowbray has not come down to us?"

"Miss Mowbray!—what of Miss Mowbray—is she not here?" said Mr. Cargill, starting, and with an expression of interest which he had not yet bestowed on any of her ladyship's liberal communications.

"Ay, poor Miss Mowbray," said Lady Penelope, lowering her voice, and shaking her head; "she has not appeared—her brother went up stairs a few minutes since, I believe, to bring her down, and so we are all left here to look at each other.—How very awkward!—But you know Clara Mowbray."

"I, madam?" said Mr. Cargill, who was now sufficiently attentive; "I really—I know Miss Mowbray—that is, I knew her some years since—but your ladyship knows she has been long in bad health—uncertain health, at least, and I have seen nothing of the young lady for a very long time."

"I know it, my dear Mr. Cargill—I know it," continued the Lady Penelope, in the same tone of deep sympathy, "I know it; and most unhappy surely have been the circumstances that have separated her from your advice and friendly counsel.—All this I am aware of—and to say truth, it has been chiefly on poor Clara's account that I have been giving you the trouble of fixing an acquaintance upon you.—You and I together, Mr. Cargill, might do wonders to cure her unhappy state of mind—I am sure we might—that is if you could bring your mind to repose absolute confidence in me."

"Has Miss Mowbray desired your ladyship to converse with me upon any subject which interests her?" said the clergyman, with more cautious shrewdness than Lady Penelope had suspected him of possessing. "I will in that case be happy to hear the nature of her communication; and whatever my poor services can perform, your ladyship may command them."

"I—I—I cannot just assert," said her ladyship with hesitation, "that I have Miss Mowbray's direct instructions to speak to you, Mr. Cargill, upon the present subject. But my affection for the dear girl is so very great—and then, you know, the inconveniences which may arise from this match."

"From which match, Lady Penelope?" said Mr Cargill.

"Nay, now, Mr. Cargill, you really carry the privi

lege of Scotland too far—I have not put a single question to you, but what you have answered by another—let us converse intelligibly for five minutes, if you can but condescend so far."

"For any length of time which your ladyship may please to command," said Mr. Cargill, "provided the subject regard your ladyship's own affairs or mine,—could I suppose these last for a moment likely to interest you."

"Out upon you," said the lady, laughing affectedly; "you should really have been a Catholic priest instead of a Presbyterian. What an invaluable father confessor have the fair sex lost in you, Mr. Cargill, and how dexterously you would have evaded any cross-examinations which might have committed your penitents!"

"Your ladyship's raillery is far too severe for me to withstand or reply to," said Mr. Cargill, bowing with more ease than her ladyship expected; and, retiring gently backward, he extricated himself from a conversation which he began to find somewhat embarrassing.

At that moment a murmur of surprise took place in the apartment, which was just entered by Miss Mowbray, leaning on her brother's arm. The cause of this murmur will be best understood, by narrating what had passed betwixt the brother and sister.

CHAPTER XXII.

EXPOSTULATION.

Seek not the feast in these irreverent robes;
Go to my chamber—put on clothes of mine.
The Taming of the Shrew.

It was with a mixture of anxiety, vexation, and resentment, that Mowbray, just when he had handed Lady Penelope into the apartment where the tables were covered, observed that his sister was absent, and that Lady Binks was hanging on the arm of Lord Etherington, to whose rank it would properly have fallen to escort the lady of the house. An anxious and hasty glance cast through the room, ascertained that she was absent, nor could the ladies present give any account of her after she had quitted the gardens, except that Lady Penelope had spoken a few words with her in her own apartment, immediately after the scenic entertainment was concluded.

Thither Mowbray hurried, complaining aloud of his sister's lateness in dressing, but internally hoping that the delay was occasioned by nothing of a more important character.

He hastened up stairs, entered her sitting-room without ceremony, and knocking at the door of her dressing-room, begged her to make haste.

"Here is the whole company impatient," he said, assuming a tone of pleasantry; "and Sir Bingo Binks exclaiming for your presence, that he may be let loose on the cold meat."

"Paddock calls," said Clara from within; "anon—anon!"

"Nay, it is no jest, Clara," continued her brother; "for here is Lady Penelope miauling like a starved cat!"

"I come—I come, greymalkin," answered Clara, in the same vein as before, and entered the parlour as she spoke, her finery entirely thrown aside, and dressed in the riding-habit which was her usual and favourite attire.

Her brother was both surprised and offended. "On my soul," he said, "Clara, this is behaving very ill. I indulge you in every freak upon ordinary occasions, but you might surely on this day, of all others, have condescended to appear something like my sister, and a gentlewoman receiving company in her own house."

"Why, dearest John," said Clara, "so that the guests have enough to eat and drink, I cannot conceive why I should concern myself about their finery, or they trouble themselves about my plain clothes."

"Come, come, Clara, this will not do," answered Mowbray; "you must positively go back into your dressing-room, and huddle your things on as fast as you can. You cannot go down to the company dressed as you are."

"I certainly can, and I certainly will, John—I have made a fool of myself once this morning to oblige you, and for the rest of the day I am determined to appear in my own dress; that is, in one which shows I neither belong to the world, nor wish to have any thing to do with its fashions."

"By my soul, Clara, I will make you repent this!" said Mowbray, with more violence than he usually exhibited where his sister was concerned.

"You cannot, dear John," she coolly replied, "unless by beating me; and that I think you would repent of yourself."

"I do not know but what it were the best way of managing you," said Mowbray, muttering between his teeth; but commanding his violence, he only said aloud, "I am sure, from long experience, Clara, that your obstinacy will at the long run beat my anger. Do let us compound the point for once—keep your old habit, since you are so fond of making a sight of yourself, and only throw the shawl round your shoulders—it has been exceedingly admired, and every woman in the house longs to see it closer—they can hardly believe it genuine."

"Do be a man, Mowbray," answered his sister; "meddle with your horse-sheets, and leave shawls alone."

"Do you be a woman, Clara, and think a little on them, when custom and decency render it necessary.—Nay, is it possible!—Will you not stir—not oblige me in such a trifle as this?"

"I would indeed if I could," said Clara; "but since you must know the truth—do not be angry—I have not the shawl. I have given it away—given it up, perhaps I should say, to the rightful owner.—She has promised me something or other in exchange for it, however. I have given it to Lady Penelope."

"Yes," answered Mowbray, "some of the work of her own fair hands, I suppose, or a couple of her ladyship's drawings, made up into fire-screens.—On my word—on my soul, this is too bad!—It is using me too ill, Clara—far too ill. If the thing had been of no value, my giving it to you should have fixed some upon it.—Good-even to you; we will do as well as we can without you."

"Nay, but, my dear John—stay but a moment," said Clara, taking his arm as he sullenly turned towards the door; "there are but two of us on the earth—do not let us quarrel about a trumpery shawl."

"Trumpery!" said Mowbray; "It cost fifty guineas, by G—, which I can but ill spare—trumpery!"

"O, never think of the cost," said Clara; "it was your gift, and that should, I own, have been enough to have made me keep to my death's day the poorest rag of it. But really Lady Penelope looked so very miserable, and twisted her poor face into so many odd expressions of anger and chagrin, that I resigned it to her, and agreed to say she had lent it to me for the performance. I believe she was afraid that I would change my mind, or that you would resume it as a seignorial waif; for, after she had walked a few turns with it wrapped around her, merely by way of taking possession, she despatched it by a special messenger to her apartment at the Well."

"She may go to the devil," said Mowbray, "for a greedy unconscionable jade, who has varnished over a selfish, spiteful heart, that is as hard as a flint, with a fine glossing of taste and sensibility!"

"Nay, but, John," replied his sister, "she really had something to complain of in the present case. The shawl had been bespoken on her account, or very nearly so—she showed me the tradesman's letter—only some agent of yours had come in between with the ready money, which no tradesman can resist.—Ah, John! I suspect half of your anger is owing to the failure of a plan to mortify poor Lady Pen, and that she has more to complain of than you have.—Come, come, you have had the advantage of her in the first display of this fatal piece of finery, if wearing it on my poor shoulders can be called a display—e'en make her welcome to the rest for peace's sake, and let us go down to these good folks, and you shall see how pretty and civil I shall behave."

Mowbray, a spoiled child, and with all the petted habits of indulgence, was exceedingly fretted at this

issue of the scheme which he had formed for mortifying Lady Penelope; but he saw at once the necessity of saying nothing more to his sister on the subject. Vengeance he privately muttered against Lady Penelope, whom he termed an absolute harpy in blue-stockings; unjustly forgetting, that in the very important affair at issue, he himself had been the first to interfere with and defeat her ladyship's designs on the garment in question.

"But I will blow her," he said, "I will blow her ladyship's conduct in the business! She shall not outwit a poor whimsical girl like Clara, without hearing it on more sides than one."

With this Christian and gentlemanlike feeling towards Lady Penelope, he escorted his sister into the eating-room, and led her to her proper place at the head of the table. It was the negligence displayed in her dress, which occasioned the murmur of surprise that greeted Clara on her entrance. Mowbray, as he placed his sister in her chair, made her general apology for her late appearance, and her riding-habit. "Some fairies," he supposed, "Puck, or such like tricksy goblin, had been in her wardrobe, and carried off whatever was fit for wearing."

There were answers from every quarter—that it would have been too much to expect Miss Mowbray to dress for their amusement a second time—that nothing she chose to wear could misbecome Miss Mowbray—that she had set like the sun, in her splendid scenic dress, and now rose like the full moon in her ordinary attire, (this flight was by the Reverend Mr. Chatterly,)—and that "Miss Mowbray being at hame, had an unco gude right to please herself;" which last piece of politeness, being at least as much to the purpose as any that had preceded it, was the contribution of honest Mrs. Blower; and was replied to by Miss Mowbray with a particular and most gracious bow.

Mrs. Blower ought to have rested her colloquial fame, as Dr. Johnson would have said, upon a compliment so evidently acceptable, but no one knows where to stop. She thrust her broad, good-natured, delighted countenance forward, and sending her voice from the bottom to the top of the table, like her umquhile husband when calling to his mate during a breeze, wondered "why Miss Clara Moubrie didna wear that grand shawl she had on at the play-making, and her just sitting upon the wind of a door. Nae doubt it was for fear of the soup, and the butter-boats, and the like;—but *she* had three shawls, which she really fand was ane ower mony—if Miss Moubrie wad like to wear ane o' them—it was but imitashion, to be sure—but it wad keep her shouthers as warm as if it were real Indian, and if it were dirtied it was the less matter."

"Much obliged, Mrs. Blower," said Mowbray unable to resist the temptation which this speech offered; "but my sister is not yet of quality sufficient, to entitle her to rob her friends of their shawls."

Lady Penelope coloured to the eyes, and bitter was the retort that arose to her tongue; but she suppressed it, and nodding to Miss Mowbray in the most friendly way in the world, yet with a very particular expression, she only said, "So you have told your brother of the little transaction which we have had this morning?—*Tu me le pagherai*—I give you fair warning, take care none of your secrets come into my keeping—that's all."

Upon what mere trifles do the important events of human life sometimes depend! If Lady Penelope had given way to her first movements of resentment, the probable issue would have been some such half-comic half-serious skirmish, as her ladyship and Mr. Mowbray had often amused the company withal. But revenge which is suppressed and deferred, is always most to be dreaded; and to the effects of the deliberate resentment which Lady Penelope cherished upon this trifling occasion, must be traced the events which our history has to record. Secretly did she determine to return the shawl, which she had entertained hopes of making her own upon very reasonable terms; and as secretly did she resolve to be revenged both upon brother and sister, conceiving herself already possessed, to a certain degree, of a clew to some part of their family history, which might serve for a foundation on which to raise her projected battery. The ancient offences and emulation of importance of the Laird of St. Ronan's, and the superiority which had been given to Clara in the exhibition of the day, combined with the immediate cause of resentment; and it only remained for her to consider how her revenge could be most signally accomplished.

Whilst such thoughts were passing through Lady Penelope's mind, Mowbray was searching with his eyes for the Earl of Etherington, judging that it might be proper, in the course of the entertainment, or before the guests had separated, to make him formally acquainted with his sister, as a preface to the more intimate connexion which must, in prosecution of the plan agreed upon, take place betwixt them. Greatly to his surprise, the young Earl was nowhere visible, and the place which he had occupied by the side of Lady Binks had been quietly appropriated by Winterblossom, as the best and softest chair in the room, and nearest to the head of the table, where the choicest of the entertainment is usually arranged. This honest gentleman, after a few insipid compliments to her ladyship upon her performance as Queen of the Amazons, had betaken himself to the much more interesting occupation of ogling the dishes, through the glass which hung suspended at his neck by a gold chain of Maltese workmanship. After looking and wondering for a few seconds, Mowbray addressed himself to the old *beau-garcon*, and asked him what had become of Etherington.

"Retreated," said Winterblossom, "and left but his compliments to you behind him—a complaint, I think, in his wounded arm.—Upon my word, that soup has a most appetizing flavour!—Lady Penelope, shall I have the honour to help you?—no!—nor you, Lady Binks?—you are too cruel!—I must comfort myself, like a heathen priest of old, by eating the sacrifice which the deities have scorned to accept of."

Here he helped himself to the plate of soup which he had in vain offered to the ladies, and transferred the further duty of dispensing it to Mr. Chatterly; "it is your profession, sir, to propitiate the divinities—ahem!"

"I did not think Lord Etherington would have left us so soon," said Mowbray; "but we must do the best we can without his countenance."

So saying, he assumed his place at the bottom of the table, and did his best to support the character of a hospitable and joyous landlord, while on her part, with much natural grace, and delicacy of attention calculated to set every body at their ease, his sister presided at the upper end of the board. But the vanishing of Lord Etherington in a manner so sudden and unaccountable—the obvious ill-humour of Lady Penelope—and the steady, though passive, sullenness of Lady Binks, spread among the company a gloom like that produced by an autumnal mist upon a pleasing landscape. The women were low-spirited, dull, nay, peevish, they did not well know why; and the men could not be joyous, though the ready resource of old hoc and champagne made some of them talkative.—Lady Penelope broke up the party by well-feigned apprehension of the difficulties, nay, dangers, of returning by so rough a road. Lady Binks begged a seat with her ladyship, as Sir Bingo, she said, judging from his devotion to the green flask, was likely to need their carriage home. From the moment of their departure, it became bad tone to remain behind; and all, as in a retreating army, were eager to be foremost, excepting MacTurk and a few stanch topers, who, unused to meet with such good cheer every day of their lives, prudently determined to make the most of the opportunity.

We will not dwell on the difficulties attending the transportation of a large company by few carriages, though the delay and disputes thereby occasioned were of course more intolerable than in the morning, for the parties had no longer the hopes of a happy day before them, as a bribe to submit to temporary inconvenience. The impatience of many was so great, that, though the evening was raw, they chose to go on foot rather than await the dull routine of the returning carriages; and as they retired they agreed

e consent, to throw the blame of whatever nience they might sustain on their host and who had invited so large a party before get- shorter and better road made between the d Shaws-Castle.
ould have been so easy to repair the path by k-stane!"
his was all the thanks which Mr. Mowbray for an entertainment which had cost him so ouble and expense, and had been looked for- by the good society at the Well with such it expectation.
as an unco pleasant show," said the good- Mrs. Blower, "only it was a pity it was sae me; and there was surely an awfu' waste of nd muslin."
o well had Dr. Quackleben improved his nu- opportunities, that the good lady was much ed to affairs in general, by the prospect of rheumatisms, and other maladies acquired e occasion, which were likely to afford that gentleman, in whose prosperity she much in- herself, a very profitable harvest.
ray, somewhat addicted to the service of s, did not find himself freed, by the secession rge a proportion of the company, from the of the jolly god, although, upon the present , he could well have dispensed with his orgies. the song, nor the pun, nor the jest, had any o kindle his heavy spirit, mortified as he was vent of his party being so different from the consummation which he had anticipated. ests, stanch boon companions, suffered not, r, their party to flag for want of the land- articipation, but continued to drink bottle ttle, with as little regard for Mr. Mowbray's ooks, as if they had been carousing at owbray Arms, instead of the Mowbray n-house. Midnight at length released him, with an unsteady step, he sought his own nt; cursing himself and his companions, con- his own person with all despatch to his bed, ueathing those of the company to as many and quagmires, as could be found betwixt Castle and St. Ronan's Well.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PROPOSAL.

would be a vestal maid, I warrant,
of Heaven—Come—we may shake your purpose;
I bring in hand a jolly suitor
n degrees in the seven sciences
es love best—He is young and noble,
e and valiant, gay, and rich, and liberal.—*The Nun.*

morning after a debauch is usually one of re- even to the most determined boon com- and, in the retrospect of the preceding day, ng Laird of St. Ronan's saw nothing very tory, unless that the excess was not, in the case, of his own seeking, but had arisen out necessary duties of a landlord, or what were red as such by his companions.
was not so much his dizzy recollections of carouse which haunted him on awakening, inexplicability which seemed to shroud the s and conduct of his new ally, the Earl of gton.
young nobleman had seen Miss Mowbray, lared his high satisfaction, had warmly and rily renewed the proposal which he had made was yet known to him—and yet, far from an opportunity to be introduced to her, he n left the party abruptly, in order to avoid the ry intercourse which must there have taken tween them. His lordship's flirtation with inks had not escaped the attention of the sa- Mowbray—her ladyship also had been in a leave Shaws-Castle; and Mowbray promised elf to discover the nature of this connexion Mrs. Gingham, her ladyship's attendant, or se; vowing deeply at the same time, that no the realm should make an affectation of ad- *Miss Mowbray a cloak for another* and more *trigue. But his doubts on this subject* were in great measure removed by the arrival of one of Lord Etherington's grooms with the following letter:

"My Dear Mowbray,
"You would naturally be surprised at my escape from the table yesterday before you returned to it, or your lovely sister had graced it with her presence. I must confess my folly; and I may do so the more boldly, for, as the footing on which I first opened this treaty was not a very romantic one, you will scarce suspect me of wishing to render it such. But I did in reality feel, during the whole of yesterday, a reluctance which I cannot express, to be presented to the lady on whose favour the happiness of my future life is to depend, upon such a public occasion, and in the presence of so promiscuous a company. I had my mask, indeed, to wear while in the promonade, but, of course, that was to be laid aside at table, and, consequently, I must have gone through the ceremony of introduction; a most interesting moment, which I was desirous to defer till a fitter season. I trust you will permit me to call upon you at Shaws-Castle this morning, in the hope—the anxious hope—of being allowed to pay my duty to Miss Mowbray, and apologize for not waiting upon her yesterday. I expect your answer with the utmost impatience, being always yours, &c. &c. &c.

"Etherington."

"This," said St. Ronan's to himself, as he folded up the letter deliberately, after having twice read it over, "seems all fair and above board; I could not wish any thing more explicit; and, moreover, it puts into black and white, as old Mick would say, what only rested before on our private conversation. An especial cure for the headache, such a billet as this in a morning."
So saying, he sat him down and wrote an answer, expressing the pleasure he should have in seeing his lordship as soon as he thought proper. He watched even the departure of the groom, and beheld him gallop off, with the speed of one who knows that his quick return was expected by an impatient master.
Mowbray remained for a few minutes by himself, and reflected with delight upon the probable consequences of this match;—the advancement of his sister—and, above all, the various advantages which must necessarily accrue to himself, by so close an alliance with one whom he had good reason to think deep *in the secret*, and capable of rendering him the most material assistance in his speculations on the turf and in the sporting world. He then sent a servant to let Miss Mowbray know that he intended to breakfast with her.
"I suppose, John," said Clara, as her brother entered the apartment, "you are glad of a weaker cup this morning than those you were drinking last night—you were carousing till after the first cock."
"Yes," said Mowbray, "that sandbed, old Mac-Turk, upon whom whole hogsheads make no impression, did make a bad boy of me—but the day is over, and they will scarce catch me in such another scrape.—What did you think of the masks?"
"Supported as well," said Clara, "as such folk support the disguise of gentlemen and ladies during life; and that is, with a great deal of bustle, and very little propriety."
"I saw only one good mask there, and that was a Spaniard," said her brother.
"O, I saw him too," answered Clara, "but he wore his visor on. An old Indian merchant, or some such thing seemed to me a better character—the Spaniard did nothing but stalk about and twangle his guitar, for the amusement of my Lady Binks, as I think."
"He is a very clever fellow, though, that same Spaniard," rejoined Mowbray—"Can you guess who he is?"
"No, indeed; nor shall I take the trouble of trying. To set to guessing about it, were as bad as seeing the whole mummery over again."
"Well," replied her brother, "you will allow one thing at least—Bottom was well acted—you cannot deny that."

"Yes," replied Clara, "that worthy really deserved to wear his ass's head to the end of the chapter—but what of him?"

"Only conceive that he should be the very same person with that handsome Spaniard," replied Mowbray.

"Then there is one fool fewer than I thought there was," replied Clara, with the greatest indifference.

Her brother bit his lip.

"Clara," he said, "I believe you are an excellent good girl, and clever to boot, but pray do not set up for wit and oddity; there is nothing in life so intolerable as pretending to think differently from other people.—That gentleman was the Earl of Etherington."

This annunciation, though made in what was meant to be an imposing tone, had no impression on Clara.

"I hope he plays the peer better than the Fidalgo," she replied carelessly.

"Yes," answered Mowbray, "he is one of the handsomest men of the time, and decidedly fashionable—you will like him much when you see him in private."

"It is of little consequence whether I do or no," answered Clara.

"You mistake the matter," said Mowbray, gravely; "it may be of considerable consequence."

"Indeed?" said Clara, with a smile; "I must suppose myself, then, too important a person not to make my approbation necessary to one of your first-rates? He cannot pretend to pass muster at St. Ronan's without it?—Well, I will depute my authority to Lady Binks, and she shall pass your new recruits instead of me."

"This is all nonsense, Clara," said Mowbray. "Lord Etherington calls here this very morning, and wishes to be made known to you. I expect you will receive him as a particular friend of mine."

"With all my heart—so you will engage, after this visit, to keep him down with your other particular friends at the Well—you know it is a bargain that you bring neither buck nor pointer into my parlour—the one worries my cat, and the other my temper."

"You mistake me entirely, Clara—this is a very different visiter from any I have ever introduced to you—I expect to see him often here, and I hope you and he will be better friends than you think of. I have more reasons for wishing this, than I have now time to tell you."

Clara remained silent for an instant, then looked at her brother with an anxious and scrutinizing glance, as if she wished to penetrate into his inmost purpose.

"If I thought,"—she said, after a minute's consideration, and with an altered and disturbed tone; "but no—I will not think that Heaven intends me such a blow—least of all, that it should come from your hands." She walked hastily to the window, and threw it open—then shut it again, and returned to her seat, saying, with a constrained smile, "May Heaven forgive you, brother, but you frightened me heartily."

"I did not mean to do so, Clara," said Mowbray, who saw the necessity of soothing her; "I only alluded in joke to those chances that are never out of other girls' heads, though you never seem to calculate on them."

"I wish you, my dear John," said Clara, struggling to regain entire composure, "I wish *you* would profit by my example, and give up the science of chance also—it will not avail you."

"How d'ye know that?—I'll show you the contrary, you silly wench," answered Mowbray—"Here is a banker's bill, payable to your own order, for the cash you lent me, and something over—don't let old Mick have the fingering, but let Bindloose manage it for you—he is the honester man between two d—d knaves."

"Will not you, brother, send it to the man Bindloose yourself?"

"No,—no," replied Mowbray—"he might confuse it with some of my transactions, and so you forfeit your stake."

"Well, I am glad you are able to pay me, for I want to buy Campbell's new work."

"I wish you joy of your purchase—but don't scratch me for not caring about it—I know as little of book as you of the long odds. And come now, be serious and tell me if you will be a good girl—lay aside your whims, and receive this English young nobleman like a lady as you are?"

"That were easy," said Clara—"but—but—Pray ask no more of me than just to see him.—Say to him at once, I am a poor creature in body, in mind, in spirits, in temper, in understanding—above all, say that I can receive him only once."

"I shall say no such thing," said Mowbray, bluntly "it is good to be plain with you at once—I thought of putting off this discussion—but since it must come the sooner it is over the better.—You are to understand, Clara Mowbray, that Lord Etherington has a particular view in this visit, and that his view has my full sanction and approbation."

"I thought so," said Clara, in the same altered tone of voice in which she had before spoken; "my mind foreboded this last of misfortunes!—But, Mowbray, you have no child before you—I neither will nor can see this nobleman."

"How!" exclaimed Mowbray, fiercely; "do you dare return me so peremptory an answer?—Think better of it, for, if we differ, you will find you will have the worst of the game."

"Rely upon it," she continued, with more vehemence, "I will see him nor no man upon the footing you mention—my resolution is taken, and threats and entreaties will prove equally unavailing."

"Upon my word, madam," said Mowbray, "you have, for a modest and retired young lady, plucked up a goodly spirit of your own!—But you shall find mine equals it. If you do not agree to see my friend Lord Etherington, ay, and to receive him with the politeness due to the consideration I entertain for him, by Heaven! Clara, I will no longer regard you as my father's daughter. Think what you are giving up—the affection and protection of a brother—and for what?—merely for an idle point of etiquette.—You cannot, I suppose, even in the workings of your romantic brain, imagine that the days of Clarissa Harlowe and Harriet Byron are come back again, when women were married by main force? and it is monstrous vanity in you to suppose that Lord Etherington, since he has honoured you with any thoughts at all, will not be satisfied with a proper and civil refusal—You are no such prize, methinks, that the day of romance are to come back for you."

"I care not what days they are," said Clara—"I tell you I will not see Lord Etherington, or any one else, upon such preliminaries as you have stated—cannot—I will not—and I ought not.—Had you meant me to receive him, which can be a matter of no consequence whatever, you should have left him on the footing of an ordinary visiter—as it is, I will not see him."

"You *shall* see and hear him both," said Mowbray "you shall find me as obstinate as you are—as willing to forget I am a brother, as you to forget that you have one."

"It is time, then," replied Clara, "that this house once our father's, should no longer hold us both. I can provide for myself, and may God bless you!"

"You take it coolly, madam," said her brother walking through the apartment with much anxiety both of look and gesture.

"I do," she answered, "for it is what I have often foreseen—Yes, brother, I have often foreseen that you would make your sister the subject of your plots and schemes, so soon as other stakes failed you. That hour is come, and I am, as you see, prepared to meet it."

"And where may you propose to retire to?" said Mowbray. "I think that I, your only relation and natural guardian, have a right to know that—my honour and that of my family is concerned."

"Your honour!" she retorted, with a keen glance at him; "your interest, I suppose you mean, is somehow connected with the place of my abode.—But keep yourself patient—the den of the rock, the linn of the brook, should be my choice, rather than a palace without my freedom."

"You are mistaken, however," said Mowbray, sternly, "if you hope to enjoy more freedom than I think you capable of making a good use of. The law authorizes, and reason, and even affection, require, that you should be put under restraint for your own safety, and that of your character. You roamed the woods a little too much in my father's time, if all stories be true."

"I did—I did indeed, Mowbray," said Clara, weeping; "God pity me, and forgive you for upbraiding me with my state of mind—I know I cannot sometimes trust my own judgment; but is it for you to remind me of this?"

Mowbray was at once softened and embarrassed.

"What folly is this?" he said; "you say the most cutting things to me—are ready to fly from my house—and when I am provoked to make an angry answer, you burst into tears!"

"Say you did not mean what you said, my dearest brother!" exclaimed Clara; "O say you did not mean it!—Do not take my liberty from me—it is all I have left, and, God knows, it is a poor comfort in the sorrows I undergo. I will put a fair face on every thing—will go down to the Well—will wear what you please, and say what you please—but O! leave me the liberty of my solitude here—let me weep alone in the house of my father—and do not force a broken-hearted sister to lay her death at your door.—My span must be a brief one, but let not your hand shake the sand-glass!—Disturb me not—let me pass quietly—I do not ask this so much for my sake as for your own. I would have you think of me, sometimes, Mowbray, after I am gone, and without the bitter reflections which the recollection of harsh usage will assuredly bring with it. Pity me, were it but for your own sake. —I have deserved nothing but compassion at your hand—There are but two of us on earth, why should we make each other miserable?"

She accompanied these entreaties with a flood of tears, and the most heart-bursting sobs. Mowbray knew not what to determine. On the one hand, he was bound by his promise to the Earl; on the other, his sister was in no condition to receive such a visiter; nay, it was most probable, that if he adopted the strong measure of compelling her to receive him, her behaviour would probably be such as totally to break off the projected match, on the success of which he had founded so many castles in the air. In this dilemma, he had again recourse to argument.

"Clara," he said, "I am, as I have repeatedly said, your only relation and guardian—if there be any real reason why you ought not to receive, and, at least, make a civil reply to such a negotiation as the Earl of Etherington has thought fit to open, surely I ought to be intrusted with it. You enjoyed far too much of that liberty which you seem to prize so highly during my father's lifetime—in the last years of it at least—have you formed any foolish attachment during that time, which now prevents you from receiving such a visit as Lord Etherington has threatened?"

"Threatened!—the expression is well chosen," said Miss Mowbray; "and nothing can be more dreadful than such a threat, excepting its accomplishment."

"I am glad your spirits are reviving," replied her brother; "but that is no answer to my question."

"Is it necessary," said Clara, "that one must have actually some engagement or entanglement, to make them unwilling to be given in marriage, or even to be pestered upon such a subject?—Many young men declare they intend to die bachelors, why may not I be permitted to commence old maid at three-and-twenty?—Let me do so, like a kind brother, and there were never nephews and nieces so petted and so scolded, so nursed and so cuffed by a maiden aunt, as your children, when you have them, shall be by aunt Clara."

"And why not say all this to Lord Etherington?" said Mowbray; "wait until he propose such a terrible bugbear as matrimony, before you refuse to receive him. Who knows, the whim that he hinted at may have passed away—*he was, as you say, flirting with Lady Binks, and her ladyship has a good deal of address, as well as beauty.*"

"Heaven improve both, (in an honest way,) if she will but keep his lordship to herself!" said Clara.

"Well, then," continued her brother, "things standing thus, I do not think you will have much trouble with his lordship—no more, perhaps, than just to give him a civil denial. After having spoken on such a subject to a man of my condition, he cannot well break off without you give him an apology."

"If that is all," said Clara, "he shall, as soon as he gives me an opportunity, receive such an answer as will leave him at liberty to woo any one whatsoever of Eve's daughters, excepting Clara Mowbray. Methinks I am so eager to set the captive free, that I now wish as much for his lordship's appearance as I feared it a little while since."

"Nay, nay, but let us go fair and softly," said her brother. "You are not to refuse him before he asks the question."

"Certainly," said Clara; "but I well know how to manage that—he shall never ask the question at all. I will restore Lady Binks's admirer, without accepting so much as a civility in ransom."

"Worse and worse, Clara," answered Mowbray; "you are to remember he is my friend and guest, and he must not be affronted in my house. Leave things to themselves.—Besides, consider an instant, Clara—had you not better take a little time for reflection in this case? The offer is a splendid one—title—fortune—and, what is more, a fortune which you will be well entitled to share largely in."

"This is beyond our implied treaty," said Clara. "I have yielded more than ever I thought I should have done, when I agreed that this Earl should be introduced to me on the footing of a common visiter; and now you talk favourably of his pretensions. This is an encroachment, Mowbray, and now I shall relapse into my obstinacy, and refuse to see him at all."

"Do as you will," replied Mowbray, sensible that it was only by working on her affections that he had any chance of carrying a point against her inclination,—"Do as you will, my dear Clara; but, for Heaven's sake, wipe your eyes."

"And behave myself," said she, trying to smile as she obeyed him,—"behave myself, you would say, like folks of this world; but the quotation is lost on you, who never read either Prior or Shakspeare."

"I thank Heaven for that," said Mowbray. "I have enough to burden my brain, without carrying such a lumber of rhymes in it as you and Lady Penelope do.—Come, that is right; go to the mirror, and make yourself decent."

A woman must be much borne down indeed by pain and suffering, when she loses all respect for her external appearance. The madwoman in Bedlam wears her garland of straw with a certain air of pretensions; and we have seen a widow whom we knew to be most sincerely affected by a recent deprivation, whose weeds, nevertheless, were arranged with a dolorous degree of grace, which amounted almost to coquetry. Clara Mowbray had also, negligent as she seemed to be of appearances, her own art of the toilet, although of the most rapid and most simple character. She took off her little riding-hat, and, unbinding a lace of Indian gold which retained her locks, shook them in dark and glossy profusion over her very handsome form, which they overshadowed down to her slender waist; and while her brother stood looking on her with a mixture of pride, affection, and compassion, she arranged them with a large comb, and, without the assistance of any *femme d'atours*, wove them, in the course of a few minutes, into such a natural head-dress as we see on the statues of the Grecian nymphs.

"Now let me but find my best muff," she said "come prince and peer, I shall be ready to receive them."

"Pshaw! your muff—who has heard of such a thing these twenty years? Muffs were out of fashion before you were born."

"No matter, John," replied his sister; "when a woman wears a muff, especially a determined old maid like myself, it is a sign she has no intentions to scratch; and therefore the muff serves all the pur-

poses of a white flag, and prevents the necessity of drawing on a glove, so prudentially recommended by the motto of our cousins, the M'Intoshes."*

"Be it as you will, then," said Mowbray; "for other than you do will it, you will not suffer it to be. —But how is this?—another billet?—We are in request this morning."

"Now, Heaven send his lordship may have judiciously considered all the risks which he is sure to encounter on this charmed ground, and resolved to leave his adventure unattempted," said Miss Mowbray.

Her brother glanced a look of displeasure at her, as he broke the seal of the letter, which was addressed to him with the words, "Haste and secrecy," written on the envelope. The contents, which greatly surprised him, we remit to the commencement of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PRIVATE INFORMATION.

——Ope this letter;
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there.——

King Lear.

THE billet which Mowbray received, and read in his sister's presence, contained these words:

"SIR,

"CLARA MOWBRAY has few friends—none, perhaps, excepting yourself, in right of blood, and the writer of this letter, by right of the fondest, truest, and most disinterested attachment, that ever man bore to woman. I am thus explicit with you, because though it is unlikely that I should ever again see or speak to your sister, I am desirous that you should be clearly acquainted with the cause of that interest, which I must always, even to my dying breath, take in her affairs.

"The person, calling himself Lord Etherington, is, I am aware, in the neighbourhood of Shaws-Castle, with the intention of paying his addresses to Miss Mowbray; and it is easy for me to foresee, arguing according to the ordinary views of mankind, that he may place his proposals in such a light as may make them seem highly desirable. But ere you give this person the encouragement which his offers may seem to deserve, please to inquire whether his fortune is certain, or his rank indisputable; and be not satisfied with light evidence on either point. A man may be in possession of an estate and title, to which he has no better right than his own rapacity and forwardness of assumption; and supposing Mr. Mowbray jealous, as he must be, of the honour of his family, the alliance of such a one cannot but bring disgrace. This comes from one who will make good what he has written."

On the first perusal of a billet so extraordinary, Mowbray was inclined to set it down to the malice of some of the people at the Well, anonymous letters being no uncommon resource of the small wits who frequent such places of general resort, as a species of deception safely and easily executed, and well calculated to produce much mischief and confusion. But upon closer consideration, he was shaken in this opinion, and, starting suddenly from the reverie into which he had fallen, asked for the messengor who had brought the letter. "He was in the hall," the servant thought, and Mowbray ran to the hall. No—the messenger was not there, but Mowbray might see his back as he walked up the avenue. He hollo'd—no answer was returned—he ran after the fellow, whose appearance was that of a countryman. The man quickened his pace as he saw himself pursued, and when he got out of the avenue, threw himself into one of the numerous bypaths which wanderers, who strayed in quest of nuts, or for the sake of exercise, had made in various directions through the extensive copse which surrounded the Castle, and were doubtless the reason of its acquiring the name of Shaws, which signifies, in the Scottish dialect, a wood of this description.

Irritated by the man's obvious desire to avoid him, and naturally obstinate in all his resolutions, Mowbray pursued for a considerable way, until he fairly lost breath; and the flier having been long out of sight, he recollected at length that his engagement with the Earl of Etherington required his attendance at the Castle.

The young lord, indeed, had arrived at Shaws-Castle, so few minutes after Mowbray's departure, that it was wonderful they had not met in the avenue. The servant to whom he applied, conceiving that his master must return instantly, as he had gone out without his hat, ushered the Earl, without further ceremony, into the breakfast-room, where Clara was seated upon one of the window-seats, so busily employed with a book, or perhaps with her own thoughts while she held a book in her hands, that she scarce raised her head, until Lord Etherington, advancing, pronounced the words, "Miss Mowbray." A start, and a loud scream, announced her deadly alarm, and these were repeated as he made one pace nearer, and in a firmer accent said, "Clara."

"No nearer—no nearer," she exclaimed, "if you would have me look upon you and live!" Lord Etherington remained standing, as if uncertain whether to advance or retreat, while with incredible rapidity she poured out her hurried entreaties that he would begone, sometimes addressing him as a real personage sometimes, and more frequently, as a delusive phantom, the offspring of her own excited imagination. "I knew it," she muttered, "I knew what would happen, if my thoughts were forced into that fearful channel. Speak to me, brother! speak to me while I have reason left, and tell me that what stands before me is but an empty shadow! But it is no shadow—it remains before me in all the lineaments of mortal substance!"

"Clara," said the Earl, with a firm, yet softened voice, "collect and compose yourself. I am, indeed, no shadow—I am a much-injured man, come to demand rights which have been unjustly withheld from me. I am now armed with power as well as justice, and my claims shall be heard."

"Never—never!" replied Clara Mowbray; "since extremity is my portion, let extremity give me courage. You have no rights—none—I know you not, and I defy you."

"Defy me not, Clara Mowbray," answered the Earl, in a tone, and with a manner—how different from those which delighted society! for now he was solemn, tragic, and almost stern, like the judge when he passes sentence upon a criminal. "Defy me not," he repeated. "I am your Fate, and it rests with you to make me a kind or severe one."

"Dare you speak thus?" said Clara, her eyes flashing with anger, while her lips grew white, and quivered for fear—"Dare you speak thus, and remember that the same heaven is above our heads, to which you so solemnly vowed you would never see me more without my own consent?"

"That vow was conditional—Francis Tyrrel, as he calls himself, swore the same—hath *he* not seen you?" He fixed a piercing look on her; "He has—you dare not disown it!—And shall an oath, which to him is but a cobweb, be to me a shackle of iron?"

"Alas! it was but for a moment," said Miss Mowbray, sinking in courage, and drooping her head as she spoke.

"Were it but the twentieth part of an instant—the least conceivable space of subdivided time—still, you *did* meet—he saw you—you spoke to him. And me also you must see—me also you must hear! Or I will first claim you for my own in the face of the world; and, having vindicated my rights, I will seek out and extinguish the wretched rival who has dared to interfere with them."

"Can you speak thus?" said Clara—"can you so burst through the ties of nature?—Have you a heart?"

"I have; and it shall be moulded like wax to your slightest wishes, if you agree to do me justice; but

* *The well-known crest of this ancient race, is a cat rampant, with a motto bearing the caution—"Touch not the cat, but [i. e. *be not*, or without] the glove."*

not granite, nor aught else that nature has of hardest, will be more inflexible if you continue a useless opposition!—Clara Mowbray, I am your Fate."

"Not so, proud man," said Clara, rising, "God gave not one potsherd the power to break another, save by his divine permission—my fate is in the will of Him, without whose will not even a sparrow falls not to the ground.—Begone—I am strong in faith of heavenly protection."

"Do you speak thus in sincerity?" said the Earl of Etherington; "consider first what is the prospect before you. I stand here in no doubtful or ambiguous character—I offer not the mere name of a husband—propose to you not a humble lot of obscurity and hardship, with fears for the past and doubts for the future; yet there *was* a time when to a suit like this you could listen favourably.—I stand high among the nobles of the country, and offer you, as my bride, your share in my honours, and in the wealth which becomes them.—Your brother is my friend, and favours my suit. I will raise from the ground, and once more render illustrious, your ancient house—your motions shall be regulated by your wishes, even by your caprices—I will even carry my self-denial so far, that you shall, should you insist on so severe a measure, have your own residence, your own establishment, and without intrusion on my part, until the most devoted love, the most unceasing attentions, shall make way on your inflexible disposition.—All this I will consent to for the future—all that is past shall be concealed from the public.—But mine, Clara Mowbray, you must be."

"Never—never!" she said with increasing vehemence. "I can but repeat a negative, but it shall have all the force of an oath.—Your rank is nothing to me—your fortune I scorn—my brother has no right, by the law of Scotland, or of nature, to compel my inclinations.—I detest your treachery, and I scorn the advantage you propose to attain by it.—Should the law give you my hand, it would but award you that of a corpse."

"Alas! Clara," said the Earl, "you do but flutter in the net; but I will urge you no farther now—there is another encounter before me."

He was turning away, when Clara, springing forward, caught him by the arm, and repeated, in a low and impressive voice the commandment,—"Thou shalt do no murder!"

"Fear not any violence," he said, softening his voice, and attempting to take her hand, "but what may flow from your own severity.—Francis is safe from me, unless you are altogether unreasonable.—Allow me but what you cannot deny to any friend of your brother, the power of seeing you at times—suspend at least the impetuosity of your dislike to me, and I will, on my part, modify the current of my just and otherwise uncontrollable resentment."

Clara, extricating herself, and retreating from him, only replied, "There is a Heaven above us, and THERE shall be judged our actions towards each other! You abuse a power most treacherously obtained—you break a heart that never did you wrong—you seek an alliance with a wretch who only wishes to be wedded to her grave.—If my brother brings you hither, I cannot help it—and if your coming prevents bloody and unnatural violence, it is so far well.—But by my consent you come *not*; and, were the choice mine, I would rather be struck with life-long blindness, than that my eyes should again open on your person—rather that my ears were stuffed with the earth of the grave than that they should again hear your voice!"

The Earl of Etherington smiled proudly, and replied, "Even this, madam, I can hear without resentment. Anxious and careful as you are to deprive your compliance of every grace and of every kindness, I receive the permission to wait on you, as I interpret your words."

"Do not so interpret them," she replied; "I do but submit to your presence as an unavoidable evil. Heaven be my witness, that, were it not to prevent greater and more desperate evil, I would not even so far acquiesce."

"*Let acquiescence, then, be the word,*" he said; "*and so thankful will I be, even for your acquiescence,* Miss Mowbray, that all shall remain private, which I conceive you do not wish to be disclosed; and, unless absolutely compelled to it in self-defence, you may rely, no violence will be resorted to by me in any quarter.—I relieve you from my presence."

So saying, he withdrew from the apartment.

CHAPTER XXV.

EXPLANATORY.

—— By your leave, gentle wax.
SHAKSPEARE.

In the hall of Shaws-Castle the Earl of Etherington met Mowbray, returned from his fruitless chase after the bearer of the anonymous epistle before recited; and who had but just learned, on his return, that the Earl of Etherington was with his sister. There was a degree of mutual confusion when they met; for Mowbray had the contents of the anonymous letter fresh in his mind, and Lord Etherington, notwithstanding all the coolness which he had endeavoured to maintain, had not gone through the scene with Clara without discomposure. Mowbray asked the Earl whether he had seen his sister, and invited him, at the same time, to return to the parlour; and his lordship replied, in a tone as indifferent as he could assume, that he had enjoyed the honour of the lady's company for several minutes, and would not now intrude farther upon Miss Mowbray's patience.

"You have had such a reception as was agreeable, my lord, I trust?" said Mowbray. "I hope Clara did the honours of the house with propriety during my absence?"

"Miss Mowbray seemed a little fluttered with my sudden appearance," said the Earl; "the servant showed me in rather abruptly; and, circumstanced as we were, there is always awkwardness in a first meeting, where there is no third party to act as master of the ceremonies.—I suspect, from the lady's looks, that you have not quite kept my secret, my good friend. I myself, too, felt a little consciousness in approaching Miss Mowbray—but it is over now; and, the ice being fairly broken, I hope to have other and more convenient opportunities to improve the advantage I have just gained in acquiring your lovely sister's personal acquaintance."

"So be it," said Mowbray; "but, as you declare for leaving the castle just now, I must first speak a single word with your lordship, for which this place is not altogether convenient."

"I can have no objections, my dear Jack," said Etherington, following him with a thrill of conscious feeling, somewhat perhaps like that of the spider when he perceives his deceitful web is threatened with injury, and sits balanced in the centre, watching every point, and uncertain which he may be called upon first to defend. Such is one part, and not the slightest part, of the penance which never fails to wait on those, who, abandoning the "fair play of the world," endeavour to work out their purposes by a process of deception and intrigue.

"My lord," said Mowbray, when they had entered a little apartment, in which the latter kept his guns, fishing-tackle, and other implements of sport, "you have played on the square with me; nay, more—I am bound to allow you have given me great odds. I am therefore not entitled to hear any reports to the prejudice of your lordship's character, without instantly communicating them. There is an anonymous letter which I have just received. Perhaps your lordship may know the hand, and thus be enabled to detect the writer."

"I do know the hand," said the Earl, as he received the note from Mowbray; "and, allow me to say, it is the only one which could have dared to frame any calumny to my prejudice. I hope, Mr. Mowbray, it is impossible for you to consider this infamous charge as any thing but a falsehood?"

"My placing it in your lordship's hands, without farther inquiry, is a sufficient proof that I hold it such, my lord; at the same time that I cannot doubt, for a moment, that your lordship has it in your

power to overthrow so frail a calumny by the most satisfactory evidence."

"Unquestionably I can, Mr. Mowbray," said the Earl; "for, besides my being in full possession of the estate and title of my father, the late Earl of Etherington, I have my father's contract of marriage, my own certificate of baptism, and the evidence of the whole country, to establish my right. All these shall be produced with the least delay possible. You will not think it surprising that one does not travel with this sort of documents in one's post-chaise."

"Certainly not, my lord," said Mowbray; "it is sufficient they are forthcoming when called for. But, may I inquire, my lord, who the writer of this letter is, and whether he has any particular spleen to gratify by this very impudent assertion, which is so easily capable of being disproved?"

"He is," said Etherington, "or, at least, has the reputation of being, I am sorry to say, a near—a very near relation of my own—in fact, a brother by the father's side, but illegitimate.—My father was fond of him—I loved him also, for he has uncommonly fine parts, and is accounted highly accomplished. But there is a strain of something irregular in his mind—a vein, in short, of madness, which breaks out in the usual manner, rendering the poor young man a dupe to vain imaginations of his own dignity and grandeur, which is perhaps the most ordinary effect of insanity, and inspiring the deepest aversion against his nearest relatives, and against myself in particular. He is a man extremely plausible, both in speech and manners; so much so, that many of my friends think there is more vice than insanity in the irregularities which he commits; but I may, I hope, be forgiven, if I have formed a milder judgment of one supposed to be my father's son. Indeed, I cannot help being sorry for poor Frank, who might have made a very distinguished figure in the world."

"May I ask the gentleman's name, my lord?" said Mowbray.

"My father's indulgence gave him our family name of Tyrrel, with his own Christian name Francis; but his proper name, to which alone he has a right, is Martigny."

"Francis Tyrrel!" exclaimed Mowbray; "why, that is the name of the very person who made some disturbance at the well just before your lordship arrived.—You may have seen an advertisement—a sort of placard."

"I have, Mr. Mowbray," said the Earl. "Spare me on that subject, if you please—it has formed a strong reason why I did not mention my connexion with this unhappy man before; but it is no unusual thing for persons, whose imaginations are excited, to rush into causeless quarrels, and then to make discreditable retreats from them."

"Or," said Mr. Mowbray, "he may have, after all, been prevented from reaching the place of rendezvous—it was that very day on which your lordship, I think, received your wound; and, if I mistake not, you hit the man from whom you got the hurt."

"Mowbray," said Lord Etherington, lowering his voice, and taking him by the arm, "it is true that I did so—and truly glad I am to observe, that, whatever might have been the consequences of such an accident, they cannot have been serious.—It struck me afterwards, that the man by whom I was so strangely assaulted, had some resemblance to the unfortunate Tyrrel—but I had not seen him for years.—At any rate, he cannot have been much hurt, since he is now able to resume his intrigues to the prejudice of my character."

"Your lordship views the thing with a firm eye," said Mowbray; "firmer than I think most people would be able to command, who had so narrow a chance of a scrape so uncomfortable."

"Why, I am, in the first place, by no means sure that the risk existed," said the Earl of Etherington; "for, as I have often told you, I had but a very transient glimpse of the ruffian; and, in the second place, I am sure that no permanent bad consequences have ensued. I am too old a fox-hunter to be afraid of a leap after it is cleared, as they tell of the fellow who fainted in the morning at the sight of the precipice he had clambered over when he was drunk on the night before. The man who wrote that letter," touching it with his finger, "is alive, and able to threaten me; and if he did come to any hurt from my hand, it was in the act of attempting my life, of which I shall carry the mark to my grave."

"Nay, I am far from blaming your lordship," said Mowbray, "for what you did in self-defence, but the circumstance might have turned out very unpleasant.—May I ask what you intend to do with this unfortunate gentleman, who is in all probability in the neighbourhood?"

"I must first discover the place of his retreat," said Lord Etherington, "and then consider what is to be done both for his safety, poor fellow, and my own. It is probable, too, that he may find sharpers to prey upon what fortune he still possesses, which, I assure you, is sufficient to attract a set of folk, who may ruin while they humour him.—May I beg that you, too, will be on the outlook, and let me know if you hear or see more of him?"

"I shall, most certainly, my lord," answered Mowbray; "but the only one of his haunts which I know, is the old Cleikum Inn, where he chose to take up his residence. He has now left it, but perhaps the old crab-fish of a landlady may know something of him."

"I will not fail to inquire," said Lord Etherington; and, with these words, he took a kind farewell of Mowbray, mounted his horse, and rode up the avenue.

"A cool fellow," said Mowbray, as he looked after him, "a d—d cool fellow, this brother-in-law of mine, that is to be—takes a shot at his father's son with as little remorse as at a blackcock—what would he do with me, were we to quarrel?—Well, I can snuff a candle, and strike out the ace of hearts; and so, should things go wrong, he has no Jack Raw to deal with, but Jack Mowbray."

Mean while the Earl of Etherington hastened home to his own apartments at the Hotel; and, not entirely pleased with the events of the day, commenced a letter to his correspondent, agent, and confidant, Captain Jekyl, which we have fortunately the means of presenting to our readers.—

"FRIEND HARRY,

"THEY say a falling house is best known by the rats leaving it—a falling state, by the desertion of confederates and allies—and a falling man, by the desertion of his friends. If this be true augury, your last letter may be considered as ominous of my breaking down. Methinks, you have gone far enough, and shared deep enough with me, to have some confidence in my *savoir faire*—some little faith both in my means and management. What cross-grained fiend has at once inspired you with what I suppose you wish me to call politic doubts and scruples of conscience, but which I can only regard as symptoms of fear and disaffection? You can have no idea of 'duels betwixt relations so nearly connected'—and 'the affair seems very delicate and intricate'—and again, 'the matter has never been fully explained to you'—and, moreover, 'if you are expected to take an active part in the business, it must be when you are honoured with my full and unreserved confidence, otherwise how could you be of the use to me which I might require?' Such are your expressions.

"Now, as to scruples of conscience about near relations, and so forth, all that has blown by without much mischief, and certainly is not likely to occur again—besides, did you never hear of friends quarrelling before? And are they not to exercise the usual privileges of gentlemen when they do? Moreover, how am I to know that this plaguy fellow *is* actually related to me?—They say it is a wise child knows its own father; and I cannot be expected wise enough to know to a certainty my father's son.—So much for relationship.—Then, as to full and unreserved confidence—why, Harry, this is just as if I were to ask you to look at a watch, and tell what it was o'clock, and you were to reply, that truly you could not inform me, because you had not examined the springs, the counter-balances, the wheels, and the whole internal

achinery of the little timepiece.—But the upshot of e whole is this. Harry Jekyl, who is as sharp a low as any other, thinks he has his friend Lord herington at a dead lock, and that he knows eady so much of the said noble lord's history as oblige his lordship to tell him the whole. And rhaps he not unreasonably concludes, that the cus- fy of a whole secret is more creditable, and probably ore lucrative, than that of a half one; and, in short,— is resolved to make the most of the cards in his nd. Another, mine honest Harry, would take the uble to recall to your mind past times and circum- ances, and conclude with expressing an humble inion, that if Harry Jekyl were asked *now* to do y service for the noble lord aforesaid, Harry had t his reward in his pocket aforehand. But I do not gue thus, because I would rather be leagued with a end who assists me with a view to future profit, an from respect to benefits already received. The st lies like the fox's scent when on his last legs, creasing every moment; the other is a back-scent, owing colder the longer you follow it, until at last becomes impossible to puzzle it out. I will there- re, submit to circumstances, and tell you the whole ory, though somewhat tedious, in hopes that I can nclude with such a trail as you will open upon east-high.

"Thus then it was.—Francis, fifth Earl of Ether- gton, and my much-honoured father, was what is lled a very eccentric man—that is, he was neither wise man nor a fool—had too much sense to walk to a well, and yet in some of the furious fits which was visited with, I have seen him quite mad enough throw any one else into it.—Men said there was a king insanity—but it is an ill bird, &c., and I will y no more about it. This shatterbrained peer was, other respects, a handsome accomplished man, th an expression somewhat haughty, yet singularly nsing when he chose it—a man, in short, who ght push his fortune with the fair sex.

"Lord Etherington, such as I have described him, ing upon his travels in France, formed an attach- nt of the heart—ay, and some have pretended, of s hand also, with a certain beautiful orphan, Marie Martigny. Of this union is said to have sprung r I am determined not to be certain on that point) at most incommodious person, Francis Tyrrel, as he lls himself, but as I would rather call him, Francis artigny; the latter suiting my views, as perhaps the rmer name agrees better with his pretensions. Now, am too good a son to subscribe to the alleged regu- rity of the marriage between my right honourable d very good lord father, because my said right nourable and very good lord did, on his return to gland, become wedded in the face of the church, my very affectionate and well-endowed mother, an Bulmer of Bulmer-hall, from which happy union rung I, Francis Valentine Bulmer Tyrrel, lawful in- ritor of my father and mother's joint estates, as I as the proud possessor of their ancient names. But e noble and wealthy pair, though blessed with such pledge of love as myself, lived mighty ill together, d the rather, when my right honourable father, ending for this other Sosia, this unlucky Francis yrrel, senior, from France, insisted, in the face of ropriety, that he should reside in his house, and hare, in all respects, in the opportunities of education which the real Sosia, Francis Valentine Bulmer yrrel, then commonly called Lord Oakendale, hath rofited in such an uncommon degree.

"Various were the matrimonial quarrels which rose between the honoured lord and lady, in conse- sence of this unseemly conjunction of the legitimate nd illegitimate; and to these, we, the subjects of the ispute, were sometimes very properly, as well as de- orously, made the witnesses. On one occasion, my ght honourable mother, who was a free spoken lady, und the language of her own rank quite inadequate o express the strength of her generous feelings, and orrowing from the vulgar two emphatic words, ap- lied them to Marie de Martigny, and her son Francis yrrel. Never did Earl *that ever wore coronet* fly into *a pitch of more uncontrollable rage, than* did *r right honourable father: and in the ardour of his* reply, he adopted my mother's phraseology, to inform her, that if there *was* a whore and bastard connected with his house, it was herself and her brat.

"I was even then a sharp little fellow, and was in- credibly struck with the communication, which, in this hour of ungovernable irritation, had escaped my right honourable father. It is true, he instantly gathered himself up again; and, he perhaps recol- lecting such a word as *bigamy*, and my mother, on her side, considering the consequences of such a thing as a descent from the Countess of Etherington into Mrs. Bulmer, neither wife, maid, nor widow, there was an apparent reconciliation between them, which lasted for some time. But the speech remained deeply imprinted on my remembrance; the more so, that once, when I was exerting over my friend Francis Tyrrel, the authority of a legitimate brother, and Lord Oakendale, old Cecil, my father's confidential valet, was so much scandalized, as to intimate a possibility that we might one day change conditions. These two accidental communications seemed to me a key to certain long lectures, with which my father used to regale us boys, but me in particular, upon the extreme mutability of human affairs,—the disappointment of the best-grounded hopes and expectations,—and the necessity of being so accomplished in all useful branches of knowledge, as might, in case of accidents, supply any defalcation in our rank and fortune;—as if any art or science could make amends for the loss of an Earldom, and twelve thousand a-year! All this prosing seemed to my anxious mind designed to prepare me for some unfortunate change; and when I was old enough to make such private inquiries as lay in my power, I became still more persuaded that my right honourable father nourished some thoughts of making an honest woman of Marie de Martigny, and a legitimate elder brother of Francis, after his death at least, if not during his life. I was the more convinced of this, when a little affair, which I chanced to have with the daughter of my Tu——, drew down my father's wrath upon me in great abundance, and occasioned my being banished to Scotland, along with my brother, under a very poor allowance, with- out introductions, except to one steady, or call it rusty, old Professor, and with the charge that I should not assume the title of Lord Oakendale, but content my- self with my maternal grandfather's name of Valentine Bulmer, that of Francis Tyrrel being pre-occupied.

"Upon this occasion, notwithstanding the fear which I entertained of my father's passionate temper, I did venture to say, that since I was to resign my title, I thought I had a right to keep my family name, and that my brother might take his mother's. I wish you had seen the look of rage with which my father regarded me when I gave him this spirited hint. 'Thou art,' he said, and paused, as if to find out the bitterest epithet to supply the blank—'thou art thy mother's child, and her perfect picture'—(this seemed the severest reproach that occurred to him.)—'Bear her name then, and bear it with patience and in se- crecy; or, I here give you my word, you shall never bear another the whole days of your life.' This sealed my mouth with a witness; and then, in allusion to my flirtation with the daughter of my Tu—— afore- said, he enlarged on the folly and iniquity of private marriages, warned me that in the country I was going to, the matrimonial noose often lies hid under flowers, and that folks find it twitched round their neck when they least expect such a cravat; assured me, that he had very particular views for settling Francis and me in life, and that he would forgive neither of us who should, by any such rash entanglements, render them unavailing.

"This last minatory admonition was the more tolerable, that my rival had his share of it; and so we were bundled off to Scotland, coupled up like two pointers in a dog-cart, and—I can speak for one at least—with much the same uncordial feelings towards each other. I often, indeed, detected Francis looking at me with a singular expression, as of pity and anxiety, and once or twice he seemed disposed to enter on something respecting the situation in which we stood towards each other; but I felt no desire to encourage his confidence. Mean time, as we were

called, by our father's directions, not brother's but cousins, so we came to bear towards each other the habits of companionship, though scarcely of friendship. What Francis thought, I know not; for my part, I must confess, that I lay by on the watch for some opportunity when I might mend my own situation with my father, though at the prejudice of my rival. And Fortune, while she seemed to prevent such an opportunity, involved us both in one of the strangest and most entangled mazes that her capricious divinityship ever wove, and out of which I am even now struggling, by sleight or force, to extricate myself. I can hardly help wondering, even yet, at the odd conjunction, which has produced such an intricacy of complicated incidents.

"My father was a great sportsman, and Francis and I had both inherited his taste for field-sports; but I in a keener and more ecstatic degree. Edinburgh, which is a tolerable residence in winter and spring, becomes disagreeable in summer, and in autumn is the most melancholy *sejour* that ever poor mortals were condemned to. No public places are open, no inhabitant of any consideration remains in the town; those who cannot get away, hide themselves in obscure corners, as if ashamed to be seen in the streets.—The gentry go to their country-houses—the citizens to their sea-bathing quarters—the lawyers to their circuits—the writers to visit their country clients—and all the world to the moors to shoot grouse. We, who felt the indignity of remaining in town during this deserted season, obtained, with some difficulty, permission from the Earl to betake ourselves to any obscure corner, and shoot grouse, if we could get leave to do so on our general character of English students at the University of Edinburgh, without quoting any thing more.

"The first year of our banishment we went to the neighbourhood of the Highlands; but finding our sport interrupted by gamekeepers and their gillies, on the second occasion we established ourselves at this little village of St. Ronan's, where there were then no Spa, no fine people, no card tables, no quizzes, excepting the old quiz of a landlady with whom we lodged. We found the place much to our mind; the old landlady had interest with some old fellow, agent of a non-residing nobleman, who gave us permission to sport over his moors, of which I availed myself keenly, and Francis with more moderation. He was, indeed, of a grave musing sort of habit, and often preferred solitary walks, in the wild and beautiful scenery with which the village is surrounded, to the use of the gun. He was attached to fishing, moreover, that dullest of human amusements, and this also tended to keep us considerably apart. This gave me rather pleasure than concern;—not that I hated Francis at that time; nay, not that I greatly disliked his society; but merely because it was unpleasant to be always with one, whose fortunes I looked upon as standing in direct opposition to my own. I also rather despised the indifference about sport, which indeed seemed to grow upon him; but my gentleman had better taste than I was aware of. If he sought no grouse on the hill, he had flushed a pheasant in the wood.

"Clara Mowbray, daughter of the Lord of the more picturesque than wealthy domain of St. Ronan's, was at that time scarce sixteen years old, and as wild and beautiful a woodland nymph as the imagination can fancy—simple as a child in all that concerned the world and its ways, acute as a needle in every point of knowledge which she had found an opportunity of becoming acquainted with; fearing harm from no one, and with a lively and natural strain of wit, which brought amusement and gayety wherever she came. Her motions were under no restraint, save that of her own inclination; for her father, though a cross, peevish, old man, was confined to his chair with the gout, and her only companion, a girl of somewhat inferior caste, bred up in the utmost deference to Miss Mowbray's fancies, served for company indeed in her strolls through the wild country on foot and horseback, *but never thought of interfering* with her will *and pleasure.*

"*The extreme loneliness of the country,* (at that time,) and the simplicity of its inhabitants, seemed to render these excursions perfectly safe. Francis, happy dog, became the companion of the damsels on such occasions through the following accident. Miss Mowbray had dressed herself and her companion like country wenches, with a view to surprise the family of one of their better sort of farmers. They had accomplished their purpose greatly to their satisfaction, and were hying home after sunset, when they were encountered by a country fellow—a sort of Harry Jekyl in his way—who, being equipped with a glass or two of whisky, saw not the nobility of blood through her disguise, and accosted the daughter of a hundred sires as he would have done a ewe-milker. Miss Mowbray remonstrated—her companion screamed—up came cousin Francis with a fowlingpiece on his shoulder, and soon put the silvan to flight.

"This was the beginning of an acquaintance, which had gone great lengths before I found it out. The fair Clara, it seems, found it safer to roam in the woods with an escort than alone, and my studious and sentimental relative was almost her constant companion. At their age, it was likely that some time might pass ere they came to understand each other; but full confidence and intimacy was established between them ere I heard of their amour.

"And here, Harry, I must pause till next morning, and send you the conclusion under a separate cover. The rap which I had over the elbow the other day, is still tingling at the end of my fingers, and you must not be critical with my manuscript."

CHAPTER XXVI.

LETTER CONTINUED.

——Must I then ravel out
My weaved up follies?——SHAKSPEARE.

"I RESUME my pen, Harry, to mention, without attempting to describe my surprise, that Francis, compelled by circumstances, made me the confidant of his love-intrigue. My grave cousin in love, and very much in the mind of approaching the perilous verge of clandestine marriage—he who used every now and then, not much to the improvement of our cordial regard, to lecture me upon filial duty, just upon the point of slipping the bridle himself! I could not for my life tell whether surprise, or a feeling of mischievous satisfaction, was predominant. I tried to talk to him as he used to talk to me; but I had not the gift of persuasion, or he the power of understanding the words of wisdom. He insisted our situation was different—that his unhappy birth, as he termed it, freed him at least from dependence on his father's absolute will—that he had, by bequest from some relative of his mother, a moderate competence, which Miss Mowbray had consented to share with him; in fine, that he desired not my counsel but my assistance. A moment's consideration convinced me, that I should be unkind, not to him only, but to myself, unless I gave him all the backing I could in this his most dutiful scheme. I recollected our right honourable father's denunciations against Scottish marriages, and secret marriages of all sorts,—denunciations perhaps not the less vehement, that he might feel some secret prick of conscience on the subject himself. I remembered that my grave brother had always been a favourite, and I forgot not—how was it possible I could forget—those ominous expressions, which intimated a possibility of the hereditary estate and honours being transferred to the elder, instead of the younger son. Now, it required no conjurer to foresee, that should Francis commit this inexpiable crime of secretly allying himself with a Scottish beauty, our sire would lose all wish to accomplish such a transference in his favour; and while my brother's merits were altogether obscured by such an unpardonable act of disobedience, my own, no longer overshadowed by prejudice or partiality, would shine forth in all their natural brilliancy. These considerations, which flashed on me with the rapidity of lightning, induced me to consent to hold Frank's backhand during the perilous game he proposed to play. I had only to take care that my own share in the

uld not be so prominent as to attract my tention; and this I was little afraid of, for was usually of that vehement and forcible which, like lightning, is attracted to one it, there bursting with violence as undi- was uncontrollable.

found the lovers needed my assistance I could have supposed; for they were ab- ices in any sort of intrigue, which to me easy and natural as lying. Francis had ted by some tattling spy in his walks with the news had been carried to old Mow- was greatly incensed at his daughter, le knowing that her crime was greater tting an unknown English student to form acquaintance with her. He prohibited far- ourse—resolved, in justice-of-peace phrase, country of us; and, prudently sinking all f his daughter's delinquency, commenced against Francis, under pretext of punishing encroacher upon his game, but in reality im from the neighbourhood. His person cularly described to all the keepers and about Shaws-Castle, and any personal betwixt him and Clara became impossi- under the most desperate risks. Nay, their alarm, that Master Francis thought it r Miss Mowbray's sake, to withdraw as far called Marchthorn, and there to conceal aintaining his intercourse with Clara only

then I became the sheet-anchor of the e lovers; it was then my early dexterity s of contrivance were first put to the test; uld be too long to tell you in how many d by how many contrivances, I acted as er-carrier, and go-between, to maintain the e of these separated turtles. I have had a of trouble in that way on my own account, half so much as I took on account of this vers. I scaled walls and swam rivers, set ds, quarterstaves, and blunderbusses at and, excepting the distant prospect of self- hich I have hinted at, I was neither to have r reward for my pains. I will own to you, Mowbray was so very beautiful—so abso- fiding in her lover's friend—and thrown in- lose intercourse with me, that there were n I thought that, in conscience, she ought ve scrupled to have contributed a mite to e faithful labourer. But then, she looked itself; and I was such a novice at that y, that I did not know how it might have ble for me to retreat, if I had made too bold e—and, in short, I thought it best to con- f with assisting true love to run smooth, in hat its course would assure me, in the long- rl's title, and an Earl's fortune.

ng was, therefore, ventured on my part ld raise suspicion, and, as the confidential the lovers, I prepared every thing for their rriage. The pastor of the parish agreed to e ceremony, prevailed upon by an argument ed to him, and which Clara, had she guessed ave little thanked me for. I led the honest lieve, that in declining to do his office, he vent a too successful lover from doing jus- betrayed maiden; and the parson, who, I l a spice of romance in his disposition, re- der such pressing circumstances, to do them ffice of binding them together, although the ce might be a charge of irregularity against Old Mowbray was much confined to his daughter less watched since Frank had re- m the neighbourhood—the brother (which, I should have said before) not then in the and it was settled that the lovers should e Old Kirk of Saint Ronan's when the twi- me deep, and go off in a chaise for England the ceremony was performed.

all this was arranged, save the actual ap- of the day, you cannot conceive the happi- he *gratitude of my sage brother. He looked elf as approaching to the seventh heaven,*

instead of losing his chance of a good fortune, and encumbering himself at nineteen with a wife, and all the probabilities of narrow circumstances, and an increasing family. Though so much younger myself, I could not help wondering at his extreme want of knowledge of the world, and feeling ashamed that I had ever allowed him to take the airs of a tutor with me; and this conscious superiority supported me against the thrill of jealousy which always seized me when I thought of his carrying off the beautiful prize, which, without my address, he could never have made his own.—But at this important crisis, I had a letter from my father, which, by some accident, had long lain at our lodgings in Edinburgh; and then visited our former quarters in the Highlands; again returned to Edinburgh, and at length reached me at Marchthorn in a most critical time.

"It was in reply to a letter of mine, in which, among other matters, such as good boys send to their papas, descriptions of the country, accounts of studies, exercises, and so forth, I had, to fill up the sheet to a dutiful length, thrown in something about the family of St. Ronan's, in the neighbourhood of which I was writing. I had no idea what an effect the name would produce on the mind of my right honourable father, but his letter sufficiently expressed it. He charged me to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Mowbray as fast and as intimately as possible; and, if need were, to inform him candidly of our real character and situation in life. Wisely considering, at the same time, that his filial admonition might be neglected if not backed by some sufficient motive, his lordship frankly let me into the secret of my grandmother's side, Mr. S. Mowbray of Nettlewood's last will and testament, by which I saw, to my astonishment and alarm, that a large and fair estate was bequeathed to the eldest son and heir of the Earl of Etherington, on condition of his forming a matrimonial alliance with a lady of the house of Mowbray, of St. Ronan's.—Mercy of Heaven! how I stared! Here had I been making every preparation for wedding Francis to the very girl, whose hand would insure to myself wealth and independence!—And even the first loss, though great, was not likely to be the last. My father spoke of the marriage like a land-surveyor, but of the estate of Nettlewood like an impassioned lover. He seemed to dote on every acre of it, and dwelt on its contiguity to his own domains as a circumstance which rendered the union of the estates not desirable merely, but constituted an arrangement, pointed out by the hand of nature. And although he observed, that, on account of the youth of the parties, a treaty of marriage could not be immediately undertaken, it was yet clear he would approve at heart of any bold stroke which would abolish the interval of time that might otherwise intervene, ere Oakendale and Nettlewood became one property.

"Here, then, were shipwrecked my fair hopes. It was clear as sunshine, that a private marriage, unpardonable in the abstract, would become venial, nay, highly laudable, in my father's eyes, if it united his heir with Clara Mowbray; and if he really had, as my fears suggested, the means of establishing legitimacy on my brother's part, nothing was so likely to tempt him to use them, as the certainty that, by his doing so, Nettlewood and Oakendale would be united into one. The very catastrophe which I had prepared, as sure to exclude my rival from his father's favour, was thus likely, unless it could be prevented, to become a strong motive and argument for the Earl placing his rights above mine.

"I shut myself up in my bedroom; locked the door; read, and again read my father's letter; and, instead of giving way to idle passion, (beware of that, Harry, even in the most desperate circumstances,) I considered, with keen investigation, whether some remedy could not yet be found. To break off the match for the time, would have been easy—a little private information to Mr. Mowbray would have done that with a vengeance—But then the treaty might be renewed under my father's auspices;—at all events, the share which I had taken in the intrigue between Clara and my brother, rendered it almost impossible for me to become a suitor in my own person.—Amid these per-

plexities, it suddenly occurred to my adventurous heart and contriving brain—what if I should personate the bridegroom?—This strange thought, you will recollect, occurred to a very youthful brain—it was banished—it returned—returned again and again—was viewed under every different shape—became familiar—was adopted.—It was easy to fix the appointment with Clara and the clergyman, for I managed the whole correspondence—the resemblance between Francis and me in stature and in proportion—the disguise which we were to assume—the darkness of the church—the hurry of the moment—might, I trusted, prevent Clara from recognising me. To the minister I had only to say, that, though I had hitherto talked of a friend, I myself was the happy man. My first name was Francis as well as his; and I had found Clara so gentle, so confiding, so flatteringly cordial in her intercourse with me, that, once within my power, and prevented from recoding by shame, and a thousand contradictory feelings, I had, with the vanity of an *amoureux de seize ans*, the confidence to believe I could reconcile the fair lady to the exchange.

"There certainly never came such a thought into a madcap's brain; and, what is more extraordinary—but that you already know—it was so far successful, that the marriage ceremony was performed between us in the presence of a servant of mine, Clara's accommodating companion, and the priest.—We got into the carriage, and were a mile from the church, when my unlucky or lucky brother stopped the chaise by force—through what means he had obtained knowledge of my little trick, I never have been able to learn. Solmes has been faithful to me in too many instances, that I should suspect him in this important crisis. I jumped out of the carriage, pitched fraternity to the devil, and, betwixt desperation and something very like shame, began to cut away with a *couteau de chasse*, which I had provided in case of necessity.—All was in vain—I was hustled down under the wheel of the carriage, and, the horses taking fright, it went over my body.

"Here ends my narrative; for I neither heard nor saw more until I found myself stretched on a sick-bed many miles from the scene of action, and Solmes engaged in attending on me. In answer to my passionate inquiries, he briefly informed me, that Master Francis had sent back the young lady to her own dwelling, and that she appeared to be extremely ill in consequence of the alarm she had sustained. My own health, he assured me, was considered as very precarious, and added, that Tyrrel, who was in the same house, was in the utmost perturbation on my account. The very mention of his name brought on a crisis in which I brought up much blood; and it is singular that the physician who attended me—a grave gentleman, with a wig—considered that this was of service to me. I know it frightened me heartily, and prepared me for a visit from Master Frank, which I endured with a tameness he would not have experienced, had the usual current of blood flowed in my veins. But sickness and the lancet make one very tolerant of sermonizing.—At last, in consideration of being relieved from his accursed presence, and the sound of his infernally calm voice, I slowly and reluctantly acquiesced in an arrangement, by which he proposed that we should for ever bid adieu to each other, and to Clara Mowbray. I would have hesitated to this last stipulation. 'She was,' I said, 'my wife, and I was entitled to claim her as such.'

"This drew down a shower of most moral reproaches, and an assurance that Clara disowned and detested my alliance, and that where there had been an essential error in the person, the mere ceremony could never be accounted binding by the law of any Christian country. I wonder this had not occurred to me; but my ideas of marriage were much founded on plays and novels, where such devices as I had practised are often resorted to for winding up the plot, without any hint of their illegality; besides, I had confided, as I mentioned before, a little too rashly perhaps, in my own powers of persuading so young a bride as Clara to be contented with one handsome fellow instead of another.

"Solmes took up the argument, when Francis released me by leaving the room. He spoke of m father's resentment, should this enterprise reach h ears—of the revenge of Mowbray of St. Ronan' whose nature was both haughty and rugged—of ri from the laws of the country, and God knows wh bugbears besides, which, at a more advanced age, would have laughed at. In a word, I scaled the c pitulation, vowed perpetual absence, and banish myself, as they say in this country, forth of Scotlan

"And here, Harry, observe and respect my geniu Every circumstance was against me in this negoti tion. I had been the aggressor in the war; I w wounded, and, it might be said, a prisoner in my a tagonist's hands; yet I could so far avail myself Monsieur Martigny's greater eagerness for peace, th I clogged the treaty with a condition highly advanta geous to myself, and equally unfavourable to him. Said Mr. Francis Martigny was to take upon himse the burden of my right honourable father's displa sure; and our separation, which was certain to gi immense offence, was to be represented as his wor not as mine. I insisted, tender-hearted, dutiful so as I was, that I would consent to no measure whic was to bring down papa's displeasure. This was *sine qua non* in our negotiation.

'Voila ce que c'est d'avoir des talens!'

"Monsieur Francis would, I suppose, have take the world on his shoulders, to have placed an etern separation betwixt his turtle dove and the falcon wh had made so bold a pounce at her.—What he wrote my father, I know not; as for myself, in all duty, represented the bad state of my health from an acc dent, and that my brother and companion havi been suddenly called from me by some cause whic he had not explained, I had thought it necessary get to London for the best advice, and only waited h lordship's permission to return to the paternal man sion. This I soon received, and found, as I expecte that he was in towering wrath against my brothe for his disobedience; and, after some time, I even h reason to think, (as how could it be otherwis Harry?) that, on becoming better acquainted wi the merits and amiable manners of his apparent he he lost any desire which he might formerly have e tertained, of accomplishing any change in my circum stances in relation to the world. Perhaps the o peer turned a little ashamed of his own conduct, a dared not aver to the congregation of the righteou (for he became saintly in his latter days,) the ve pretty frolics which he seems to have been guilty of his youth. Perhaps, also, the death of my right ho ourable mother operated in my favour, since, whi she lived, my chance was the worse—there is no sa ing what a man will do to spite his wife.—Enoug he died—slept with his right honourable fathers, a I became, without opposition, Right Honourable his stead.

"How I have borne my new honours, thou, Harr and our merry set, know full well. Newmarket a Tattersal's may tell the rest. I think I have been lucky as most men where luck is most prized, and I shall say no more on that subject.

"And now, Harry, I will suppose thee in a more izing mood; that is, I will fancy the dice have r wrong—or your double-barrel has hung fire—or a ce tain lady has looked cross—or any such weigh cause of gravity has occurred, and you give me t benefit of your seriousness.—'My dear Etheringto say you pithily, 'you are a precious fool!—Here y are, stirring up a business rather scandalous in itse and fraught with mischief to all concerned—a bu ness which might sleep for ever, if you let it alo but which is sure, like a sea-coal fire, to burst into flame if you go on poking it. I would like to a your lordship only two questions,'—say you, wi your usual graceful attitude of adjusting your perpe dicular shirt collar, and passing your hand over t knot of your cravat, which deserves a peculiar pla in the *Tictania*—'only two questions—that is, Wh ther you do not repent the past, and whether you not fear the future?' Very comprehensive queri these of yours, Harry; for they respect both the ti past and the time to come—one's whole life, in sho

However, I shall endeavour to answer them as well as I may.

"Repent the past, said you?—Yes, Harry, I think I do repent the past—that is, not quite in the parson's style of repentance, which resembles yours when you have the headache, but as I would repent a hand at cards which I had played on false principles. I should have begun with the young lady—availed myself in a very different manner of Monsieur Martigny's absence, and my own intimacy with her, and thus superseded him, if possible, in the damsel's affections. The scheme I adopted, though there was, I think, both boldness and dexterity in it, was that of a novice of premature genius, who could not calculate chances. So much for repentance.—Do I not fear the future?—Harry, I will not cut your throat for supposing you to have put the question, but calmly assure you, that I never feared any thing in my life. I was born without the sensation, I believe; at least, it is perfectly unknown to me. When I felt that cursed wheel pass across my breast, when I felt the pistol-ball benumb my arm, I felt no more agitation than at the bounce of a champagne-cork. But I would not have you think that I am fool enough to risk plague, trouble, and danger, (all of which, besides considerable expense, I am now prepared to encounter,) without some adequate motive,—and here it is.

"From various quarters, hints, rumours, and surmises have reached me, that an attack will be made on my rank and status in society, which can only be in behalf of this fellow Martigny, (for I will not call him by his stolen name of Tyrrel.) Now, this I hold to be a breach of the paction betwixt us, by which—that is, by that which I am determined to esteem its true meaning and purport—he was to leave my right honourable father and me to settle our own matters without his interference, which amounted to a virtual resignation of his rights, if the scoundrel ever had any. Can he expect I am to resign my wife, and what is a better thing, old Scrogie Mowbray's estate of Nettlewood, to gratify the humour of a fellow who sets up claims to my title and whole property? No, by ——! If he assails me in a point so important, I will retaliate upon him in one where he will feel as keenly; and that he may depend upon.—And now, methinks, you come upon me with a second edition of your grave remonstrances, about family feuds, unnatural rencontres, offence to all the feelings of all the world, et cetera, et cetera, which you might usher in most delectably with the old stave about brethren dwelling together in unity. I will not stop to inquire, whether all these delicate apprehensions are on account of the Earl of Etherington, his safety, and his reputation; or whether my friend Harry Jekyl be not considering how far his own interference with such a naughty business will be well taken at Head-quarters; and so, without pausing on that question, I shall barely and briefly say, that you cannot be more sensible than I am of the madness of bringing matters to such an extremity—I have no such intention, I assure you, and it is with no such purpose that I invite you here.—Were I to challange Martigny, he would refuse me the meeting; and all less ceremonious ways of arranging such an affair are quite old-fashioned.

It is true, at our first meeting, I was betrayed into the scrape I told you of—just as you may have shot (or shot *at*, for I think you are no downright hitter) a hen-pheasant, when flushed within distance, by a sort of instinctive movement, without reflecting on the enormity you are about to commit. The truth is, there is an ignis fatuus influence, which seems to govern our house—it poured its wildfire through my father's veins—it has descended to me in full vigour, and every now and then its impulse is irresistible. There was my enemy, and here were my pistols, was all I had time to think about the matter. But I will be on my guard in future, the more surely, as I cannot receive any provocation from him; on the contrary, if I must confess the truth, though I was willing to gloss it a little in my first account of the matter, (like the Gazette, when recording a defeat,) I am certain he would never voluntarily have fired at me, and that his pistol went off as he fell. You know me well enough to be assured, that I will never be again in the scrape of attacking an unresisting antagonist, were he ten times my brother.

"Then, as to this long tirade about hating my brother—Harry, I do not hate him more than the first-born of Egypt are in general hated by those whom they exclude from entailed estates, and so forth—not one landed man in twenty of us that is not hated by his younger brothers, to the extent of wishing him quiet in his grave, as an abominable stumbling-block in their path of life and so far only do I hate Monsieur Martigny. But for the rest, I rather like him as otherwise; and would he but die, would give my frank consent to his being canonized; and while he lives, I am not desirous that he should be exposed to any temptation from rank and riches, those main obstacles to the self-denying course of life, by which the odour of sanctity is attained.

"Here again you break in with your impertinent queries—If I have no purpose of quarrelling personally with Martigny, why do I come into collision with him at all?—why not abide by the treaty of Marchthorn, and remain in England, without again approaching St. Ronan's or claiming my maiden bride?

"Have I not told you, I want him to cease all threatened attempts upon my fortune and dignity? Have I not told you, that I want to claim my wife, Clara Mowbray, and my estate of Nettlewood, fairly won by marrying her?—And, to let you into the whole secret, though Clara is a very pretty woman, yet she goes for so little in the transaction with me, her unimpassioned bridegroom, that I hope to make some relaxation of my rights over her the means of obtaining the concessions which I think most important.

"I will not deny, that an aversion to awakening bustle, and encountering reproach, has made me so slow in looking after my interest, that the period will shortly expire, within which I ought, by old Scrog Mowbray's will, to qualify myself for becoming his heir, by being the accepted husband of Miss Mowbray of St. Ronan's. Time was—time is—and, if I catch it not by the forelock as it passes, time will be no more—Nettlewood will be forfeited—and if I have in addition a lawsuit for my title, and for Oakendale, I run a risk of being altogether capotted. I must, therefore, act at all risks, and act with vigour—and this is the general plan of my campaign, subject always to be altered according to circumstances. I have obtained—I may say purchased—Mowbray's consent to address his sister. I have this advantage, that if she agrees to take me, she will for ever put a stop to all disagreeable reports and recollections, founded on her former conduct. In that case I secure the Nettlewood property, and am ready to wage war for my paternal estate. Indeed, I firmly believe, that should this happy consummation take place, Monsieur Martigny will be too much heart-broken to make further fight, but will e'en throw helve after hatchet, and run to hide himself, after the fashion of a true lover, in some desert beyond seas.

"But supposing the lady has the bad taste to be obstinate, and will none of me, I still think that her happiness, or her peace of mind, will be as dear to Martigny, as Gibraltar is to the Spaniards, and that he will sacrifice a great deal to induce me to give up my pretensions. Now, I shall want some one to act as my agent in communicating with this fellow; for I will not deny that my old appetite for cutting his throat may awaken suddenly, were I to hold personal intercourse with him. Come thou, therefore, without delay, and hold my back-hand—Come, for you know me, and that I never left a kindness unrewarded. To be specific, you shall have means to pay off a certain inconvenient mortgage, without troubling the tribe of Issachar, if you will be but true to me in this matter—Come, therefore, without further apologies or further delay. There shall, I give you my word, neither be risk or offence in the part of the drama which I intend to commit to your charge.

"Talking of the drama, we had a miserable attempt at a sort of bastard theatricals, at Mowbray's rat-gnawed mansion. There were two things worth noticing—One, that I lost all the courage on which I piqued myself, and fairly fled from the pit, rather than present myself before Miss Clara Mowbray, when it

came to the push. And upon this I pray you to remark, that I am a person of singular delicacy and modesty, instead of being the Drawcansir and Daredevil that you would make of me. The other memorabile is of a more delicate nature, respecting the conduct of a certain fair lady, who seemed determined to fling herself at my head. There is a wonderful degree of freemasonry among us folk of spirit; and it is astonishing how soon we can place ourselves on a footing with neglected wives and discontented daughters. If you come not soon, one of the rewards held out to you in my former letter, will certainly not be forthcoming. No schoolboy keeps gingerbread for his comrade, without feeling a desire to nibble at it; so, if you appear not to look after your own interest, say you had fair warning. For my own part, I am rather embarrassed than gratified by the prospect of such an affair, when I have on the tapis another of a different nature. This enigma I will explain at meeting.

"Thus finishes my long communication. If my motives of action do not appear explicit, think in what a maze fortune has involved me, and how much must necessarily depend on the chapter of accidents.

"Yesterday I may be said to have opened my siege, for I presented myself before Clara. I had no very flattering reception—that was of little consequence, for I did not expect one. By alarming her fears, I made an impression thus far, that she acquiesces in my appearing before her as her brother's guest, and this is no small point gained. She will become accustomed to look on me, and will remember with less bitterness the trick which I played her formerly; while I, on the other hand, by a similar force of habit, will get over certain awkward feelings with which I have been compunctiously visited whenever I look upon her.—Adieu! Health and brotherhood.

"Thine,
"ETHERINGTON.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE REPLY.

Thou bearest a precious burden, gentle post,
Nitre and sulphur—See that it explode not!—*Old Play.*

"I HAVE received your two long letters, my dear Etherington, with equal surprise and interest; for what I knew of your Scottish adventures before, was by no means sufficient to prepare me for a statement so perversely complicated. The Ignis Fatuus which, you say, governed your father, seems to have ruled the fortunes of your whole house, there is so much eccentricity in all that you have told me. But *n'importe*, Etherington, you were my friend—you held me up when I was completely broken down; and, whatever you may think, my services are at your command much more from reflections on the past, than hopes for the future. I am no speech-maker, but this you may rely on while I continue to be Harry Jekyl. You have deserved some love at my hands, Etherington, and you have it.

"Perhaps I love you the better since your perplexities have become known to me; for, my dear Etherington, you were before too much an object of envy to be entirely an object of affection. What a happy fellow! was the song of all who named you. Rank, and a fortune to maintain it—luck sufficient to repair all the waste that you could make in your income, and skill to back that luck, or supply it, should it for a moment fail you.—The cards turning up as if to your wish—the dice rolling, it almost seemed at your wink—it was rather your look than the touch of your cue that sent the ball into the pocket. You seemed to have fortune in chains, and a man of less honour would have been almost suspected of helping his luck by a little art.—You won every bet; and the instant that you were interested, one might have named the winning horse—it was always that which *you were to gain most by.*—You never held out your piece but the game went down—and then the women!—*with form, manners, person, and, above all, your* tongue—what wild work have you made among them!—Good heaven! and have you had the old sword hanging over your head by a horsehair all this while?—Has your rank been doubtful?—Your fortune unsettled?—And your luck, so constant in every thing else, has that, as well as your predominant influence with the women failed you, when you wished to form a connexion for life, and when the care of your fortune required you to do so?—Etherington, I am astonished!—The Mowbray scrape I always thought an inconvenient one, as well as the quarrel with this same Tyrrel, or Martigny; but I was far from guessing the complicated nature of your perplexities.

"But I must not run on in a manner, which though it relieves my own marvelling mind, cannot be very pleasant to you. Enough, I look on my obligations to you as more light to be borne, now I have some chance of repaying them to a certain extent; but, even were the full debt paid, I would remain as much attached to you as ever. It is your friend who speaks, Etherington; and, if he offers his advice in somewhat plain language, do not, I entreat you, suppose that your confidence has encouraged an offensive familiarity, but consider me as one who, in a weighty matter, writes plainly, to avoid the least chance of misconstruction.

"Etherington, your conduct hitherto has resembled any thing rather than the coolness and judgment which are so peculiarly your own when you choose to display them. I pass over the masquerade of your marriage—it was a boy's trick, which could hardly have availed you much, even if successful; for what sort of a wife would you have acquired, had this same Clara Mowbray proved willing to have accepted the change which you had put upon her, and transferred herself, without repugnance, from one bridegroom to another?—Poor as I am, I know that neither Nettlewood nor Oakendale should have bribed me to marry such a —— I cannot decorously fill up the blank.

"Neither, my dear Etherington, can I forgive you the trick you put on the clergyman, in whose eyes you destroyed the poor girl's character to induce him to consent to perform the ceremony, and have thereby perhaps fixed an indelible stain on her for life—this was not a fair *ruse de guerre.*—As it is, you have taken little by your stratagem—unless, indeed, it should be difficult for the young lady to prove the imposition put upon her—for that being admitted, the marriage certainly goes for nothing. At least, the only use you can make of it, would be to drive her into a more formal union, for fear of having this whole unpleasant discussion brought into a court of law; and in this, with all the advantages you possess, joined to your own arts of persuasion, and her brother's influence, I should think you very likely to succeed. All women are necessarily the slaves of their reputation. I have known some to have given up their virtue to preserve their character, which is, after all, only the shadow of it. I therefore would not conceive it difficult for Clara Mowbray to persuade herself to become a countess, rather than be the topic of conversation for all Britain, while a lawsuit betwixt you is in dependence; and that may be for the greater part of both your lives.

"But, in Miss Mowbray's state of mind, it may require time to bring her to such a conclusion; and I fear you will be thwarted in your operations by your rival—I will not offend you by calling him your brother. Now, it is here that I think with pleasure I may be of some use to you,—under this special condition, that there shall be no thoughts of farther violence taking place between you. However you may have smoothed over your rencontre to yourself, there is no doubt that the public would have regarded any accident which might have befallen on that occasion, as a crime of the deepest dye, and that the law would have followed it with the most severe punishment. And for all that I have said of my serviceable disposition, I would fain stop short on this side of the gallows—my neck is too long already. Without a jest, Etherington, you must be ruled by counsel in this matter. I detect your hatred to this man in every line of your letter, even when you write with the

greatest coolness; even where there is an affectation of gayety, I read your sentiments on this subject; and they are such as—I will not preach to you—I will not say a good man—but such as every wise man—every man who wishes to live on fair terms with the world, and to escape general malediction, and perhaps a violent death, where all men will clap their hands and rejoice at the punishment of the fratricide,—would, with all possible speed, eradicate from his breast. My services therefore, if they are worth your acceptance, are offered on the condition that this unholy hatred be subdued with the utmost force of your powerful mind, and that you avoid every thing which can possibly lead to such a catastrophe as you have twice narrowly escaped. I do not ask you to like this man, for I know well the deep root which your prejudices hold in your mind; I merely ask you to avoid him, and to think of him as one, who, if you do meet him, can never be the object of personal resentment.

"On these conditions, I will instantly join you at your Spa, and wait but your answer to throw myself into the post-chaise. I will seek out this Martigny for you, and I have the vanity to think I shall be able to persuade him to take the course which his own true interest, as well as yours so plainly points out—and that is, to depart and make us free of him. You must not grudge a round sum of money, should that prove necessary—we must make wings for him to fly with, and I must be empowered by you to that purpose. I cannot think you have any thing serious to fear from a lawsuit. Your father threw out this sinister hint at a moment when he was enraged at his wife, and irritated by his son; and I have little doubt that his expressions were merely flashes of anger at the moment, though I see they have made a deep impression on you. At all events, he spoke of a preference to his illegitimate son, as something which it was in his own power to give or to withhold; and he has died without bestowing it. The family seem addicted to irregular matrimony, and some left-handed marriage there may have been used to propitiate the modesty, and save the conscience, of the French lady; but, that any thing of the nature of a serious and legal ceremony took place, nothing but the strongest proof can make me believe.

"I repeat, then, that I have little doubt that the claims of Martigny, whatever they are, may be easily compounded, and England made clear of him. This will be more easily done, if he really entertains such a romantic passion, as you describe, for Miss Clara Mowbray. It would be easy to show him, that whether she is disposed to accept your lordship's hand or not, her quiet and peace of mind must depend on his leaving the country. Rely on it, I shall find out the way to smooth him down, and whether distance or the grave divide Martigny and you, is very little to the purpose; unless in so far as the one point can be attained with honour and safety, and the other, if attempted, would only make all concerned the subject of general execration and deserved punishment. —Speak the word, and I attend you, as your truly grateful and devoted "HENRY JEKYL."

To this admonitory epistle, the writer received, in the course of post, the following answer:—

"My truly grateful and devoted Henry Jekyl has adopted a tone, which seems to be exalted without any occasion. Why, thou suspicious monitor, have I not repeated a hundred times that I repent sincerely of the foolish rencontre, and am determined to curb my temper, and be on my guard in future—And what need you come upon me, with your long lesson about execration, and punishment, and fratricide, and so forth?—You deal with an argument as a boy does with the first hare he shoots, which he never thinks dead till he has fired the second barrel into her. What a fellow you would have been for a lawyer! how long you would have held forth upon the plainest cause, until the poor bothered judge was almost willing to decide against justice, that he might be revenged on you. If I must *repeat what I have* said twenty *times, I tell you I have no thoughts of proceeding with this fellow as I would with another.* If my father's blood be in his veins, it shall save the skin his mother gave him. And so come, without more parade, either of stipulation or argument. Thou art, indeed, a curious animal! One would think, to read your communication, that you had yourself discovered the propriety of acting as a negotiator, and the reasons which might, in the course of such a treaty, be urged with advantage to induce this fellow to leave the country—Why, this is the very course chalked out in my last letter! You are bolder than the boldest gipsy, for you not only steal my ideas, and disfigure them that they may pass for yours, but you have the assurance to come a-begging with them to the door of the original parent! No man like you for stealing other men's inventions, and cooking them up in your own way. However, Harry, bating a little self-conceit and assumption, thou art as honest a fellow as ever man put faith in—clever, too, in your own style, though not quite the genius you would fain pass for.—Come on thine own terms, and come as speedily as thou canst. I do not reckon the promise I made the less binding, that you very generously make no allusion to it.

"Thine,
"ETHERINGTON.

"P. S. One single caution I must add—do not mention my name to any one at Harrowgate, or your prospect of meeting me, or the route which you are about to take. On the purpose of your journey, it is unnecessary to recommend silence. I know not whether such doubts are natural to all who have secret measures to pursue, or whether nature has given me an unusual share of anxious suspicion; but I cannot divest myself of the idea, that I am closely watched by some one whom I cannot discover. Although I concealed my purpose of coming hither from all mankind but you, whom I do not for an instant suspect of blabbing, yet it was known to this Martigny, and he is down here before me. Again, I said not a word—gave not a hint to any one of my views towards Clara, yet the tattling people here had spread a report of a marriage depending between us, even before I could make the motion to her brother. To be sure, in such society there is nothing talked of but marrying and giving in marriage; and this, which alarms me, as connected with my own private purposes, may be a bare rumour, arising out of the gossip of the place—Yet I feel like the poor woman in the old story, who felt herself watched by an eye that glared upon her from behind the tapestry.

"I should have told you in my last, that I had been recognised at a public entertainment by the old clergyman, who pronounced the matrimonial blessing on Clara and me, nearly eight years ago. He insisted upon addressing me by the name of Valentine Bulmer, under which I was then best known. It did not suit me at present to put him into my confidence, so I cut him Harry, as I would an old pencil. The task was the less difficult, that I had to do with one of the most absent men that ever dreamed with his eyes open. I verily believe he might be persuaded that the whole transaction was a vision, and that he had never in reality seen me before. Your pious rebuke, therefore, about what I told him formerly concerning the lovers, is quite thrown away. After all, if what I said was not accurately true, as I certainly believe it was an exaggeration, it was all Saint Francis of Martigny's fault, I suppose. I am sure he had love and opportunity on his side.

"Here you have a postscript, Harry, longer than the letter, but it must conclude with the same burden —Come, and come quickly."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FRIGHT.

As shakes the bough of trembling leaf,
When sudden whirlwinds rise;
As stands aghast the warrior chief,
When his bass army flies.

* * * * * *

IT had been settled by all who took the matter into consideration, that the fidgety, fiery, old Nabob would

soon quarrel with his landlady, Mrs. Dods, and become impatient of his residence at St. Ronan's. A man so kind to himself, and so inquisitive about the affairs of others, could have, it was supposed, a limited sphere for gratification either of his tastes or of his curiosity, in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's: and many a time the precise day and hour of his departure were fixed by the idlers at the Spa. But still old Touchwood appeared amongst them when the weather permitted, with his nut-brown visage, his throat carefully wrapped up in an immense Indian kerchief, and his gold-headed cane, which he never failed to carry over his shoulder; his short, but stout limbs, and his active step, showing plainly that he bore it rather as a badge of dignity than a means of support. There he stood, answering shortly and gruffly to all questions proposed to him, and making his remarks aloud upon the company, with great indifference as to the offence which might be taken; and as soon as the ancient priestess had handed him his glass of the salutiferous water, turned on his heel with a brief good-morning, and either marched back to hide himself in the Manse, with his crony Mr. Cargill, or to engage in some hobby-horsical pursuit connected with his neighbours in the Aultoun.

The truth was, that the honest gentleman having, so far as Mrs. Dods would permit, put matters to rights within her residence, wisely abstained from pushing his innovations any farther, aware that it is not every stone which is capable of receiving the last degree of polish. He next set himself about putting Mr. Cargill's house into order; and without leave asked or given by that reverend gentleman, he actually accomplished as wonderful a reformation in the Manse, as could have been effected by a benevolent Brownie. The floors were sometimes swept—the carpets were sometimes shaken—the plates and dishes were cleaner—there was tea and sugar in the tea-chest, and a joint of meat at proper times was to be found in the larder. The elder maid-servant wore a good stuff gown—the younger snooded up her hair, and now went about the house a damsel so trig and neat, that some said she was too handsome for the service of a bachelor divine; and others, that they saw no business so old a fool as the Nabob had to be meddling with a lassie's busking. But for such evil bruits Mr. Touchwood cared not, even if he happened to hear of them, which was very doubtful. Add to all these changes, that the garden was weeded, and the glebe was regularly laboured.

The talisman by which all this desirable alteration was wrought, consisted partly in small presents, partly in constant attention. The liberality of the singular old gentleman gave him a perfect right to scold when he saw things wrong; the domestics, who had fallen into total sloth and indifference, began to exert themselves under Mr. Touchwood's new system of rewards and surveillance; and the minister, half unconscious of the cause, reaped the advantage of the exertions of his busy friend. Sometimes he lifted his head, when he heard workmen thumping and bouncing in the neighbourhood of his study, and demanded the meaning of the clatter which annoyed him; but on receiving for answer that it was by order of Mr. Touchwood, he resumed his labours, under the persuasion that all was well.

But even, the Augean task of putting the Manse in order, did not satisfy the gigantic activity of Mr. Touchwood. He aspired to universal dominion in the Aultoun of St. Ronan's; and, like most men of an ardent temper, he contrived, in a great measure, to possess himself of the authority which he longed after. Then was there war waged by him with all the petty, but perpetual nuisances, which infest a Scottish town of the old stamp—then was the hereditary dunghill, which had reeked before the window of the cottage for fourscore years, transported behind the house—then was the broken wheelbarrow, or unserviceable cart, removed out of the footpath—the old hat, or blue petticoat, taken from the window into which it had been stuffed, to "expel the winter's flaw," was consigned to the gutter, and its place supplied by good perspicuous glass. The means by which such reformation was effected, were the same as resorted to in the Manse—money and admonition. The latter given alone would have met little attention perhaps would have provoked opposition—but, softened and sweetened by a little present to assist the reform recommended, it sunk into the hearts of the hearers, and in general overcame their objections. Besides, an opinion of the Nabob's wealth was high among the villagers; and an idea prevailed amongst them, that, notwithstanding his keeping no servants or equipage, he was able to purchase, if he pleased, half the land in the country. It was not grand carriages and fine liveries that made heavy purses, they rather helped to lighten them; and they said, who pretended to know what they were talking about, that old Turnpenny, and Mr. Bindloose to boot, would tell down more money on Mr. Touchwood's mere word, than upon the joint bond of half the fine folk at the Well. Such an opinion smoothed every thing before the path of one, who showed himself neither averse to give nor to lend; and it by no means diminished the reputation of his wealth, that in transactions of business he was not carelessly negligent of his interest, but plainly showed he understood the value of what he was parting with. Few, therefore, cared to withstand the humours of a whimsical old gentleman, who had both the will and the means of obliging those disposed to comply with his fancies; and thus the singular stranger contrived, in the course of a brief space of days or weeks, to place the villagers more absolutely at his devotion, than they had been at the pleasure of any individual since their ancient lords had left the Aultoun. The power of the baron-bailie himself, though the office was vested in the person of old Meiklewham, was a subordinate jurisdiction, compared to the voluntary allegiance which the inhabitants paid to Mr. Touchwood.

There were, however, recusants, who declined the authority thus set up amongst them, and, with the characteristic obstinacy of their countrymen, refused to hearken to the words of the stranger, whether they were for good or for evil. These men's dunghills were not removed, nor the stumbling-blocks taken from the footpath, where it passed the front of their houses. And it befell, that while Mr. Touchwood was most eager in abating the nuisances of the village, he had very nearly experienced a frequent fate of great reformers—that of losing his life by means of one of those enormities which as yet had subsisted in spite of all his efforts.

The Nabob finding his time after dinner hang somewhat heavy on his hand, and the moon being tolerably bright, had, one harvest evening, sought his usual remedy for dispelling ennui by a walk to the Manse, where he was sure, that, if he could not succeed in engaging the minister himself in some disputation, he would at least find something in the establishment to animadvert upon and to restore to order.

Accordingly, he had taken the opportunity to lecture the younger of the minister's lasses upon the duty of wearing shoes and stockings; and, as his advice came fortified by a present of six pair of white cotton hose, and two pair of stout leathern shoes, it was received, not with respect only, but with gratitude, and the chuck under the chin that rounded up the oration, while she opened the outer door for his honour, was acknowledged with a blush and a giggle. Nay, so far did Grizzy carry her sense of Mr. Touchwood's kindness, that, observing the moon was behind a cloud, she very carefully offered to escort him to the Cleikum Inn with a lantern, in case he should come to some harm by the gate. This the traveller's independent spirit scorned to listen to; and, having briefly assured her that he had walked the streets of Paris and of Madrid whole nights without such an accommodation, he stoutly strode off on his return to his lodgings.

An accident, however, befell him, which, unless the police of Madrid and Paris be belied, might have happened in either of those two splendid capitals, as well as in the miserable Aultoun of St. Ronan's. Before the door of Saunders Jaup, a feuar of some importance, "who held his land free, and carcina a bodle for any one," yawned that odoriferous gulf,

ycleped, in Scottish phrase, the jaw-hole; in other words, an uncovered common sewer. The local situation of this receptacle of filth was well known to Mr. Touchwood; for Saunders Jaup was at the very head of those who held out for the practices of their fathers, and still maintained those ancient and unsavoury customs which our traveller had in so many instances succeeded in abating. Guided, therefore, by his nose, the Nabob made a considerable circuit to avoid the displeasure and danger of passing this filthy puddle at the nearest, and by that means fell upon Scylla as he sought to avoid Charybdis. In plain language, he approached so near the bank of a little rivulet, which in that place passed betwixt the footpath and the horseroad, that he lost his footing, and fell into the channel of the streamlet from a height of three or four feet. It was thought that the noise of his fall, or at least his call for assistance, must have been heard in the house of Saunders Jaup; but that honest person was, according to his own account, at that time engaged in the exercise of the evening; an excuse which passed current, although Saunders was privately heard to allege, that the town would have been the quieter, "if the auld, meddling busybody had bidden still in the burn for gude and a'."

But Fortune had provided better for poor Touchwood, whose foibles, as they arose out of the most excellent motives, would have ill deserved so severe a fate. A passenger, who heard him shout for help, ventured cautiously to the side of the bank, down which he had fallen; and, after ascertaining the nature of the ground as carefully as the darkness permitted, was at length, and not without some effort, enabled to assist him out of the channel of the rivulet.

"Are you hurt materially?" said this good Samaritan to the object of his care.

"No—no—d—n it—no," said Touchwood, extremely angry at his disaster, and the cause of it. "Do you think I, who have been at the summit of Mount Athos, where the precipice sinks a thousand feet on the sea, care a farthing about such a fall as this is?"

But, as he spoke, he reeled, and his kind assistant caught him by the arm to prevent his falling.

"I fear you are more hurt than you suppose, sir," said the stranger: "permit me to go home along with you."

"With all my heart," said Touchwood; "for though it is impossible I can need help in such a foolish matter, yet I am equally obliged to you, friend; and if the Cleikum Inn be not out of your road, I will take your arm so far, and thank you to the boot."

"It is much at your service, sir," said the stranger; "indeed, I was thinking to lodge there for the night."

"I am glad to hear it," resumed Touchwood; "you shall be my guest, and I will make them look after you in proper fashion—You seem to be a very civil sort of fellow, and I do not find your arm inconvenient—it is the rheumatism makes me walk so ill—the pest of all that have been in hot climates when they settle among these d—d fogs."

"Lean as hard and walk as slow as you will, sir," said the benevolent assistant—"this is a rough street."

"Yes, sir—and why is it rough?" answered Touchwood. "Why, because the old pig-headed fool, Saunders Jaup, will not allow it to be made smooth. There he sits, sir, and obstructs all rational improvement; and, if a man would not fall into his infernal putrid gutter, and so become an abomination to himself and odious to others, for his whole life to come, he runs the risk of breaking his neck, as I have done to-night."

"I am afraid, sir," said his companion, "you have fallen on the most dangerous side.—You remember Swift's proverb, 'The more dirt, the less hurt.'"

"But why should there be either dirt or hurt in a well-regulated place?" answered Touchwood—"Why should not men be able to go about their affairs at night, in such a hamlet as this, without either endangering necks or noses?—Our Scottish magistrates are worth nothing, sir—nothing at all. Oh for a Turkish Cadi, now, to trounce *the scoundrel—or the Mayor of Calcutta to bring him into his court—or* were it *but an English Justice of the Peace that* is newly included in the commission, they would abate the villain's nuisance with a vengeance on him!—But here we are—this is the Cleikum Inn.—Hallo—hillo—house!—Eppie Anderson!—Beenie Chambermaid!—boy Boots!—Mrs. Dods!—are you all of you asleep and dead?—Here have I been half murdered, and you let me stand bawling at the door!"

Eppie Anderson came with a light, and so did Beenie Chambermaid with another; but no sooner did they look upon the pair who stood in the porch under the huge sign that swung to and fro with heavy creaking, than Beenie screamed, flung away her candle, although a four in the pound, and in a newly japanned candlestick, and fled one way, while Eppie Anderson, echoing the yell, brandished her light round her head like a Bacchante flourishing her torch, and ran off in another direction.

"Ay—I must be a bloody spectacle," said Mr. Touchwood, letting himself fall heavily upon his assistant's shoulder, and wiping his face, which trickled with wet—"I did not think I had been so seriously hurt; but I find my weakness now—I must have lost much blood."

"I hope you are still mistaken," said the stranger; "but here lies the way to the kitchen—we shall find light there, since no one chooses to bring it to us."

He assisted the old gentleman into the kitchen, where a lamp, as well as a bright fire, was burning by the light of which he could easily discern that the supposed blood was only water of the rivulet, and, indeed, none of the cleanest, although much more so than the sufferer would have found it a little lower, where the stream is joined by the superfluities of Saunders Jaup's palladium. Relieved by his new friend's repeated assurances that such was the case, the Senior began to bustle up a little, and his companion, desirous to render him every assistance, went to the door of the kitchen to call for a basin and water. Just as he was about to open the door, the voice of Mrs. Dods was heard as she descended the stairs, in a tone of indignation by no means unusual to her, yet mingled at the same time with a few notes that sounded like unto the quaverings of consternation.

"Idle limmers—silly sluts—I'll warrant nane o' ye will ever see ony thing waur than yoursell, ye silly tawpies—Ghaist, indeed!—I'll warrant it's some idle dub-skelper frae the Waal, coming after some o' yoursells on nae honest errand!—Ghaist, indeed!—Hand up the candle, John Ostler—I'se warrant it a twa-handed ghaist, and the door left on the sneck. There's somebody in the kitchen—gang forward wi' the lantern, John Ostler."

At this critical moment the stranger opened the door of the kitchen, and beheld the Dame advancing at the head of her household troops. The ostler and humpbacked postilion, one bearing a stable-lantern and a hay-fork, the other a rushlight and a broom, constituted the advanced guard; Mrs. Dods herself formed the centre, talking loud and brandishing a pair of tongs; while the two maids, like troops not to be much trusted after their recent defeat, followed, cowering in the rear. But notwithstanding this admirable disposition, no sooner had the stranger shown his face, and pronounced the words, "Mrs. Dods!" than a panic seized the whole array. The advanced guard recoiled in consternation, the ostler upsetting Mrs. Dods in the confusion of his retreat; while she, grappling with him in her terror, secured him by the ears and hair, and they joined their cries together in hideous chorus. The two maidens resumed their former flight, and took refuge in the darksome den, entitled their bedroom, while the humpbacked postilion fled like the wind into the stable, and, with professional instinct, began, in the extremity of his terror, to saddle a horse.

Mean while, the guest whose appearance had caused this combustion, plucked the roaring ostler from above Mrs. Dods, and pushing him away with a hearty slap on the shoulder, proceeded to raise and encourage the fallen landlady, inquiring, at the same time, "What, in the devil's name, was the cause of all this senseless confusion?"

"And what is the reason, in Heaven's name," answered the matron, keeping her eyes firmly shut,

and still shrewish in her expostulation, though in the very extremity of terror, "what is the reason that you should come and frighten a decent house, where you met naething, when ye was in the body, but the height of civility?"

"And why should I frighten you, Mrs. Dods? or, in one word, what is the meaning of all this nonsensical terror?"

"Are not you," said Mrs. Dods, opening her eyes a little as she spoke, "the ghaist of Francis Tirl?"

"I am Francis Tyrrel, unquestionably, my old friend."

"I kend it! I kend it!" answered the honest woman, relapsing into her agony; "and I think ye might be ashamed of yourself, that are a ghaist, and have nae better to do than to frighten a puir auld alewife."

"On my word, I am no ghost, but a living man," answered Tyrrel.

"Were ye no murdered than?" demanded Mrs. Dods, still in an uncertain voice, and only partially opening her eyes—"Are ye very sure ye werena murdered?"

"Why, not that ever I heard of, certainly, dame," replied Tyrrel.

"But *I* shall be murdered presently," said old Touchwood from the kitchen, where he had hitherto remained a mute auditor of this extraordinary scene—"*I* shall be murdered, unless you fetch me some water without delay."

"Coming, sir, coming," answered Dame Dods, her professional reply being as familiar to her as that of poor Francis's "Anon, anon, sir." "As I live by honest reckonings," said she, fully collecting herself, and giving a glance of more composed temper at Tyrrel, "I believe it *is* yourself, Maister Frank, in blood and body after a'—and see if I dinna gie a proper sorting to yon twa silly jauds that gard me mak a bogle of you, and a fule of myself—Ghaists! my certie, I sall ghaist them—If they had their heads as muckle on their wark as on their daffing, they wad play nae sic pliskies—it's the wanton steed that scaurs at the windle-strae—Ghaists! wha e'er heard of ghaists in an honest house? Naebody need fear bogles that has a conscience void of offence.—But I am blithe that MacTurk hasna murdered ye when a' is done, Maister Francie."

"Come this way, Mother Dods, if you would not have me do a mischief!" exclaimed Touchwood, grasping a plate which stood on the dresser, as if he were about to heave it at the landlady, by way of recalling her attention.

"For the love of Heaven, dinna break it!" exclaimed the alarmed landlady, knowing that Touchwood's effervescence of impatience sometimes expended itself at the expense of her crockery, though it was afterwards liberally atoned for. "Lord, sir, are ye out of your wits!—it breaks a set ye ken—God-sake, put doun the cheeny plate, and try your hand on the delf-ware!—it will just make as good a jingle—But, Lord haud a grip o' us! now I look at ye, what can has come ower ye, and what sort of a plight are ye in!—Wait till I fetch water and a towel."

In fact, the miserable guise of her new lodger now overcame the dame's curiosity to inquire after the fate of her earlier acquaintance, and she gave her instant and exclusive attention to Mr. Touchwood, with many exclamations, while aiding him to perform the task of ablution and abstersion. Her two fugitive handmaidens had by this time returned to the kitchen, and endeavoured to suppress a smuggled laugh at the recollection of their mistress's panic, by acting very officiously in Mr. Touchwood's service. By dint of washing and drying, the token of the sable stains was at length removed, and the veteran became, with some difficulty, satisfied that he had been more dirtied and frightened than hurt.

Tyrrel, in the mean time, stood looking on with wonder, imagining that he beheld in the features which emerged from a mask of mud, the countenance of an old friend. After the operation was ended, he could not help addressing himself to Mr. Touchwood, to demand whether he had not the pleasure to see a friend, to whom he had been obliged when at Smyrna, for some kindness respecting his money matters?

"Not worth speaking of—not worth speaking of," said Touchwood, hastily. "Glad to see you though—glad to see you.—Yes, here I am; you will find me the same good-natured old fool that I was at Smyrna—never look how I am to get in money again—always laying it out. Never mind—it was written in my forehead, as the Turk says.—I will go up now and change my dress—you will sup with me when I come back—Mrs. Dods will toss us up something—a brandered fowl will be best, Mrs. Dods, with some mushrooms, and get us a jug of mulled wine—plottie, as you call it—to put the recollection of the old Presbyterian's common sewer out of my head."

So saying, up stairs marched the traveller to his own apartment, while Tyrrel, seizing upon a candle was about to do the same.

"Mr. Touchwood is in the blue room, Mrs. Dods; I suppose I may take possession of the yellow one?"

"Suppose naething about the matter, Maister Francis Tirl, till ye tell me downright where ye have been a' this time, and whether ye hae been murdered or no?"

"I think you may be pretty well satisfied of that, Mrs. Dods?"

"Troth! and so I am in a sense; and yet it gars me grue to look upon ye, sae mony days and weeks it has been since I thought ye were rotten in the moulds. And now to see ye standing before me hale and feir, and crying for a bedroom like ither folk!"

"One would almost suppose, my good friend," said Tyrrel, "that you were sorry at my having come alive again."

"It's no for that," replied Mrs. Dods, who was peculiarly ingenious in the mode of framing and stating what she conceived to be her grievances; "but is it no a queer thing for a decent man like yourself, Maister Tirl, to be leaving your lodgings without a word spoken, and me put to a' these charges in seeking for your dead body, and very near taking my business out of honest Maister Bindloose's hands, because he kend the cantrips of the like of you better than I did?—And than they hae putten up an advertisement down at the Waal yonder, wi' a' their names at it, setting ye forth, Maister Francie, as ane of the greatest black-guards unhanged; and wha, div ye think, is to keep ye in a creditable house, if that's the character ye get?"

"You may leave that to me, Mrs. Dods—I assure you that matter shall be put to rights to your satisfaction; and I think, so long as we have known each other, you may take my word that I am not undeserving the shelter of your roof for a single night, (I shall ask it no longer,) until my character is sufficiently cleared. It was for that purpose chiefly I came back again."

"Came back again!" said Mrs. Dods.—"I profess ye made me start, Maister Tirl, and you looking sae pale, too.—But I think," she added, straining after a joke, "if ye were a ghaist, seeing we are such auld acquaintance, ye wadna wish to spoil my custom, but would just walk decently up and down the auld castle wa's, or maybe down at the kirk yonder—there have been awfu' things done in that kirk and kirkyard—I whiles dinna like to look that way Maister Francie."

"I am much of your mind, mistress," said Tyrrel, with a sigh; "and, indeed, I do in one sense resemble the apparitions you talk of; for, like them, and to as little purpose, I stalk about scenes where my happiness departed.—But I speak riddles to you, Mrs. Dods—the plain truth is, that I met with an accident on the day I last left your house, the effects of which detained me at some distance from St. Ronan's till this very day."

"Hegh, sirs, and ye were sparing of your trouble, that wadna write a bit line, or send a bit message!—Ye might hae thought folk wad hae been vexed eneugh about ye, forby undertaking journeys, and hiring folk to seek for your dead body."

"I shall willingly pay all reasonable charges which my disappearance may have occasioned," answered her guest; "and I assure you, once for all, that my remaining for some time quiet at Merchthorn, arose partly from illness, and partly from business of a very pressing and particular nature."

"At Marchthorn!" exclaimed Dame Dods, "heard ever man the like o' that!—And where did ye put up in Marchthorn, an ane may mak' bauld to speer?"

"At the Black Bull," replied Tyrrel.

"Ay, that's auld Tam Lowrie's—a very decent man, Thamas—and a douce creditable house—nane of your flisk-ma-hoys—I am glad ye made choice of sic gude quarters, neighbour; for I am beginning to think ye are but a queer ane—ye look as if butter wadna melt in your mouth, but I sall warrant cheese no choke ye.—But I'll thank ye to gang your ways into the parlour, for I am no like to get muckle mair out o' ye, it's like; and ye are standing here just in the gate, when we hae the supper to dish."

Tyrrel, glad to be released from the examination to which his landlady's curiosity had without ceremony subjected him, walked into the parlour, where he was presently joined by Mr. Touchwood, newly attired, and in high spirits.

"Here comes our supper!" he exclaimed.—"Sit ye down, and let us see what Mrs. Dods has done for us.—I profess, mistress, your plottie is excellent, ever since I taught you to mix the spices in the right proportion."

"I am glad the plottie pleases ye, sir—but I think I kend gay weel how to make it before I saw your honour—Maister Tirl can tell that, for mony a browst of it I hae brewed lang syne for him and the callant Valentine Bulmer."

This ill-timed observation extorted a groan from Tyrrel; but the traveller, running on with his own recollections, did not appear to notice his emotion.

"You are a conceited old woman," said Mr. Touchwood; "how the devil should any one know how to mix spices so well as he who has been where they grow?—I have seen the sun ripening nutmegs and cloves, and here, it can hardly fill a peascod, by Jupiter. Ah, Tyrrel, the merry nights we have had at Smyrna!—Gad, I think the gammon and the good wine taste all the better in a land where folks hold them to be sinful indulgences—Gad, I believe many a good Moslem is of the same opinion—that same prohibition of their prophet's gives a flavour to the ham, and a relish to the Cyprus.—Do you remember old Cogia Hassein, with his green turban?—I once played him a trick, and put a pint of brandy into his sherbet. Egad, the old fellow took care never to discover the cheat until he had got to the bottom of the flagon, and then he strokes his long white beard, and says, 'Ullah Kerim,'—that is, 'Heaven is merciful,' Mrs. Dods, Mr. Tyrrel knows the meaning of it.—Ullah Kerim, says he, after he had drunk about a gallon of brandy-punch!—Ullah Kerim, says the hypocritical old rogue, as if he had done the first thing in the world!"

"And what for no? What for shouldna the honest man say a blessing after his drap punch?" demanded Mrs. Dods; "it was better, I ween, than blasting, and blawing, and swearing, as if folks shouldna be thankful for the creature comforts."

"Well said, old Dame Dods," said the traveller; "that is a right hostess's maxim, and worthy of Mrs. Quickly herself. Here is to thee, and I pray ye to pledge me before you leave the room."

"Troth, I'll pledge naebody the night, Maister Touchwood; for, what wi' the upcast and terror that I got a wee while syne, and what wi' the bit taste that I behoved to take of the plottie while I was making it, my head is sair eneugh distressed the night already.—Maister Tirl, the yellow room is ready for ye when ye like; and, gentlemen, as the morn is the Sabbath, I canna be keeping the servant queans out of their beds to wait on ye ony langer, for they will mak it an excuse for lying till aught o'clock on the Lord's day. So, when your plottie is done, I'll be muckle obliged to ye to light the bedroom candles, and put out the double moulds, and e'en show yoursells to your beds; for douce folks, sic as the like of you, should set an example by ordinary.—And so, gude-night to ye baith."

"By my faith," said Touchwood, as she withdrew, 'our dame turns as obstinate as a Pacha with three tails!—We *have her gracious permission to finish our mug however; so here is to your health* once more, Mr. Tyrrel, wishing you a hearty welcome to your own country."

"I thank you, Mr. Touchwood," answered Tyrrel; "and I return you the same good wishes, with, as I sincerely hope, a much greater chance of their being realized.—You relieved me, sir, at a time when the villany of an agent, prompted, as I have reason to think, by an active and powerful enemy, occasioned my being, for a time, pressed for funds.—I made remittances to the *Ragion* you dealt with, to acquit myself at least of the pecuniary part of my obligation; but the bills were returned, because, it was stated, you had left Smyrna."

"Very true—very true—left Smyrna, and here I am in Scotland—as for the bills, we will speak of them another time—something due for picking me out of the gutter."

"I shall make no deduction on that account," said Tyrrel, smiling, though in no jocose mood; and I beg you not to mistake me. The circumstances of embarrassment under which you found me at Smyrna, were merely temporary—I am most able and willing to pay my debt; and, let me add, I am most desirous to do so."

"Another time—another time," said Mr. Touchwood—"time enough before us, Mr. Tyrrel—besides, at Smyrna, you talked of a lawsuit—law is a lickpenny, Mr. Tyrrel—no counsellor like the pound in purse."

"For my lawsuit," said Tyrrel, "I am fully provided."

"But have you good advice?—Have you good advice?" said Touchwood; "answer me that."

"I have advised with my lawyers," answered Tyrrel, internally vexed to find that his friend was much disposed to make his generosity upon the former occasion a pretext for prying farther into his affairs now than he thought polite or convenient.

"With your counsel learned in the law—eh, my dear boy? But the advice you should take is of some travelled friend, well acquainted with mankind and the world—some one that has lived double your years, and is maybe looking out for some bare young fellow that he may do a little good to—one that might be willing to help you farther than I can pretend to guess—for, as to your lawyer, you get just your guinea's worth from him—not even so much as the baker's bargain, thirteen to the dozen."

"I think I should not trouble myself to go far in search of a friend such as you describe," said Tyrrel, who could not affect to misunderstand the senior's drift, "when I was near Mr. Peregrine Touchwood; but the truth is, my affairs are at present so much complicated with those of others, whose secrets I have no right to communicate, that I cannot have the advantage of consulting you, or any other friend. It is possible I may be soon obliged to lay aside this reserve, and vindicate myself before the whole public, I will not fail, when that time shall arrive, to take an early opportunity of confidential communication with you."

"That is right—confidential is the word—No person ever made a confidant of me who repented it—Think what the Pacha might have made of it, had he taken my advice, and cut through the Isthmus of Suez.—Turk and Christian, men of all tongues and countries, used to consult old Touchwood, from the building of a mosque down to the settling of an *agio*.—But come—Good-night—good-night."

So saying, he took up his bedroom light, and extinguished one of those which stood on the table, nodded to Tyrrel to discharge his share of the duty imposed by Mrs. Dods with the same punctuality, and they withdrew to their several apartments, entertaining very different sentiments of each other.

"A troublesome, inquisitive old gentleman," said Tyrrel to himself; "I remember him narrowly escaping the bastinado at Smyrna, for thrusting his advice on the Turkish cadi—and then I lie under a considerable obligation to him, giving him a sort of right to annoy me—Well, I must parry his impertinence as I can."

"A shy cock this Frank Tyrrel," thought the traveller; "a very complete dodger!—But no matter—I

shall wind him, were he to double like a fox—I am resolved to make his matters my own, and if *I* cannot carry him through, I know not who can."

Having formed this philanthropic resolution, Mr. Touchwood threw himself into bed, which luckily declined exactly at the right angle, and, full of self-complacency, consigned himself to slumber.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MEDIATION.

> ——— So begone!
> We will not now be troubled with reply;
> We offer fair, take it advisedly.
>
> *King Henry IV., Part I.*

It had been the purpose of Tyrrel, by rising and breakfasting early, to avoid again meeting Mr. Touchwood, having upon his hands a matter in which that officious gentleman's interference was likely to prove troublesome. His character, he was aware, had been assailed at the Spa in the most public manner, and in the most public manner he was resolved to demand redress, conscious that whatever other important concerns had brought him to Scotland, must necessarily be postponed to the vindication of his honour. He was determined, for this purpose, to go down to the rooms when the company was assembled at the breakfast hour, and had just taken his hat to set out, when he was interrupted by Mrs. Dods, who, announcing "a gentleman that was speering for him," ushered into the chamber a very fashionable young man in a military surtout, covered with silk lace and fur, and wearing a foraging-cap; a dress now too familiar to be distinguished, but which at that time was used only by geniuses of a superior order. The stranger was neither handsome nor plain, but had in his appearance a good deal of pretension, and the cool easy superiority which belongs to high breeding. On his part, he surveyed Tyrrel; and, as his appearance differed, perhaps, from that for which the exterior of the Cleikum Inn had prepared him, he abated something of the air with which he had entered the room, and politely announced himself as Captain Jekyl, of the —— Guards, (presenting at the same time, his ticket.)

"He presumed he spoke to Mr. Martigny?"

"To Mr. Francis Tyrrel, sir," replied Tyrrel, drawing himself up—"Martigny was my mother's name—I have never borne it."

"I am not here for the purpose of disputing that point, Mr. Tyrrel, though I am not entitled to admit what my principal's information leads him to doubt."

"Your principal, I presume, is Sir Bingo Binks?" said Tyrrel. "I have not forgotten that there is an unfortunate affair between us."

"I have not the honour to know Sir Bingo Binks," said Captain Jekyl. "I come on the part of the Earl of Etherington."

Tyrrel stood silent for a moment, and then said, "I am at a loss to know what the gentleman who calls himself Earl of Etherington can have to say to me, through the medium of such a messenger as yourself, Captain Jekyl. I should have supposed that, considering our unhappy relationship, and the terms on which we stand towards each other, the lawyers were the fittest negotiators between us."

"Sir," said Captain Jekyl, "you are misunderstanding my errand. I am come on no message of hostile import from Lord Etherington—I am aware of the connexion betwixt you, which would render such an office altogether contradictory to common sense and the laws of nature; and I assure you, I would lay down my life rather than be concerned in an affair so unnatural. I would act, if possible, as a mediator betwixt you."

They had hitherto remained standing. Mr. Tyrrel now offered his guest a seat; and, having assumed one himself, he broke the awkward pause which ensued by observing, "I should be happy, after experiencing such a long course of injustice and persecution from your friend, to learn, even at *this late* period, Captain Jekyl, any thing which *can make me think better, either of him,* or of his *purpose towards me and towards others.*"

"Mr. Tyrrel," said Captain Jekyl, "you must allow me to speak with candour. There is too great a stake betwixt your brother and you to permit you to be friends; but I do not see it is necessary that you should therefore be mortal enemies."

"I am not my brother's enemy, Captain Jekyl," said Tyrrel—"I have never been so—His friend I cannot be, and he knows but too well the insurmountable barrier which his own conduct has placed between us."

"I am aware," said Captain Jekyl, slowly and expressively, "generally, at least, of the particulars of your unfortunate disagreement."

"If so," said Tyrrel, colouring, "you must be also aware with what extreme pain I feel myself compelled to enter on such a subject with a total stranger—a stranger, too, the friend and confidant of one who —— But I will not hurt your feelings Captain Jekyl, but rather endeavour to suppress my own. In one word, I beg to be favoured with the import of your communication, as I am obliged to go down to the Spa this morning, in order to put to rights some matters there which concern me nearly."

"If you mean the cause of your absence from an appointment with Sir Bingo Binks," said Captain Jekyl, "the matter has been already completely explained. I pulled down the offensive placard with my own hand, and rendered myself responsible for your honour to any one who should presume to hold it in future doubt."

"Sir," said Tyrrel, very much surprised, "I am obliged to you for your intention, the more so as I am ignorant how I have merited such interference. It is not, however, quite satisfactory to me, because I am accustomed to be the guardian of my own honour."

"An easy task, I presume in all cases, Mr. Tyrrel, answered Jekyl, "but peculiarly so in the present, when you will find no one so hardy as to assail it.—My interference, indeed, would have been unjustifiably officious, had I not been at the moment undertaking a commission implying confidential intercourse with you. For the sake of my own character, it became necessary to establish yours. I know the truth of the whole affair from my friend, the Earl of Etherington, who ought to thank Heaven so long as he lives, that saved him on that occasion from the commission of a very great crime."

"Your friend, sir, has had, in the course of his life, much to thank Heaven for, but more for which to ask God's forgiveness."

"I am no divine, sir," replied Captain Jekyl, with spirit; "but I have been told that the same may be said of most men alive."

"I, at least, cannot dispute it," said Tyrrel; "but, to proceed.—Have you found yourself at liberty, Captain Jekyl, to deliver to the public the whole particulars of a rencontre so singular as that which took place between your friend and me?"

"I have not, sir," said Jekyl—"I judged it a matter of great delicacy, and which each of you had the like interest to preserve secret."

"May I beg to know, then," said Tyrrel, "how it was possible for you to vindicate my absence from Sir Bingo's rendezvous otherwise?"

"It was only necessary, sir, to pledge my word as a gentleman and a man of honour, characters in which I am pretty well known to the world, that, to my certain personal knowledge, you were hurt in an affair with a friend of mine, the further particulars of which prudence required should be sunk into oblivion. I think no one will venture to dispute my word, or to require more than my assurance.—If there should be any one very hard of faith on the occasion, I shall find a way to satisfy him. In the mean while, your outlawry has been rescinded in the most honourable manner; and Sir Bingo, in consideration of his share in giving rise to reports so injurious to you, is desirous to drop all further proceedings in his original quarrel, and hopes the whole matter will be forgot and forgiven on all sides."

"Upon my word Captain Jekyl," answered Tyr-

el, "you lay me under the necessity of acknowledg- ng obligation to you. You have cut a knot which should have found it very difficult to unloose; for I rankly confess, that, while I was determined not to emain under the stigma put upon me, I should have ad great difficulty in clearing myself, without men- ioning circumstances, which, were it only for the ake of my father's memory, should be buried in ternal oblivion. I hope your friend feels no con- nued inconvenience from his hurt?"

"His lordship is nearly quite recovered," said ekyl.

"And I trust he did me the justice to own, that, o far as my will was concerned, I am totally guilt- ss of the purpose of hurting him?"

"He does you full justice in that and every thing lse," replied Jekyl; "regrets the impetuosity of his wn temper, and is determined to be on his guard gainst it in future."

"That," said Tyrrel, "is so far well; and now, ay I ask once more, what communication you have) make to me on the part of your friend?—Were from any one but him, whom I have found so uni- rmly false and treacherous, your own fairness and ndour would induce me to hope that this unnatural urrel might be in some sort ended by your medi- tion."

"I then proceed, sir, under more favourable aus- ices than I expected," said Captain Jekyl, "to enter a my commission.—You are about to commence a awsuit, Mr. Tyrrel, if fame does not wrong you, for ie purpose of depriving your brother of his estate and tle."

"The case is not fairly stated, Captain Jekyl," re- lied Tyrrel; "I commence a lawsuit, when I do com- ence it, for the sake of ascertaining my own just ghts."

"It comes to the same thing eventually," said the ediator; "I am not called upon, to decide upon the stice of your claims, but they are, you will allow, rly started. The late Countess of Etherington id in possession—open and undoubted possession— f her rank in society."

"If she had no real claim to it, sir," replied Tyrrel, she had more than justice who enjoyed it so long; nd the injured lady whose claims were postponed, ad just so much less.—But this is no point for you nd me to discuss between us—it must be tried else- here."

"Proofs, sir, of the strongest kind, will be necessary) overthrow a right so well established in public inion as that of the present possessor of the title of therington."

Tyrrel took a paper from his pocketbook, and, hand- g it to Captain Jekyl, only answered, "I have no oughts of asking you to give up the cause of your end; but methinks the documents of which I give u a list, may shake your opinion of it."

Captain Jekyl read, muttering to himself, "'*Cer- ficate of marriage, by the Rev. Zadock Kemp, chap- in to the British Embassy at Paris, between Marie Bellroche, Comptesse de Martigny, and the Right onourable John Lord Oakendale—Letters between im Earl of Etherington and his lady, under the le of Madame de Martigny—Certificate of baptism Declaration of the Earl of Etherington on his ath-bed.*'—All this is very well—but may I ask you, r. Tyrrel, if it is really your purpose to go to extremity ith your brother?"

"He has forgot that he is one—he has lifted his nd against my life."

"You have shed his blood—twice shed it," said kyl; "the world will not ask which brother gave e offence, but which received, which inflicted, the verest wound."

"Your friend has inflicted one on me, sir," said rrel, "that will bleed while I have the power of emory."

"I understand you, sir," said Captain Jekyl; "you ean the affair of Miss Mowbray?"

"Spare me on that subject, sir!" said Tyrrel. Hitherto *I have disputed my most important rights rights which involved my rank in society, my for- ne, the honour of my mother—with something like* composure; but do not say more on the topic you have touched upon, unless you would have before you a madman!—Is it possible for you, sir, to have heard even the outline of this story, and to imagine that I can ever reflect on the coldblooded and most inhu- man stratagem, which this friend of yours prepared for two unfortunates, without"——He started up, and walked impetuously to and fro. "Since the Fiend himself interrupted the happiness of perfect innocence, there was never such an act of treachery—never such schemes of happiness destroyed—never such inevita- ble misery prepared for two wretches who had the idiocy to repose perfect confidence in him!—Had there been passion in his conduct, it had been the act of a man—a wicked man, indeed, but still a human crea- ture, acting under the influence of human feelings— but his was the deed of a calm, cold, calculating demon, actuated by the basest and most sordid motives of self-interest, joined, as I firmly believe, to an early and inveterate hatred of one whose claims he considered as at variance with his own."

"I am sorry to see you in such a temper," said Captain Jekyl, calmly; "Lord Etherington, I trust, acted on very different motives than those you impute to him; and if you will but listen to me, perhaps something may be struck out which may accommo- date these unhappy disputes."

"Sir," said Tyrrel, sitting down again, "I will listen to you with calmness, as I would remain calm under the probe of a surgeon tending a festered wound. But when you touch me to the quick, when you prick the very nerve, you cannot expect me to endure without wincing."

"I will endeavour, then, to be as brief in the opera- tion as I can," replied Captain Jekyl, who possessed the advantage of the most admirable composure dur- ing the whole conference. "I conclude, Mr. Tyrrel, that the pence, happiness, and honour of Miss Mow- bray, are dear to you?"

"Who dare impeach her honour!" said Tyrrel, fiercely; then checking himself, added, in a more moderate tone, but one of deep feeling, "They are dear to me, sir, as my eyesight."

"My friend holds them in equal regard," said the Captain; "and has come to the resolution of doing her the most ample justice."

"He can do her justice no otherwise, than by ceas- ing to haunt this neighbourhood, to think, to speak, even to dream of her."

"Lord Etherington thinks otherwise," said Captain Jekyl; "he believes that if Miss Mowbray has sus- tained any wrong at his hands, which, of course, I am not called upon to admit, it will be best repaired by the offer to share with her his title, his rank, and his fortune."

"His title, rank, and fortune, sir, are as much a falsehood as he is himself," said Tyrrel, with vio- lence—"Marry Clara Mowbray? never!"

"My friend's fortune, you will observe," replied Jekyl, "does not rest entirely upon the event of the lawsuit with which you, Mr. Tyrrel, now threaten him.—Deprive him, if you can, of the Oakendale estate, he has still a large patrimony by his mother; and besides as to his marriage with Clara Mowbray, he conceives, that unless it should be the lady's wish to have the ceremony repeated, to which he is most desirous to defer his own opinion, they have only to declare that it has already passed between them."

"A trick, sir!" said Tyrrel, "a vile infamous trick! of which the lowest wretch in Newgate would be ashamed—the imposition of one person for another."

"Of that, Mr. Tyrrel, I have seen no evidence whatever. The clergyman's certificate is clear— Francis Tyrrel is united to Clara Mowbray in the holy bands of wedlock—such is the tenor—there is a copy—nay, stop one instant, if you please, sir. You say there was an imposition in the case—I have no doubt but you speak what you believe, and what Miss Mowbray told you. She was surprised—forced in some measure from the husband she had just married —ashamed to meet her former lover, to whom, doubt- less, she had made many a vow of love, and never a true one—what wonder that, unsupported by her bride- groom, she should have changed her tone, and thrown

all the blame of her own inconstancy on the absent swain?—A woman, at a pinch so critical, will make the most improbable excuse, rather than be found guilty on her own confession."

"There must be no jesting in this case," said Tyrrel, his cheek becoming pale, and his voice altered with passion.

"I am quite serious, sir," replied Jekyl; "and there is no law court in Britain that would take the lady's word—all she has to offer, and that in her own cause—against a whole body of evidence, direct and circumstantial, showing that she was by her own free consent married to the gentleman who now claims her hand.—Forgive me, sir—I see you are much agitated—I do not mean to dispute your right of believing what you think is most credible—I only use the freedom of pointing out to you the impression which the evidence is likely to make on the minds of indifferent persons."

"Your friend," answered Tyrrel, affecting a composure, which, however, he was far from possessing, "may think by such arguments to screen his villany; but it cannot avail him—the truth is known to Heaven—it is known to me—and there is, besides, one indifferent witness upon earth, who can testify that the most abominable imposition was practised on Miss Mowbray."

"You mean her cousin,—Hannah Irwin, I think, is her name," answered Jekyl; "you see I am fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. But where is Hannah Irwin to be found?"

"She will appear, doubtless, in Heaven's good time, and to the confusion of him who now imagines the only witness of his treachery—the only one who could tell the truth of this complicated mystery—either no longer lives, or, at least, cannot be brought forward against him, to the ruin of his schemes. Yes, sir, that slight observation of yours has more than explained to me why your friend, or, to call him by his true name, Mr. Valentine Bulmer, has not commenced his machinations sooner, and also why he has commenced them now. He thinks himself certain that Hannah Irwin is not now in Britain, or to be produced in a court of justice—he may find himself mistaken."

"My friend seems perfectly confident of the issue of his cause," answered Jekyl; "but for the lady's sake, he is most unwilling to prosecute a suit which must be attended with so many circumstances of painful exposure."

"Exposure, indeed!" answered Tyrrel; "thanks to the traitor who laid a mine so fearful, and who now affects to be reluctant to fire it.—Oh! how I am bound to curse that affinity that restrains my hands! I would be content to be the meanest and vilest of society, for one hour of vengeance on this unexampled hypocrite!—One thing is certain, sir—your friend will have no living victim. His persecution will kill Clara Mowbray, and fill up the cup of his crimes, with the murder of one of the sweetest——I shall grow a woman, if I say more on the subject!"

"My friend," said Jekyl, "since you like best to have him so defined, is as desirous as you can be to spare the lady's feelings; and with that view, not reverting to former passages, he has laid before her brother a proposal of alliance, with which Mr. Mowbray is highly pleased."

"Ha!" said Tyrrel, starting—"And the lady?"—

"And the lady so far proved favourable, as to consent that Lord Etherington shall visit Shaws-Castle."

"Her consent must have been extorted!" exclaimed Tyrrel.

"It was given voluntarily," said Jekyl, "as I am led to understand; unless, perhaps, in so far as the desire to veil these very unpleasing transactions may have operated, I think naturally enough, to induce her to sink them in eternal secrecy, by accepting Lord Etherington's hand.—I see, sir, I give you pain, and am sorry for it.—I have no title to call upon you for any exertion of generosity; but, should such be Miss Mowbray's sentiments, is it too much to expect of you, that you will not compromise the lady's honour by insisting upon former claims, and opening up disagreeable transactions so long past?"

"Captain Jekyl," said Tyrrel, solemnly, "I have no claims. Whatever I might have had, were cancelled by the act of treachery through which your friend endeavoured too successfully to supplant me. Were Clara Mowbray as free from her pretended marriage as law could pronounce her, still with me—*me*, at least, of all men in the world—the obstacle must ever remain, that the nuptial benediction has been pronounced over her, and the man whom I must for once call *brother*."—— He stopped at that word, as if it had cost him agony to pronounce it, and then resumed:—"No, sir, I have no views of personal advantage in this matter—they have been long annihilated—But I will not permit Clara Mowbray to become the wife of a villain—I will watch over her with thoughts as spotless as those of her guardian angel. I have been the cause of all the evil she has sustained—I first persuaded her to quit the path of duty—I, of all men who live, am bound to protect her from the misery—from the guilt—which must attach to her as this man's wife. I will never believe that she wishes it—I will never believe, that in calm mind and sober reason, she can be brought to listen to such a guilty proposal.—But her mind—alas!—is not of the firm texture it once could boast; and your friend knows well how to press on the spring of every passion that can agitate and alarm her. Threats of exposure may extort her consent to this most unfitting match, if they do not indeed drive her to suicide, which I think the most likely termination. I will, therefore, be strong where she is weak.—Your friend, sir, must at least strip his proposals of their fine gilding. I will satisfy Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's of his false pretences, both to rank and fortune; and I rather think he will protect his sister against the claim of a needy profligate though he might be dazzled with the alliance of a wealthy peer."

"Your cause, sir, is not yet won," answered Jekyl; "and when it is, your brother will retain property enough to entitle him to marry a greater match than Miss Mowbray, besides the large estate of Nettlewood, to which that alliance must give him right. But I would wish to make some accommodation between you if it were possible. You profess, Mr. Tyrrel, to lay aside all selfish wishes and views in this matter, and to look entirely to Miss Mowbray's safety and happiness?"

"Such, upon my honour, is the exclusive purpose of my interference—I would give all I am worth to procure her an hour of quiet—for happiness she will never know again."

"Your anticipations of Miss Mowbray's distress," said Jekyl, "are, I understand, founded upon the character of my friend. You think him a man of light principle, and because he overreached you in a juvenile intrigue, you conclude that now, in his more steady and advanced years, the happiness of the lady in whom you are so much interested ought not to be trusted to him?"

"There may be other grounds," said Tyrrel, hastily; "but you may argue upon those you have named, as sufficient to warrant my interference."

"How, then, if I should propose some accommodation of this nature? Lord Etherington does not pretend to the ardour of a passionate lover. He lives much in the world, and has no desire to quit it. Miss Mowbray's health is delicate—her spirits variable—and retirement would most probably be her choice.—Suppose—I am barely putting a supposition—suppose that a marriage between two persons so circumstanced were rendered necessary or advantageous to both—suppose that such a marriage were to secure to one party a large estate—were to insure the other against all the consequences of an unpleasant exposure—still, both ends might be obtained by the mere ceremony of marriage passing between them. There might be a previous contract of separation, with suitable provisions for the lady, and stipulations, by which the husband should renounce all claim to her society. Such things happen every season, if not on the very marriage day, yet before the honeymoon is over.—Wealth and freedom would be the lady's, and as much rank as you, sir, supposing your claims just, may think proper to leave them."

e was a long pause, during which Tyrrel under-
many changes of countenance, which Jekyl
d carefully, without pressing him for an an-
At length he replied, "There is much in your
al, Captain Jekyl, which I might be tempted to
to, as one manner of unloosing this Gordian
nd a compromise by which Miss Mowbray's
tranquillity would be in some degree provided
ut I would rather trust a fanged adder than your
unless I saw him fettered by the strongest ties of
t. Besides, I am certain the unhappy lady could
urvive the being connected with him in this
r, though but for the single moment when they
appear together at the altar. There are other
ons"——
hecked himself, paused, and then proceeded in
and self-possessed tone. "You think, per-
ven yet, that I have some selfish and interested
in this business; and probably you may feel
f entitled to entertain the same suspicion to-
me, which I avowedly harbour respecting every
tion which originates with your friend.—I
help it—I can but meet these disadvantageous
sions with plain dealing and honesty; and it
e spirit of both that *I* make a proposition to
Your friend is attached to rank, fortune, and
r advantages, in the usual proportion, at least,
ch they are pursued by men of the world—this
st admit, and I will not offend you by supposing
now few people who do not desire such advan-
answered Captain Jekyl; "and I frankly own
e affects no particular degree of philosophic
eance respecting them."
it so," answered Tyrrel. "Indeed, the propo-
have just made indicates that his pretended
in this young lady's hand is entirely, or almost
, dictated by motives of interest, since you are
son that he would be contented, to separate
er society on the very marriage day, provided
doing so, he was assured of the Nettlewood
y."
proposition was unauthorized by my prin-
answered Jekyl; "but it is needless to deny,
a very tenor implies an idea, on my part, that
Etherington is no passionate lover."
ll then," answered Tyrrel. "Consider, sir,
him consider well, that the estate and rank he
sumes, depend upon my will and pleasure—
I prosecute the claims of which that scroll
you aware, he must descend from the rank of
into that of a commoner, stripped of by much
tter half of his fortune—a diminution which
be far from compensated by the estate of Net-
d, even if he could obtain it, which could only
eans of a lawsuit, precarious in the issue, and
ishonourable in its very essence."
ll, sir," replied Jekyl, "I perceive your argu-
What is your proposal?"
at I will abstain from prosecuting my claim on
honours and that property—that I will leave
ine Bulmer in possession of his usurped title
deserved wealth—that I will bind myself under
ongest penalties never to disturb his possession
Earldom of Etherington and estates belonging
on condition that he allows the woman, whose
f mind he has ruined for ever, to walk through
rld in her wretchedness, undisturbed either by
rriage-suit, or by any claim founded upon his
ost treacherous conduct—in short, that he for-
molest Clara Mowbray, either by his presence,
letter, or through the intervention of a third
and be to her in future as if he did not exist."
is is a singular offer," said the Captain; "may
f you are serious in making it?"
m neither surprised nor offended at the ques-
said Tyrrel. "I am a man, sir, like others, and
o superiority to that which all men desire the
sion of—a certain consideration and station in
. I am no romantic fool to undervalue the sa-
I am about to make. I renounce a rank which
ought *to be the more valuable to me*, because
hres (he blushed as he spoke) the fame of an
d mother—because, in failing to claim it, I disobey the commands of a dying father, who wished that by doing so I should declare to the world the penitence which hurried him perhaps to the grave, and the making which public he considered might be some atonement for his errors. From an honoured place in the land, I descend voluntarily to become a nameless exile; for, once certain that Clara Mowbray's peace is assured, Britain no longer holds me. All this I do, sir, not in any idle strain of overheated feeling, but seeing, and knowing, and dearly valuing, every advantage which I renounce—yet I do it, and do it willingly, rather than be the cause of farther evil to one, on whom I have already brought too—too much."

His voice, in spite of his exertions, faltered as he concluded the sentence, and a big drop which rose to his eye, required him for the moment to turn towards the window.

"I am ashamed of this childishness," he said, turning again to Captain Jekyl; "if it excites your ridicule, sir, let it be at least a proof of my sincerity."

"I am far from entertaining such sentiments," said Jekyl, respectfully—for, in a long train of fashionable follies, his heart had not been utterly hardened—"very far, indeed. To a proposal so singular as yours, I cannot be expected to answer—except thus far—the character of the peerage is, I believe, indelible, and cannot be resigned or assumed at pleasure. If you are really Earl of Etherington, I cannot see how your resigning the right may avail my friend."

"You, sir, it might not avail," said Tyrrel, gravely, "because you, perhaps, might scorn to exercise a right, or hold a title that was not legally yours. But your friend will have no such compunctious visitings. If he can act the Earl to the eye of the world, he has already shown that his honour and conscience will be easily satisfied."

"May I take a copy of the memorandum containing this list of documents," said Captain Jekyl, "for the information of my constituent?"

"The paper is at your pleasure, sir," replied Tyrrel; "it is itself but a copy.—But Captain Jekyl," he added, with a sarcastic expression, "is, it would seem, but imperfectly let into his friend's confidence—he may be assured his principal is completely acquainted with the contents of this paper, and has accurate copies of the deeds to which it refers."

"I think it scarce possible," said Jekyl, angrily.

"Possible and certain!" answered Tyrrel. "My father, shortly preceding his death, sent me—with a most affecting confession of his errors—this list of papers, and acquainted me that he had made a similar communication to your friend. That he did so I have no doubt, however Mr. Bulmer may have thought proper to disguise the circumstance in communication with you. One circumstance, among others, stamps at once his character, and confirms me of the danger he apprehended by my return to Britain. He found means, through a scoundrelly agent, who had made me the usual remittances from my father while alive, to withhold those which were necessary for my return from the Levant, and I was obliged to borrow from a friend."

"Indeed?" replied Jekyl. "It is the first time I have heard of these papers—May I inquire where the originals are, and in whose custody?"

"I was in the East," answered Tyrrel, "during my father's last illness, and these papers were by him deposited with a respectable commercial house, with which he was connected. They were enclosed in a cover directed to me, and that again in an envelope, addressed to the principal person in their firm."

"You must be sensible," said Captain Jekyl, "that I can scarcely decide on the extraordinary offer which you have been pleased to make, of resigning the claim founded on these documents, unless I had a previous opportunity of examing them."

"You shall have that opportunity—I will write to have them sent down by the post—they lie but in small compass."

"This, then," said the Captain, "sums up all that can be said at present.—Supposing these proofs to be of unexceptionable authenticity, I certainly would advise my friend Etherington to put to sleep a claim so

important as yours, even at the expense of resigning his matrimonial speculation—I presume you design to abide by your offer?"

"I am not in the habit of altering my mind—still less of retracting my word," said Tyrrel, somewhat haughtily.

"We part friends, I hope?" said Jekyl, rising, and taking his leave.

"Not enemies, certainly, Captain Jekyl. I will own to you I owe you my thanks for extricating me from that foolish affair at the Well—nothing could have put me to more inconvenience than the necessity of following to extremity a frivolous quarrel at the present moment."

"You will come down among us, then?" said Jekyl.

"I certainly shall not wish to appear to hide myself," answered Tyrrel; "it is a circumstance might be turned against me—there is a party who will avail himself of every advantage. I have but one path, Captain Jekyl—that of truth and honour."

Captain Jekyl bowed, and took his leave. So soon as he was gone, Tyrrel locked the door of the apartment, and drawing from his bosom a portrait, gazed on it with a mixture of sorrow and tenderness, until the tears dropped from his eye.

It was the picture of Clara Mowbray, such as he had known her in the days of their youthful love, and taken by himself, whose early turn for painting had already developed itself. The features of the blooming girl might be yet traced in the fine countenance of the more matured original. But what was now become of the glow which had shaded her cheek?—what of the arch, yet subdued pleasantry, which lurked in the eye?—what of the joyous content, which composed every feature to the expression of a Euphrosyné?—Alas! these were long fled!—Sorrow had laid his hand upon her—the purple light of youth was quenched—the glance of innocent gayety was exchanged for looks now moody with ill-concealed care, now animated by a spirit of reckless and satirical observation.

"What a wreck! what a wreck!" exclaimed Tyrrel; "and all of one wretch's making.—Can I put the last hand to the work, and be her murderer outright? I cannot—I cannot!—I will be strong in the resolve I have formed—I will sacrifice all—rank—station—fortune—and fame. Revenge!—Revenge itself, the last good left me—revenge itself I will sacrifice, to obtain for her such tranquillity as she may be yet capable to enjoy."

In this resolution he sat down, and wrote a letter to the commercial house with whom the documents of his birth, and other relative papers were deposited, requesting that the packet containing them should be forwarded to him through the post-office.

Tyrrel was neither unambitious, nor without those sentiments respecting personal consideration, which are usually united with deep feeling and an ardent mind. It was with a trembling hand, and a watery eye, but with a heart firmly resolved, that he sealed and despatched the letter; a step towards the resignation, in favour of his mortal enemy, of that rank and condition in life, which was his own by right of inheritance, but had so long hung in doubt betwixt them.

CHAPTER XXX.

INTRUSION.

By my troth, I will go with thee to the lane's-end:—I am a kind of burr—I shall stick.—Measure for Measure.

It was now far advanced in autumn. The dew lay thick on the long grass, where it was touched by the sun; but where the sward lay in shadow, it was covered with hoar frost, and crisped under Jekyl's foot, as he returned through the woods of St. Ronan's. The leaves of the ash-trees detached themselves from the branches, and, without an air of wind, fell spontaneously on the path. The mists still lay lazily upon the heights, and the huge old tower of St. Ronan's *was entirely shrouded with vapour, except where a sunbeam, struggling with the mist,* penetrated into its *wreath so far as to show a projecting* turret upon one of the angles of the old fortress, which, long a favourite haunt of the raven, was popularly called the Corbie's Tower. Beneath, the scene was open and lightsome, and the robin redbreast was chirping his best, to atone for the absence of all other choristers. The fine foliage of autumn was seen in many a glade, running up the sides of each little ravine, russet-hued and golden-specked, and tinged frequently with the red hues of the mountain-ash; while here and there a huge old fir, the native growth of the soil, flung his broad shadow over the rest of the trees, and seemed to exult in the permanence of his dusky livery over the more showy, but transitory brilliance by which he was surrounded.

Such is the scene, which, so often described in prose and in poetry, yet seldom loses its effect upon the ear or upon the eye, and through which we wander with a strain of mind congenial to the decline of the year. There are few who do not feel the impression; and even Jekyl, though bred to far different pursuits than those most favourable to such contemplation, relaxed his pace to admire the uncommon beauty of the landscape.

Perhaps, also, he was in no hurry to rejoin the Earl of Etherington, towards whose service he felt himself more disinclined since his interview with Tyrrel. It was clear that that nobleman had not fully reposed in his friend the confidence promised; he had not made him aware of the existence of those important documents of proof, on which the whole fate of his negotiation appeared now to hinge, and in so far had deceived him. Yet, when he pulled from his pocket, and re-read Lord Etherington's explanatory letter, Jekyl could not help being more sensible than he had been on the first perusal, how much the present possessor of that title felt alarmed at his brother's claims; and he had some compassion for the natural feeling that must have rendered him shy of communicating at once the very worst view of his case, even to his most confidential friend. Upon the whole, he remembered that Lord Etherington had been his benefactor to an unusual extent; that, in return, he had promised the young nobleman his active and devoted assistance, in extricating him from the difficulties with which he seemed at present surrounded; that, in quality of his confidant, he had become acquainted with the most secret transactions of his life; and that it could only be some very strong cause indeed which could justify breaking off from him at this moment. Yet he could not help wishing either that his own obligations had been less, his friend's cause better, or, at least, the friend himself more worthy of assistance.

"A beautiful morning, sir, for such a foggy, d—d climate as this," said a voice close by Jekyl's ear, which made him at once start out of his contemplation. He turned half round, and beside him stood our honest friend Touchwood, his throat muffled in his large Indian handkerchief, huge gouty shoes thrust upon his feet, his bobwig well powdered, and the gold-headed cane in his hand, carried upright as a sergeant's halberd. One glance of contemptuous survey entitled Jekyl, according to his modish ideas, to rank the old gentleman as a regular-built quiz, and to treat him as the young gentlemen of his Majesty's Guards think themselves entitled to use every unfashionable variety of the human species. A slight inclination of a bow, and a very cold "You have the advantage of me, sir," dropped as it were unconsciously from his tongue, were meant to repress the old gentleman's advances, and moderate his ambition to be hail fellow well met with his betters. But Mr. Touchwood was callous to the intended rebuke; he had lived too much at large upon the world, and was far too confident of his own merits, to take a repulse easily, or to permit his modesty to interfere with any purpose which he had formed.

"Advantage of you, sir?" he replied; "I have lived too long in the world not to keep all the advantages I have, and get all I can—and I reckon it one that I have overtaken you, and shall have the pleasure of your company to the Well."

"I should but interrupt your worthier meditations, sir" said the other; "besides, I am a modest young

nan, and think myself fit for no better company than ny own—moreover, I walk slow—very slow.—Good orning to you, Mr. A—A—I believe my treacherous emory has let slip your name, sir."

"My name!—Why, your memory must have been ke Pat Murtough's greyhound, that let the hare go efore he caught it. You never heard my name in our life. Touchwood is my name. What d'ye think f it, now you know it?"

"I am really no connoisseur in surnames," anwered Jekyl; "and it is quite the same to me whener you call yourself Touchwood or Touchstone. on't let me keep you from walking on, sir. You rill find breakfast far advanced at the Well, sir, and our walk has probably given you an appetite."

"Which will serve me to luncheon-time, I promise ou," said Touchwood; "I always drink my coffee s soon as my feet are in my pabouches—it's the ay all over the East. Never trust my breakfast to ner scalding milk-and-water at the Well, I assure ou; and for walking slow, I have had a touch of he gout."

"Have you?" said Jekyl; "I am sorry for that; ecause, if you have no mind to breakfast, I have—nd so, Mr. Touchstone, good-morrow to you."

But, although the young soldier went off at double uick time, his pertinacious attendant kept close by is side, displaying an activity which seemed inconistent with his make and his years, and talking way the whole time, so as to show that his lungs ere not in the least degree incommoded by the unsual rapidity of motion.

"Nay, young gentleman, if you are for a good hart walk, I am for you, and the gout may be d—d. 'ou are a lucky fellow to have youth on your side; ut yet, so far as between the Aultoun and the Well, think I could walk you for your sum, barring runing—all heel and toe—equal weight, and I would atch Barclay himself for a mile."

"Upon my word, you are a gay old gentleman!" aid Jekyl, relaxing his pace; "and if we must be low-travellers, though I can see no great occasion r it, I must even shorten sail for you."

So saying, and as if another means of deliverance ad occurred to him, he slackened his pace, took out morocco case of cigars, and, lighting one with his *rique*t, said, while he walked on, and bestowed as uch of its fragrance as he could upon the face of is intrusive companion, "Vergeben sie, mein herr—h bin erzogen in kaiserlicher dienst—muss rauchen n kleine wenig."*

"Rauchen sie immer fort," said Touchwood, proucing a huge meerschaum, which, suspended by a hain from his neck, lurked in the bosom of his coat, habe auch mien pfeichen—Sehen sie den lieben pf!"† and he began to return the smoke, if not the re, of his companion, in full volumes, and with intest.

"The devil take the twaddle," said Jekyl to himelf, "he is too old and too fat to be treated after the anner of Professor Jackson; and, on my life, I annot tell what to make of him.—He is a resident o—I must tip him the cold shoulder, or he will be ostering me eternally."

Accordingly, he walked on, sucking his cigar, and pparently in as abstracted a mood as Mr. Cargill imself, without paying the least attention to Touchood, who, nevertheless, continued talking, as if he ad been addressing the most attentive listener in cotland, whether it were the favourite nephew of a ross, old, rich bachelor, or the aid-de-camp of some ld rusty firelock of a general, who tells stories of the merican war.

"And so, sir, I can put up with any companion at pin ch, for I have travelled in all sorts of ways, from caravan down to a carrier's cart; but the best socity is the best every where; and I am happy I have llen in with a gentleman who suits me so well as ou.—That grave, steady attention of yours reminds e of Elfi Bey—you might talk to him in English, or any thing he understood least of—you might have read Aristotle to Elfi, and not a muscle would he stir—give him his pipe, and he would sit on his cushion with a listening air as if he took in every word of what you said."

Captain Jekyl threw away the remnant of his cigar, with a little movement of pettishness, and began to whistle an opera air.

"There again, now!—That is just so like the Marquis of Roccombole, another dear friend of mine, that whistles all the time you talk to him—He says he learned it in the Reign of Terror, when a man was glad to whistle to show his throat was whole. And, talking of great folk, what do you think of this affair between Lord Etherington and his brother, or cousin, as some folk call him?"

Jekyl absolutely started at the question; a degree of emotion, which, had it been witnessed by any of his fashionable friends, would for ever have ruined his pretensions to rank in the first order.

"What affair?" he asked, so soon as he could command a certain degree of composure.

"Why, you know the news surely? Francis Tyrrel, whom all the company voted a coward the other day, turns out as brave a fellow as any of us; for, instead of having run away to avoid having his own throat cut by Sir Bingo Binks, he was at the very moment engaged in a gallant attempt to murder his elder brother, or his more lawful brother, or his cousin, or some such near relation."

"I believe you are misinformed, sir," said Jekyl dryly, and then resumed, as deftly as he could, his proper character of a pococurante.

"I am told," continued Touchwood, "one Jekyl acted as a second to them both on the occasion—a proper fellow, sir—one of those fine gentlemen whom we pay for polishing the pavement in Bond Street, and looking at a thick shoe and a pair of worsted stockings, as if the wearer were none of their paymasters. However, I believe the Commander-in-Chief is like to discard him when he hears what has happened"

"Sir!" said Jekyl, fiercely—then, recollecting the folly of being angry with an original of his companion's description, he proceeded more coolly, "You are misinformed—Captain Jekyl knew nothing of any such matter as you refer to—you talk of a person you know nothing of—Captain Jekyl is"—— (Here he stopped a little, scandalized, perhaps, at the very idea of vindicating himself to such a personage from such a charge.)

"Ay, ay," said the traveller, filling up the chasm in his own way, "he is not worth our talking of certainly—but I believe he knew as much of the matter as either you or I do, for all that."

"Sir, this is either a very great mistake, or wilful impertinence," answered the officer. "However absurd or intrusive you may be, I cannot allow you, either in ignorance or incivility, to use the name of Captain Jekyl with disrespect.—I am Captain Jekyl, sir."

"Very like, very like," said Touchwood, with the most provoking indifference; "I guessed as much before."

"Then, sir, you may guess what is likely to follow, when a gentleman hears himself unwarrantably and unjustly slandered," replied Captain Jekyl, surprised and provoked that his annunciation of name and rank seemed to be treated so lightly. "I advise you sir, not to proceed too far upon the immunities of your age and insignificance."

"I never presume farther than I have good reason to think necessary, Captain Jekyl," answered Touchwood, with great composure. "I am too old, as you say, for any such idiotical business as a duel, which no nation I know of practices but our silly fools of Europe—and then, as for your switch, which you are grasping with so much dignity, that is totally out of the question. Look you, young gentleman; four-fifths of my life have been spent among men who do not set a man's life at the value of a button on his collar—every person learns, in such cases, to protect himself as he can; and whoever strikes me must stand to the consequences. I have always a brace of bull-dogs

* Forgive me, sir, I was bred in the Imperial service, and must make a little.

† Smoke as much as you please; I have got my pipe too.—See that a beautiful bear!

about *ten* which put age and youth on a level. So suppose me horse-whipped, and pray, at the same time, suppose yourself shot through the body. The same exertion of imagination will serve for both purposes."

So saying, he exhibited a very handsome, highly finished, and richly-mounted pair of pistols.

"Catch me without my tools," said he, significantly buttoning his coat over the arms, which were concealed in a side-pocket, ingeniously contrived for that purpose. "I see you do not know what to make of me," he continued, in a familiar and confidential tone; "but, to tell you the truth, every body that has meddled in this St. Ronan's business is a little off the hooks—something of a *tête exaltée*, in plain words, a little crazy, or so; and I do not affect to be much wiser than other people."

"Sir," said Jekyl, "your manners and discourse are so unprecedented, that I must ask your meaning plainly and decidedly—Do you mean to insult me or no?"

"No insult at all, young gentleman—all fair meaning, and above board—I only wished to let you know what the world may say, that is all."

"Sir," said Jekyl, hastily, "the world may tell what lies it pleases; but I was not present at the rencontre between Etherington and Mr. Tyrrel—I was some hundred miles off."

"There now," said Touchwood, "there *was* a rencontre between them—the very thing I wanted to know."

"Sir," said Jekyl, aware too late that, in his haste to vindicate himself, he had committed his friend, "I desire you will found nothing on an expression hastily used to vindicate myself from a false aspersion—I only meant to say, if there was an affair such as you talk of, I knew nothing of it."

"Never mind—never mind—I shall make no bad use of what I have learned," said Touchwood. "Were you to eat your words with the best fish-sauce, (and that is Burgess's,) I have got all the information from them I wanted."

"You are strangely pertinacious, sir," replied Jekyl.

"O, a rock, a piece of flint for that—What I have learned, I have learned, but I will make no bad use of it.—Hark ye, Captain, I have no malice against your friend—perhaps the contrary—but he is in a bad course, sir—has kept a false reckoning, for as deep as he thinks himself; and I tell you so, because I hold you (your finery out of the question) to be, as Hamlet says, indifferent honest; but, if you were not, why necessity is necessity; and a man will take a Bedouin for his guide in the desert, whom he would not trust with an aspar in the cutivated field; so I think of reposing some confidence in you—have not made up my mind, yet though."

"On my word, sir, I am greatly flattered both by your intentions and your hesitation," said Captain Jekyl. "You were pleased to say just now, that every one concerned with these matters was something particular."

"Ay, ay—something crazy—a little mad, or so. That was what I said, and I can prove it."

"I should be glad to hear the proof," said Jekyl—"I hope you do not except yourself?"

"Oh! by no means," answered Touchwood; "I am one of the maddest old boys ever slept out of straw, or went loose. But you can put fishing questions in your turn, Captain, I see that—you would fain know how much, or how little, I am in all these secrets. Well, that is as hereafter may be. In the mean time, here are my proofs.—Old Scrogie Mowbray was mad, to like the sound of Mowbray better than that of Scrogie; young Scrogie was mad, not to like it as well. The old Earl of Etherington was not sane when he married a French wife in secret, and dovilish mad indeed when he married an English one in public. Then for the good folk here, Mowbray of St. Ronan's is cracked, when he wishes to give his sister to he knows not precisely whom: She is a fool not to take him, because she *does* know who *he is, and what has* been between them; and your *friend is maddest of all, who seeks* her under so heavy a penalty;—and you and I, Captain, go mad go for company's sake, when we mix ourselves such a mess of folly and frenzy."

"Really, sir, all that you have said is an abs riddle to me," replied the embarrassed Jekyl.

"Riddles may be read," said Touchwood, nod "if you have any desire to read mine, pray, notice, that this being our first interview, I hav erted myself *faire les frais du conversation*, as Frenchmen says; if you want another, you come to Mrs. Dod's, at the Cleikum Inn, any day b Saturday, at four precisely, when you will find of your half-starved, long-limbed bundles of b which you call poultry at the *table-d'hote* but a Chitty-gong fowl!—I got Mrs. Dods the breed old Ben Vandewash, the Dutch broker—stewe minute, with rice and mushrooms.—If you ca without a silver fork, and your appetite serves you shall be welcome—that's all.—So, good mo to you, good master lieutenant, for a captain o Guards is but a lieutenant after all."

So saying, and ere Jekyl could make any an the old gentlemen turned short off into a path w led to the healing fountain, branching away that which conducted to the Hotel.

Uncertain with whom he had been holding a versation so strange, Jekyl remained looking him, until his attention was roused by a little who crept out from an adjoining thicket, w switch in his hand, which he had been just cu —probably against regulations to the contrary made and provided, for he held himself ready to cover in the copse again, in case any one we sight who might be interested in chastising his quency. Captain Jekyl easily recognised in his of that hopeful class of imps, who pick up a pr ous livelihood about places of public resort, by errands, brushing shoes, doing the groom's conchman's work in the stables, driving don opening gates, and so forth, for about one tenth of their time, spending the rest in gambling, sle in the sun, and otherwise qualifying themselv exercise the profession of thieves and pickpo either separately, or in conjunction with the waiters, grooms, and postilions. The little o had an indifferent pair of pantaloons, and abou a jacket, for, like Pentapolin with the naked ar went on action with his right shoulder bare; a part of what had once been a hat covered his bleached white with the sun, and his face, as b as a berry, was illuminated by a pair of eyes, w for spying out either peril or profit, might have ri those of the hawk.—In a word, it was the or Puck of the Shaws dramaticals.

"Come hither, ye unhanged whelp," said "and tell me if you know the old gentleman passed down the walk just now—yonder he is, s sight."

"It is the Naboab," said the boy; "I could to his back among all the backs at the Waal honour."

"What do you call a Nabob, you varlet?"

"A Naboab—a Naboab?" answered the "odd, I believe it is ane comes frae foreign with mair siller than his pouches can hand, and it a' through the country—they are as yello orangers, and maun hae a' thing their ain gate."

"And what is this Naboab's name, as yo him?" demanded Jekyl.

"His name is Touchwood," said his info "ye may see him at the Waal every morning."

"I have not seen him at the ordinary."

"Na, na," answered the boy; "he is a queer cull, he disna frequent wi' other folk, but lives at the Cleikum.—He gave me half-a-crown and forbade me to play it awa' at pitch and to

"And you disobeyed him, of course?"

"Na, I didna dis-obeyed him—I played it a neevie-neevie-nick-nack."

"Well, there is sixpence for thee; lose it to th in any way thou think'st proper."

So saying, he gave the little galopin his don and a slight rap on the pate at the same time, sent him scouring from his presence. He wi

ed to Lord Etherington's apartments, and, as would have it, found the Earl alone.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCUSSION.

I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys—none are for me
That look into me with suspicious eyes.
Richard III.

w now, Jekyl!" said Lord Etherington, eagerly; t news from the enemy?—Have you seen him?"
ave," replied Jekyl.
d in what humour did you find him?—in none as very favourable, I dare say, for you have a and perplexed look, that confesses a losing —I have often warned you how your hang-dog strays you at brag—And then, when you would ush up your courage, and put a good face on a ame, your bold looks always remind me of a rd hoisted only half-mast high, and betraying choly and dejection, instead of triumph and ce."
im only holding the cards for your lordship at t," answered Jekyl; "and I wish to Heaven nay be no one looking over the hand."
w do you mean by that?"
hy, I was beset, on returning through the wood, old bore, a Nabob, as they call him, and Touch-by name."
ave seen such a quiz about," said Etherington—it of him?"
thing," answered Jekyl, "except that he seemed w much more of your affairs than you would re aware of. He smoked the truth of the ltre betwixt Tyrrel and you, and what is worse— needs confess the truth—he contrived to wring me a sort of confirmation of his suspicions."
life! wert thou mad?" said Lord Etherington, g pale; "His is the very tongue to send the hrough the whole country—Hal, you have un-ne."
ope not," said Jekyl; "I trust in Heaven I have His knowledge is quite general—only that there ome scuffle between you—Do not look so dis-about it, or I will e'en go back and cut his , to secure his secrecy."
irsed indiscretion!" answered the Earl—"how you let him fix on you at all?"
cannot tell," said Jekyl—"he has powers of beyond ten of the dullest of all possible doc-stuck like a limpet to a rock—a perfect double Old Man of the Sea, who I take to have been atest bore on record."
uld you not have turned him on his back like a and left him there?" said Lord Etherington.
d had an ounce of lead in my body for my pains? o—we have already had footpad work enough—ise you the old buck was armed, as if he meant folks on the low toby."*
ell—well—But Martigny, or Tyrrel, as you call what says he?"
hy, Tyrrel, or Martigny, as your lordship calls answered Jekyl, "will by no means listen to rdship's proposition. He will not consent that Mowbray's happiness shall be placed in your ip's keeping; nay, it did not meet his appro-a bit the more, when I hinted at the acknow-ent of the marriage, or the repetition of the ony, attended by an immediate separation, I thought I might venture to propose."
d on what grounds does he refuse so reasonable ommodation?" said Lord Etherington—"Does I seek to marry the girl himself?"
elieve he thinks the circumstances of the case that impossible," replied his confidant.
hat? then he would play the dog in the man-ither eat nor let eat?—He shall find himself ten. She has used me like a dog, Jekyl, since you; and, by Jove! I will have her, that I may her pride, and cut him to the liver with the of seeing it."

"Nay, but hold—hold!" said Jekyl; "perhaps I have something to say on his part, that may be a better compromise than all you could have by teasing him. He is willing to purchase what he calls Miss Mowbray's tranquillity, at the expense of his resignation of his claims to your father's honours and estate; and he surprised me very much, my lord, by showing me this list of documents, which, I am afraid, makes his success more than probable, if there really are such proofs in existence." Lord Etherington took the paper and seemed to read with much attention, while Jekyl proceeded,—"He has written to procure these evidences from the person with whom they are deposited."

"We shall see what like they are when they arrive," said Lord Etherington.—"They come by post, I suppose?"

"Yes; and may be immediately expected," answered Jekyl.

"Well—he is my brother on one side of the house, at least," said Lord Etherington; "and I should not much like to have him lagged for forgery, which I suppose will be the end of his bolstering up an unsubstantial plea by fabricated documents—I should like to see these same papers he talks of."

"But, my lord," replied Jekyl, "Tyrrel's allegation is, that you *have* seen them; and that copies, at least, were made out for you, and are in your possession—such is his averment."

"He lies," answered Lord Etherington, "so far as he pretends I know of such papers. I consider the whole story as froth—foam—fudge, or whatever is most unsubstantial. It will prove such when the papers appear, if indeed they ever will appear. The whole is a bully from beginning to end; and I wonder at thee, Jekyl, for being so thirsty after syllabub, that you can swallow such whipt cream as that stuff amounts to. No, no—I know my advantage, and shall use it so as to make all their hearts bleed. As for these papers, I recollect now that my agent talked of copies of some manuscripts having been sent him, but the originals were not then forthcoming; and I'll bet the long odds that they never are—mere fabrications—if I thought otherwise, would I not tell you?"

"Certainly, I hope you would, my lord," said Jekyl; "for I see no chance of my being useful to you, unless I have the honour to enjoy your confidence."

"You do—you do, my friend," said Etherington, shaking him by the hand; "and since I must consider your present negotiation as failed, I must devise some other mode of settling with this mad and troublesome fellow."

"No violence, my lord," said Jekyl, once more, and with much emphasis.

"None—none—none, by Heaven!—Why, thou suspicious wretch, must I swear, to quell your scruples?—On the contrary, it shall not be my fault, if we are not on decent terms."

"It would be infinitely to the advantage of both your characters if you could bring that to pass," answered Jekyl; "and if you are serious in wishing it, I will endeavour to prepare Tyrrel. He comes to the Well or to the ordinary to-day, and it would be highly ridiculous to make a scene."

"True, true; find him out, my dear Jekyl, and persuade him how foolish it will be to bring our family quarrels out before strangers, and for their amusement. They shall see the two bears can meet without biting.—Go—go—I will follow you instantly—go, and remember you have my full and exclusive confidence.—Go, half-bred, startling fool!" he continued, the instant Jekyl had left the room, "with just spirits enough to ensure your own ruin, by hurrying you into what you are not up to.—But he has character in the world—is brave—and one of those whose countenance gives a fair face to a doubtful business. He is my creature, too—I have bought and paid for him, and it would be idle extravagance not to make use of him—But as to confidence—no confidence, honest Hal, beyond that which cannot be avoided. If I wanted a confidant, here comes a better than thou by half—Solmes has no scruples—he will always give me money's worth of zeal and secrecy for money.

* "*Rob as a footpad.*"

His lordship's valet at this moment entered the apartment, a grave, civil-looking man, past the middle age, with a sallow complexion, a dark thoughtful eye, slow, and sparing of speech, and sedulously attentive to all the duties of his situation.

"Solmes,"—said Lord Etherington, and then stopped short.

"My lord"—There was a pause; and when Lord Etherington had again said, "Solmes!" and his valet had answered, "Your lordship," there was a second pause; until the Earl, as if recollecting himself "Oh! I remember what I wished to say—it was about the course of post here. It is not very regular, I believe?"

"Regular enough, my lord, so far as concerns this place—the people in the Aultoun do not get their letters in course."

"And why not, Solmes?" said his lordship.

"The old woman who keeps the little inn there, my lord, is on bad terms with the post-mistress—the one will not send for the letters, and the other will not despatch them to the village; so, betwixt them, they are sometimes lost or mislaid, or returned to the General Post-office."

"I wish that may not be the case of a packet which I expect in a few days—it should have been here already, or, perhaps, it may arrive in the beginning of the week—it is from that formal ass, Trueman the Quaker, who addresses me by my Christian and family name, Francis Tyrrel. He is like enough to mistake the inn, too, and I should be sorry it fell into Monsieur Martigny's hands—I suppose you know he is in that neighbourhood?—Look after its safety, Solmes—quietly, you understand; because people might put odd constructions, as if I were wanting a letter which was not my own."

"I understand perfectly, my lord," said Solmes, without exhibiting the slightest change in his sallow countenance, though entirely comprehending the nature of the service required.

"And here is a note will pay for postage," said the Earl, putting into his valet's hand a bank-bill of considerable value; "and you may keep the balance for occasional expenses."

This was also fully understood; and Solmes, too politic and cautious even to look intelligence, or acknowledge gratitude, made only a bow of acquiescence, put the note into his pocket-book, and assured his lordship that his commands should be punctually attended to.

"There goes the agent for my money, and for my purpose," said Lord Etherington, exultingly; "no extorting of confidence, no demanding of explanations, no tearing off the veil with which a delicate manœuvre is *gaze*—all excuses are received as *argent comptant*, provided only, that the best excuse of all, the *argent comptant* itself, come to recommend them. Yet I will trust no one—I will out, like a skilful general, and reconnoitre in person."

With this resolution, Lord Etherington put on his surtout and cap, and sallying from his apartments, took the way to the bookseller's shop, which also served as post-office and circulating library; and being in the very centre of the parade, (for so is termed the broad terrace walk which leads from the inn to the Well,) it formed a convenient lounging-place for newsmongers and idlers of every description.

The Earl's appearance created, as usual, a sensation upon the public promenade; but whether it was the suggestion of his own alarmed conscience, or that there was some real cause for the remark, he could not help thinking his reception was of a more doubtful character than usual. His fine figure and easy manners produced their usual effect, and all whom he spoke to received his attention as an honour; but none offered, as usual, to unite themselves to him, or to induce him to join their party. He seemed to be looked on rather as an object of observation and attention, than as making one of the company; and to escape from a distant gaze, which became rather embarrassing, he turned into the little emporium of news and literature.

He entered unobserved, just as Lady Penelope had *finished reading some verses, and was* commenting *upon them with all the alacrity of a femme savante,* in possession of something which no one is to hear repeated oftener than once.

"Copy—no indeed!"—these were the snatches which reached Lord Etherington's ear, from the group of which her ladyship formed the centre—"honour bright—I must not betray poor Chatterly—besides, his lordship is my friend, and a person of rank, you know—so one would not—You have not got the book, Mr. Pott?—you have not got Statius?—you never have any thing one longs to see."

"Very sorry, my lady—quite out of copies at present—I expect some in my next monthly parcel."

"Good lack, Mr. Pott, that is your never-failing answer," said Lady Penelope; "I believe if I were to ask you for the last new edition of the Alkoran, you would tell me it was coming down in your next monthly parcel."

"Can't say, my lady, really," answered Mr. Pott; "have not seen the work advertised yet; but I have no doubt, if it is likely to take, there will be copies in my next monthly parcel."

"Mr. Pott's supplies are always in the *paullo post futurum* tense," said Mr. Chatterly, who was just entering the shop.

"Ah! Mr. Chatterly, are you there?" said Lady Penelope; "I lay my death at your door—I cannot find this Thebaid, where Polynices and his brother"—

"Hush, my lady!—hush, for Heaven's sake!" said the poetical divine, and looked towards Lord Etherington. Lady Penelope took the hint, and was silent; but she had said enough to call up the traveller Touchwood, who raised his head from the newspaper which he was studying, and, without addressing his discourse to any one in particular, ejaculated, as if in scorn of Lady Penelope's geography—

"Polynices?—Polly Peachum.—There is no such place in the Thebais—the Thebais is in Egypt—the mummies come from the Thebais—I have been in the catacombs—caves very curious indeed—we were lapidated by the natives—pebbled to some purpose, I give you my word. My janizary thrashed a whole village by way of retaliation."

While he was thus proceeding, Lord Etherington, as if in a listless mood, was looking at the letters which stood ranged on the chimney-piece, and carrying on a languid dialogue with Mrs. Pott, whose person and manners were not ill adapted to her situation, for she was good-looking, and vastly fine and affected.

"Number of letters here which don't seem to find owners, Mrs. Pott?"

"Great number, indeed, my lord—it is a great vexation, for we are obliged to return them to the post-office, and the postage is charged against us if they are lost; and how can one keep sight of them all?"

"Any love-letters among them, Mrs. Pott?" said his lordship, lowering his tone.

"Oh, fie! my lord, how should I know?" answered Mrs. Pott, dropping her voice to the same cadence.

"Oh! every one can tell a love-letter—that has ever received one, that is—one knows them without opening—they are always folded hurriedly and sealed carefully—and the direction manifests a kind of tremulous agitation, that marks the state of the writer's nerves—that now,"—pointing with his switch to a letter upon the chimney-piece, "that *must* be a love-letter."

"He, he, he!" giggled Mrs. Pott, "I beg pardon for laughing, my lord—but—he, he, he!—that is a letter from one Bindloose, the banker body, to the old woman Luckie Dods, as they call her, at the change house in the Aultoun."

"Depend upon it then, Mrs. Pott, that your neighbour, Mrs. Dods, has got a lover in Mr. Bindloose—unless the banker has been shaking hands with the palsy. Why do you not forward her letter?—you are very cruel to keep it in durance here."

"Me forward!" answered Mrs. Pott; "the cappernoity, old, girning alewife, may wait long enough or I forward it—She'll not loose the letters that come to her by the King's post, and she must go on troking wi' the old carrier, as if there was no post-house in the neighbourhood. But the solicitor will be about wi' her one of these days."

rou are too cruel—you really should send the
r; consider, the older she is, the poor soul
ss time to lose."
s was a topic on which Mrs. Pott under-
jesting. She was well aware of our ma-
'eteracy against her and her establishment,
esented it as a placeman resents the efforts
al. She answered something sulkily, "That
loosed letters should have letters; and nei-
ie Dods, nor any of her lodgers, should ever
rape of a pen from the St. Ronan's office,
did not call for and pay for."
obable that this declaration contained the
f the information which Lord Etherington
med to extract by his momentary flirtation
. Pott; for when, retreating as it were from
subject, she asked him, in a pretty mincing
y his skill in pointing out another love-letter,
iswered carelessly, "that in order to do that
write her one;" and leaving his confidential
r her little throne, he lounged through the
iop, bowed slightly to Lady Penelope as he
id issued forth upon the parade, where he
ectacle which might well have appalled a
ss self-possession than himself.
he left the shop, little Miss Digges entered
reathless, with the emotion of impatience
ariosity. "Oh la! my lady, what do you
for?—Mr. Tyrrel has just entered the other
e parade this moment, and Lord Etherng-
lking that way—they must meet each other.
come, come away, and see them meet!—I
[they'll speak—I hope they won't fight—Oh
me, my lady!"
it go with you, I find," said Lady Penelope;
) strangest thing, my love, that curiosity of
iut other folk's matters—I wonder what your
will say to it."
never mind mamma—nobody minds her—
nobody—Do come, dearest Lady Pen, or I
away by myself.—Mr. Chatterly, do make
p"
it come, it seems," said Lady Penelope, "or
ive a pretty account of you."
twithstanding this rebuke, and forgetting, at
time, that people of quality ought never to
a hurry, Lady Penelope, with such of her
as she could hastily collect around her,
ong the parade with unusual haste, in sym-
ubtless, with Miss Digges's curiosity, as her
declared she had none of her own.
end the traveller, had also caught up Miss
information; and, breaking off abruptly an
f the Great Pyramid, which had been na-
troduced by the mention of the Thebais, and
he fair alarmist's words, "hope they won't
) rushed upon the parade, and bustled along
s his sturdy supporters could carry him. If
ty of the traveller, and the delicacy of Lady
, were surprised into unwonted haste from
erness to witness the meeting of Tyrrel and
nerington, it may be well supposed that the
of the rest of the company was a slender
on their curiosity, and that they hurried to
it at the expected scene, with the alacrity of
n of the fancy hastening to a set-to.
h, though the meeting afforded little sport to
io expected dire conclusions, it was, never-
sufficiently interesting to those spectators
e accustomed to read the language of sup-
assion betraying itself at the moment when
se are most desirous to conceal it.
had been followed by several loiterers so
ie entered the public walk; and their num-
now so much reinforced, that he saw himself
n and displeasure the centre of a sort of
ho watched his motions. Sir Bingo and
MacTurk were the first to bustle through it,
ldress him with as much politeness as they
nmand.
ant, sir," mumbled Sir Bingo, extending the
id of fellowship and reconciliation, ungloved.
*'—sorry that any thing should have hap-
veen us—very sorry, on my word."*

"No more need be said, sir," replied Tyrrel; "the whole is forgotten."

"Very handsome, indeed—quite the civil thing—hope to meet you often, sir."—And here the knight was silent.

Mean while, the more verbose Captain proceeded, "Och, py Cot, and it was an awfu' mistake, and I could draw the penknife across my finger for having written the word.—By my sowl, and I scratched it till I scratched a hole in the paper.—Och! that I should live to do an uncivil thing by a gentleman that had got himself hit in an honourable affair! But you should have written, my dear; for how the devil could we guess that you were so well provided in quarrels, that you had to settle two in one day!"

"I was hurt in an unexpected—an accidental manner, Captain MacTurk. I did not write because there was something in my circumstances at the moment which required secrecy; but I was resolved, the instant I recovered, to put myself to rights in your good opinion."

"Och! and you have done that," said the Captain, nodding sagaciously; "for Captain Jekyl, who is a fine child, has put us all up to your honourable conduct. They are pretty boys, these guardsmen, though they may play a little fine sometimes, and think more of themselves than peradventure they need for to do, in comparison with us of the line.—But he let us know all about it—and, though he said not a word of a certain fine lord, with his footpad, and his hurt, and what not, yet we all knew how to lay that and that together.—And if the law would not right you, and there were bad words between you, why should not two gentlemen right themselves? And as to your being kinsmen, why should not kinsmen behave to each other like men of honour? Only, some say you are father's sons, and that *is* something too near.—I had once thoughts of calling out my uncle Dougal myself, for there is no saying where the line should be drawn; but I thought, on the whole, there should be no fighting, as there is no marriage, within the forbidden degrees. As for first cousins—Wheugh!—that's all fair—fire away, Flanigan!—But here is my lord, just upon us, like a stag of the first head, and the whole herd behind him."

Tyrrel stepped forward a little before his officious companions, his complexion rapidly changing into various shades, like that of one who forces himself to approach and touch some animal or reptile for which he entertains that deep disgust and abhorrence which was anciently ascribed to constitutional antipathy. This appearance of constraint put upon himself, with the changes which it produced on his face, was calculated to prejudice him somewhat in the opinion of the spectators, when compared with the steady, stately, yet, at the same time, easy demeanour of the Earl of Etherington, who was equal to any man in England in the difficult art of putting a good countenance on a bad cause. He met Tyrrel with an air as unembarrassed, as it was cold; and, while he paid the courtesy of a formal and distant salutation, he said aloud, "I presume, Mr. Tyrrel de Martigny, that, since you have not thought fit to avoid this awkward meeting, you are disposed to remember our family connexion so far as to avoid making sport for the good company?"

"You have nothing to apprehend from my passion, Mr. Bulmer," replied Tyrrel, "if you can assure yourself against the consequences of your own."

"I am glad of that," said the Earl, with the same composure, but sinking his voice so as only to be heard by Tyrrel; "and as we may not again in a hurry hold any communication together, I take the freedom to remind you, that I sent you a proposal of accommodation by my friend, Mr. Jekyl."

"It was inadmissible," said Tyrrel—"altogether inadmissible—both from reasons which you may guess, and others which it is needless to detail.—I sent you a proposition, think of it well."

"I will," replied Lord Etherington, "when I shall see it supported by those alleged proofs, which I do not believe ever had existence."

"Your conscience holds another language from your tongue," said Tyrrel; "but I disclaim reproaches.

and decline altercation. I will let Captain Jekyl know when I have received the papers, which, you say, are essential to your forming an opinion on my proposal.—In the mean while, do not think to deceive me. I am here for the very purpose of watching and defeating your machinations; and, while I live, be assured they shall never succeed.—And now, sir—or my lord—for the titles are in your choice—fare you well."

"Hold a little," said Lord Etherington. "Since we are condemned to shock each other's eyes, it is fit the good company should know what they are to think of us. You are a philosopher, and do not value the opinion of the public—a poor worldling like me is desirous to stand fair with it.—Gentlemen," he continued, raising his voice, "Mr. Winterblossom, Captain MacTurk, Mr—what is his name, Jekyl?—Ay, Micklehen—You have, I believe, all some notion, that this gentleman, my near relation, and I, have some undecided claims on each other, which prevent our living upon good terms. We do not mean, however, to disturb you with our family quarrels; and, for my own part, while this gentleman, Mr. Tyrrel, or whatever he may please to call himself, remains a member of this company, my behaviour to him will be the same as to any stranger who may have that advantage.—Good morrow to you, sir—Good morning, gentlemen—we all meet at dinner, as usual.—Come, Jekyl."

So saying, he took Jekyl by the arm, and, gently extricating himself from the sort of crowd, walked off, leaving most of the company prepossessed in his favour, by the ease and apparent reasonableness of his demeanour. Sounds of depreciation, forming themselves indistinctly into something like the words, "my eye, and Betty Martin," did issue from the neck-cloth of Sir Bingo, but they were not much attended to; for it had not escaped the observation of the quicksighted gentry at the Well, that the Baronet's feelings towards the noble Earl were in the inverse ratio of those displayed by Lady Binks, and that, though ashamed to testify, or perhaps incapable of feeling, any anxious degree of jealousy, his temper had been for some time considerably upon the fret; a circumstance concerning which his fair moiety did not think it necessary to give herself any concern.

Mean while, the Earl of Etherington walked onward with his confidant, in the full triumph of successful genius.

"You see," he said, "Jekyl, that I can turn a corner with any man in England. It was a proper blunder of yours, that you must extricate the fellow from the mist which accident had flung around him—you might as well have published the story of our rencontre at once, for every one can guess it, by laying time, place, and circumstance together; but never trouble your brains for a justification. You marked how I assumed my natural superiority over him—towered up in the full pride of legitimacy—silenced him even where the good company most do congregate. This will go to Mowbray through his agent, and will put him still madder on my alliance. I know he looks jealously on my flirtation with a certain lady—the dasher yonder—nothing makes a man sensible of the value of an opportunity, but the chance of losing it."

"I wish to Heaven you would give up thoughts of Miss Mowbray!" said Jekyl; "and take Tyrrel's offer, if he has the means of making it good."

"Ay, if—if. But I am quite sure he has no such rights as he pretends to, and that his papers are all a deception.—Why do you put your eye upon me as fixed as if you were searching out some wonderful secret?"

"I wish I knew what to think of your real *bona fide* belief respecting these documents," said Jekyl, not a little puzzled by the steady and unembarrassed air of his friend.

"Why, thou most suspicious of coxcombs," said Etherington, "what the devil would you have me say to you?—Can I, as the lawyers say, prove a negative? or, is it not very possible, that such things *may exist*, though I have never seen or heard of *them? All I can say is, that of all men* I am the *most interested to deny the existence of* such documents; and, therefore, certainly will not admit of it, unless I am compelled to do so by their being produced; nor then either, unless I am at the same time well assured of their authenticity."

"I cannot blame you for your being hard of faith, my lord," said Jekyl; "but still I think if you can cut out with your earldom, and your noble hereditary estate, I would, in your case, pitch Nettlewood to the devil."

"Yes, as you pitched your own patrimony, Jekyl; but you took care to have the spending of it first.—What would *you* give for such an opportunity of piecing your fortunes by marriage?—Confess the truth."

"I might be tempted, perhaps," said Jekyl, "in my present circumstances; but if they were what they have been, I should despise an estate that was to be held by petticoat tenure, especially when the lady of the manor was a sickly fantastic girl, that hated me, as this Miss Mowbray has the bad taste to hate you."

"Umph—sickly?—no, no, she is not sickly—she is as healthy as any one in constitution—and, on my word, I think her paleness only renders her more interesting. The last time I saw her, I thought she might have rivalled one of Canova's finest statues."

"Yes; but she is indifferent to you—you do not love her," said Jekyl.

"She is any thing but indifferent to me," said the Earl; "she becomes daily more intcresting—for her dislike piques me; and besides, she has the insolence openly to defy and contemn me before her brother, and in the eyes of all the world. I have a kind of loving hatred—a sort of hating love for her; in short, thinking upon her is like trying to read a riddle, and makes one make quite as many blunders, and talk just as much nonsense. If ever I have the opportunity, I will make her pay for all her airs."

"What airs?" said Jekyl.

"Nay, the devil may describe them, for I cannot; but, for example—Since her brother has insisted on her receiving me, or I should rather say on her appearing when I visit Shaws-Castle, one would think her invention has toiled in discovering different ways of showing want of respect to me, and dislike to my presence. Instead of dressing herself as a lady should, especially on such occasions, she chooses some fantastic, or old-fashioned, or negligent bedizening, which makes her at least look odd, if it cannot make her ridiculous—such triple tiaras of various-coloured gauze on her head—such pieces of old tapestry, I think, instead of shawls and pelisses—such thick-soled shoes—such tan-leather gloves—mercy upon us, Hal, the very sight of her equipment would drive mad a whole conclave of milliners! Then her postures are so strange—she does so stoop and lollop, as the women call it, so cross her legs and square her arms—were the goddess of grace to look down on her, it would put her to flight for ever!"

"And you are willing to make this awkward, ill-dressed, unmannered dowdy, your Countess, Etherington; you, for whose critical eye half the town dress themselves?" said Jekyl.

"It is all a trick, Hal—all an assumed character to get rid of me, to disgust me, to baffle me; but I am not to be had so easily. The brother is driven to despair—he bites his nails, winks, coughs, makes signs, which she always takes up at cross-purpose.—I hope he beats her after I go away; there would be a touch of consolation, were one but certain of that."

"A very charitable hope, truly, and your present feelings might lead the lady to judge what she may expect after wedlock. But," added Jekyl, "cannot you, so skilful in fathoming every mood of the female mind, divine some mode of engaging her in conversation?"

"Conversation!" replied the Earl; "why, ever since the shock of my first appearance was surmounted, she has contrived to vote me a nonentity; and that she may annihilate me completely, she has chosen, of all occupations, that of working a stocking! From what cursed old antediluvian, who lived before the invention of spinning-jennies, she learned this craft, Heaven only knows; but there she sits, with her work pinned to her knee—not the pretty taper silken fabric, with which Jeannette of Amiens

oquetted, while Tristram Shandy was observing her rogress; but a huge worsted bag, designed for some lat-footed old pauper, with heels like an elephant— nd there she squats, counting all the stitches as she rorks, and refusing to speak, or listen, or look up, nder pretence that it disturbs her calculation!"

"An elegant occupation, truly, and I wonder it does ot work a cure upon her noble admirer," said Jekyl.

"Confound her—no—she shall not trick me. And nen amid this affectation of vulgar stolidity, there reak out such sparkles of exultation, when she inks she has succeeded in baffling her brother, and plaguing me, that, by my faith, Hal, I could not ill, were it at my option, whether to kiss or to cuff er."

"You are determined to go on with this strange ffair, then?" said Jekyl.

"On—on—on, my boy!—Clara and Nettlewood for ver!" answered the Earl. "Besides this brother of ers provokes me too—he does not do for me half what he might—what he ought to do. He stands on oints of honour, forsooth, this broken-down horse- eckey, who swallowed my two thousand pounds as pointer would a pat of butter.—I can see he wishes o play fast and loose—has some suspicions, like you, Hal, upon the strength of my right to my father's itles and estate; as if, with the tithe of the Nettle- rood property alone, I would not be too good a catch for one of his beggarly family. He must cheme, forsooth, this half-baked Scotch cake!—He nust hold off and on, and be cautious, and wait the esult, and try conclusions with me, this lump of oat- neal dough!—I am much tempted to make an exam- le of him in the course of my proceedings."

"Why, this is vengeance horrible and dire," said ekyl; "yet I give up the brother to you; he is a onceited coxcomb, and deserves a lesson. But I would fain intercede for the sister."

"We shall see"—replied the Earl; and then sud- enly, "I tell you what it is, Hal; her caprices are so diverting, that I sometimes think out of mere con- radiction, I almost love her; at least, if she would ut clear old scores, and forget one unlucky prank of aine, it should be her own fault if I did not make her happy woman."

CHAPTER XXXII.

A DEATH-BED.

It comes—it wrings me in my parting hour,
The long-hid crime—the well-disguised guilt.
Bring me some holy priest to lay the spectre!
Old Play.

The general expectation of the company had been isappointed by the pacific termination of the meeting etwixt the Earl of Etherington and Tyrrel, the anti- ipation of which had created so deep a sensation. t had been expected that some appalling scene would have taken place; instead of which, each party eemed to acquiesce in a sullen neutrality, and leave he war to be carried on by their lawyers. It was enerally understood that the cause was removed out f the courts of Bellona into that of Themis; and lthough the litigants continued to inhabit the same eighbourhood, and once or twice met at the public alks or public table, they took no notice of each ther, farther than by exchanging on such occasions grave and distant bow.

In the course of two or three days, people ceased to ake interest in a feud so coldly conducted; and if hey thought of it at all, it was but to wonder that oth the parties should persevere in residing near the ipa, and in chilling, with their unsocial behaviour, a arty met together for the purposes of health and musement.

But the brothers, as the reader is aware, how- ver painful their occasional meetings might be, ad the strongest reasons to remain in each other's eighbourhood—Lord Etherington to conduct his esign upon Miss Mowbray, Tyrrel to disconcert is plan, if possible, and both to await the answer hich should be returned by *the house in London, ho were depositaries of the papers left by* the late arl

Jekyl, anxious to assist his friend as much as possible made in the mean time a visit to old Touchwood at the Aultoun, expecting to find him as communicative as he had formerly been on the subject of the quarrel betwixt the brothers, and trusting to discover, by dint of address, whence he had derived his information concerning the affairs of the noble house of Etherington. But the confidence which he had been induced to expect on the part of the old traveller was not reposed. Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, as the Earl called him, had changed his mind or was not in the vein of communication. The only proof of his confidence worth mentioning, was his imparting to the young officer a valuable receipt for concocting curra-powder.

Jekyl was therefore reduced to believe that Touchwood, who appeared all his life to have been a great intermeddler in other people's matters, had puzzled out the information which he appeared to possess of Lord Etherington's affairs, through some of those obscure sources whence very important secrets do frequently, to the astonishment and confusion of those whom they concern, escape to the public. He thought this the more likely, as Touchwood was by no means critically nice in his society, but was observed to converse as readily with a gentleman's gentleman, as with the gentleman to whom he belonged, and with a lady's attendant, as with the lady herself. He that will stoop to this sort of society, who is fond of tattle, being at the same time disposed to pay some consideration for gratification of his curiosity, and not over scrupulous respecting its accuracy, may always command a great quantity of private anecdote. Captain Jekyl naturally enough concluded, that this busy old man became in some degree master of other people's affairs by such correspondences as these; and he could himself bear witness to his success in cross-examination, as he had been surprised into an avowal of the rencontre between the brothers, by an insidious observation of the said Touchwood. He reported, therefore, to the Earl, after this interview, that, on the whole, he thought he had no reason to fear much on the subject of the traveller, who, though he had become acquainted, by some means or other, with some leading facts of his remarkable history, only possessed them in a broken, confused, and desultory manner, insomuch that he seemed to doubt whether the parties in the expected lawsuit were brothers or cousins, and appeared totally ignorant of the facts on which it was to be founded.

It was the next day after this *éclaircissement* on the subject of Touchwood, that Lord Etherington dropped as usual into the bookseller's shop, got his papers, and skimming his eye over the shelf on which lay, till called for, the postponed letters destined for the Aultoun, saw with a beating heart the smart post-mistress toss amongst them with an air of sovereign contempt, a pretty large packet, addressed to Francis Tyrrel, Esq. &c. He withdrew his eyes, as if conscious that even to have looked on this important parcel might engender some suspicion of his purpose, or intimated the deep interest which he took in the contents of the missive which was so slightly treated by his friend Mrs. Pott. At this moment the door of the shop opened, and Lady Penelope Penfeather entered, with her eternal *pendante*, the little Miss Digges.

"Have you seen Mr. Mowbray?—Has Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's been down this morning?—Do you know any thing of Mr. Mowbray, Mrs. Pott?" were questions which the lettered lady eagerly huddled on the back of each other, scarcely giving time to the lady of letters to return a decided negative to all and each of them.

"Mr. Mowbray was not about—was not coming there this morning—his servant had just called for letters and papers, and announced as much."

"Good Heaven! how unfortunate!" said Lady Penelope, with a deep sigh, and sinking down on one of the little sofas in an attitude of shocking desolation, which called the instant attention of Mr. Pott and his good woman, the first uncorking a small phial of salts, for he was a pharmacopolist as well as vendor

of literature and transmitter of letters, and the other hastening for a glass of water. A strong temptation thrilled from Lord Etherington's eyes to his finger-ends. Two steps might have brought him within arm's-length of the unwatched packet, on the contents of which, in all probability, rested the hope and claims of his rival in honour and fortune; and, in the general confusion, was it impossible to possess himself of it unobserved? But no—no—no—the attempt was too dreadfully dangerous to be risked; and, passing from one extreme to another, he felt as if he was incurring suspicion by suffering Lady Penelope to play off her airs of affected distress and anxiety, without seeming to take that interest in them which her rank at least might be supposed to demand. Stung with this apprehension, he hastened to express himself so anxiously on the subject, and to demonstrate so busily his wish to assist her ladyship, that he presently stood committed a great deal farther than he had intended. Lady Penelope was infinitely obliged to his lordship—indeed, it was her character in general not to permit herself to be overcome by circumstances; but something had happened, so strange, so embarrassing, so melancholy, that she owned it had quite overcome her—notwithstanding, she had at all times piqued herself on supporting her own distresses, better than she was able to suppress her emotions in viewing those of others.

"Could he be of any use?" Lord Etherington asked. "She had inquired after Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's—his servant was at her ladyship's service, if she chose to send to command his attendance."

"Oh! no, no!" said Lady Penelope; "I dare say, my dear lord, you will answer the purpose a great deal better than Mr. Mowbray—that is, provided you are a Justice of Peace."

"A Justice of Peace!" said Lord Etherington, much surprised; "I am in the commission unquestionably, but not for any Scotch county."

"O, that does not signify," said Lady Penelope; "and if you will trust yourself with me a little way, I will explain to you how you can do one of the most charitable, and kind, and generous things in the world."

Lord Etherington's delight in the exercise of charity, kindness, and generosity, was not so exuberant as to prevent his devising some means for evading Lady Penelope's request, when, looking through the sash-door, he had a distant glance of his servant Solmes approaching the Post-office.

I have heard of a sheep-stealer who had rendered his dog so skilful an accomplice in his nefarious traffic, that he used to send him out to commit acts of felony by himself, and had even contrived to impress on the poor cur the caution that he should not, on such occasions, seem even to recognise his master, if they met accidentally.* Apparently, Lord Etherington conducted himself upon a similar principle; for he had no sooner a glimpse of his agent, than he seemed to feel the necessity of leaving the stage free for his machinations.

"My servant," he said, with as much indifference as he could assume, "will call for my letters—I must attend Lady Penelope;" and, instantly proffering his services as Justice of the Peace, or in whatever other quality she chose to employ them, he hastily presented his arm, and scarce gave her ladyship time to recover from her state of languor to the necessary degree of activity ere he hurried her from the shop; and, with her thin hatchet-face chattering close to his ear, her yellow and scarlet feathers crossing his nose, her lean right honourable arm hooking his elbow, he braved the suppressed titters and sneers of all the younger women whom he met as they traversed the parade. One glance of intelligence, though shot at a distance, passed betwixt his lordship and Solmes as the former left the public walk under the guidance of Lady Penelope, his limbs indeed obeying her pleasure, and his ears dinned with her attempts to explain the business in question, but his mind totally indifferent where he was going, or ignorant on what purpose, and exclusively occupied with the packet in Mrs. Pott's heap of postponed letters, and its probable fate.

At length an effort of recollection made Lord Etherington sensible that his abstraction must seem strange, and, as his conscience told him, even suspicious in the eyes of his companion; putting therefore the necessary degree of constraint upon himself, he expressed, for the first time, curiosity to know where their walk was to terminate. It chanced, that this was precisely the question which he needed not to have asked, if he had paid but the slightest attention to the very voluble communications of her ladyship, which had all turned upon this subject.

"Now, my dear lord," she said, "I must believe you lords of the creation think us poor simple women the vainest fools alive. I have told you how much pain it costs me to speak about my little charities, and yet you come to make me tell you the whole story over again. But I hope, after all, your lordship is not surprised at what I have thought it my duty to do in this sad affair—perhaps I have listened too much to the dictates of my own heart, which are apt to be so deceitful."

On the watch to get at something explanatory, yet afraid, by demanding it directly, to show that the previous tide of narrative and pathos had been lost on an inattentive ear, Lord Etherington could only say, that Lady Penelope could not err in acting according to the dictates of her own judgment.

Still the compliment had not sauce enough for the lady's sated palate; so, like a true glutton of praise, she began to help herself with the soup-ladle.

"Ah! judgment?—how is it you men know us so little, that you think we can pause to weigh sentiment in the balance of judgment?—that is expecting rather too much from us poor victims of our feelings. So that you must really hold me excused if I forgot the errors of this guilty and unhappy creature, when I looked upon her wretchedness—Not that I would have my little friend, Miss Digges, or your lordship, suppose that I am capable of palliating the fault, while I pity the poor, miserable sinner. Oh, no—Walpole's verses express beautifully what one ought to feel on such occasions—

> 'For never was the gentle breast
> Insensible to human woes;
> Feeling, though firm, it melts distress'd
> For weaknesses it never knows.'"

"Most accursed of all *précieuses*," thought his lordship, "when wilt thou, amidst all thy chatter, utter one word sounding like sense or information?"

But Lady Penelope went on—"If you knew, my

* There were several instances of this dexterity, but especially those which occurred in the celebrated case of Murdison and Millar in 1773. These persons, a sheep-farmer and his shepherd, settled in the vale of Tweed, commenced and carried on for some time an extensive system of devastation on the flocks of their neighbours. A dog belonging to Millar was so well trained, that he had only to show him during the day the parcel of sheep which he desired to have; and when dismissed at night for the purpose, Yarrow went right to the pasture where the flock had fed, and carried off the quantity shown him. He then drove them before him by the most secret paths to Murdison's farm, where the dishonest master and servant were in readiness to receive the booty. Two things were remarkable. In the first place, that if the dog, when thus dishonestly employed, actually met his master, he observed great caution in recognising him, as if he had been afraid of bringing him under suspicion; secondly, that he showed a distinct sense that the illegal transactions in which he was engaged were not of a nature to endure daylight. The sheep which he was directed to drive, were often reluctant to leave their own pastures, and sometimes the intervention of rivers or other obstacles made their progress peculiarly difficult. On such occasions, Yarrow continued his efforts to drive his plunder forward, until the day began to dawn, a signal which, he conceived, rendered it necessary for him to desert his spoil, and slink homeward by a circuitous road. It is generally said this accomplished dog was hanged along with his master; but the truth is, he survived him long, in the service of a man in Leithen, yet was said afterwards to have shown little of the wonderful instinct exhibited in the employment of Millar.

Another instance of similar sagacity, a friend of mine discovered in a beautiful little spaniel, which he had purchased from a dealer in the canine race. When he entered a shop, he was not long in observing that his little companion made it a rule to follow at some interval, and to estrange itself from his master so much as to appear totally unconnected with him. And when he left the shop, it was the dog's custom to remain behind him till it could find an opportunity of seizing a pair of gloves, or silk stockings, or some similar property, which it brought to its master. The poor fellow probably saved its life by falling into the hands of an honest man.

lord, how I lament my limited means on those occasions! but I have gathered something among the good people at the Well. I asked that selfish wretch, Winterblossom, to walk down with me to view her distress, and the heartless beast told me he was afraid of infection!—infection from a puer—puerperal fever! I should not perhaps pronounce the word, but science is of no sex—however, I have always used thieves' vinegar essence, and never have gone farther than the threshold."

Whatever were Etherington's faults, he did not want charity, so far as it consists in giving alms.

"I am sorry," he said, taking out his purse, "your ladyship should not have applied to me."

"Pardon me, my lord, we only beg from our friends; and your lordship is so constantly engaged with Lady Binks, that we have rarely the pleasure of seeing you in what I call *my* little circle."

Lord Etherington, without further answer, tendered a couple of guineas, and observed, that the poor woman should have medical attendance.

"Why, so I say," answered Lady Penelope; "and I asked the brute Quackleben, who, I am sure, owes me some gratitude, to go and see her; but the sordid monster answered, 'Who was to pay him?'—He grows every day more intolerable, now that he seems sure of marrying that fat blowzy widow. He could not, I am sure, expect that I—out of my pittance—And besides, my lord, is there not a law that the parish, or the county, or the something or other, shall pay for physicking the poor?"

"We will find means to secure the Doctor's attendance," said Lord Etherington; "and I believe my best way will be to walk back to the Well, and send him to wait on the patient. I am afraid I can be of little use to a poor woman in a childbed fever."

"Puerperal, my lord, puerperal," said Lady Penelope in a tone of correction.

"In a puerperal fever then," said Lord Etherington; "why, what can I do to help her?"

"Oh! my lord, you have forgotten that this Anne Heggie, that I told you of, came here with one child in her arms—and another—in short, about to become a mother again—and settled herself in this miserable hut I told you of—and some people think the minister should have sent her to her own parish; but he is a strange, soft-headed, sleepy sort of man, not over active in his parochial duties. However, there she settled, and there was something about her quite beyond the style of a common pauper, my lord—not at all the disgusting sort of person that you give a sixpence to while you look another way—but some one that seemed to have seen better days—one that, as Shakspeare says, could a tale unfold—though, indeed, I have never thoroughly learned her history—only, that to-day, as I called to know how she was, and sent my maid into her hut with some trifle, not worth mentioning, I find there is something hangs about her mind concerning the Mowbray family here of St. Ronan's—and my woman says the poor creature is dying, and is raving either for Mr. Mowbray or for some magistrate to receive a declaration; and so I have given you the trouble to come with me, that we may get out of the poor creature, if possible, whatever she has got to say.—I hope it is not murder—I hope not—though young St. Ronan's has been a strange, wild, daring, thoughtless creature—*sgherro insigne*, as the Italian says.—But here is the hut, my lord—pray, walk in."

The mention of the St. Ronan's family, and of a secret relating to them, banished the thoughts which Lord Etherington began to entertain of leaving Lady Penelope to execute her works of devoted charity without his assistance. It was now with an interest equal to her own, that he stood before a most miserable hut, where the unfortunate female, her distresses not greatly relieved by Lady Penelope's ostentatious bounty, had resided both previous to her confinement, and since that event had taken place, with an old woman, one of the parish poor, whose miserable dole the minister had augmented, that she might have some means of assisting the stranger.

Lady Penelope lifted the latch and entered, after a momentary hesitation, which proceeded from a struggle betwixt her fear of infection, and her eager curiosity to know something, she could not guess what, that might affect the Mowbrays in their honour or fortunes. The latter soon prevailed, and she entered, followed by Lord Etherington. The lady, like other comforters of the cabins of the poor, proceeded to rebuke the grumbling old woman for want of order and cleanliness—censured the food which was provided for the patient, and inquired particularly after the wine which she had left to make caudle with. The crone was not so dazzled with Lady Penelope's dignity or bounty as to endure her reprimand with patience. "They that had their bread to won wi' an arm," she said, for the other hung powerless by her side, "had mair to do than to soop hooses; if her leddyship wad let her ain idle quean of a lass take the besom, she might make the house as clean as she liked; and madam wad be a' the better of the exercise, and wad hae done, at least, ae turn of wark at the week's end."

"Do you hear the old hag, my lord?" said Lady Penelope. "Well, the poor are horrid ungrateful wretches—And the wine, dame—the wine?"

"The wine!—there was hardly half a mutchkin, and puir, thin, fusionless skink it was—the wine was drank out ye may swear—we didna fling it ower our shouther—if ever we were to get good o't, it was by taking it naked, and no wi' your sugar and your slaisters—I wish, for ane, I had ne'er kend the sour smack o't. If the bedral hadna gien me a drap of usquebaugh, I might e'en hae died of your leddyship's liquor, for"——

Lord Etherington here interrupted the grumbling crone, thrusting some silver into her grasp, and at the same time begging her to be silent. The hag weighed the crown-piece in her hand, and crawled to her chimney-corner, muttering as she went,—"This is something like—this is something like—no like rinning into the house and out of the house, and geeing orders, like mistress and mair, and than a puir shilling again Saturday at e'en."

So saying, she sat down to her wheel, and seized, while she spun, her jet-black cutty pipe, from which she soon sent such clouds of vile mundungus vapour as must have cleared the premises of Lady Penelope, had she not been strong in purpose to share the expected confession of the invalid. As for Miss Digges, she coughed, sneezed, retched, and finally ran out of the cottage, declaring she could not live in such a smoke, if it were to hear twenty sick women's last speeches; and that, besides, she was sure to know all about it from Lady Penelope, if it was ever so little worth telling over again.

Lord Etherington was now standing beside the miserable flock-bed, in which lay the poor patient, distracted, in what seemed to be her dying moments, with the peevish clamour of the elder infant, to which she could only reply by low moans, turning her looks as well as she could from its ceaseless whine to the other side of her wretched couch, where lay the unlucky creature to which she had last given birth; its shivering limbs imperfectly covered with a blanket, its little features already swollen and bloated, and its eyes scarce open, apparently insensible to the evils of a state from which it seemed about to be speedily released.

"You are very ill, poor woman," said Lord Etherington; "I am told you desire a magistrate."

"It was Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's whom I desired to see—John Mowbray of St. Ronan's—the lady promised to bring him here."

"I am not Mowbray of St. Ronan's," said Lord Etherington; "but I am a justice of peace, and a member of the legislature—I am, moreover, Mr. Mowbray's particular friend, if I can be of use to you in any of these capacities."

The poor woman remained long silent, and when she spoke it was doubtfully.

"Is my Lady Penelope Penfeather there?" she said, straining her darkened eyes.

"Her ladyship is present, and within hearing," said Lord Etherington.

"My case is the worse," answered the dying woman, for so she seemed, "if I must communicate such a

secret as mine to a man of whom I know nothing, and a woman of whom I only know that she wants discretion."

"I—I want discretion!" said Lady Penelope; but at a signal from Lord Etherington she seemed to restrain herself; nor did the sick woman, whose powers of observation were greatly impaired, seem to be aware of the interruption. She spoke, notwithstanding her situation, with an intelligible and even emphatic voice; her manner in a great measure betraying the influence of the fever, and her tone and language seeming much superior to her most miserable condition.

"I am not the abject creature which I seem," she said; "at least, I was not born to be so. I wish I were that utter object! I wish I were a wretched pauper of the lowest class—a starving vagabond—a witless mother—ignorance and insensibility would make me bear my lot like the outcast animal that dies patiently on the side of the common, where it has been half-starved during its life. But I—but I—born and bred to better things, have not lost the memory of them, and they make my present condition—my shame—my poverty—my infamy—the sight of my dying babes—the sense that my own death is coming fast on—they make these things a foretaste of hell!"

Lady Penelope's self-conceit and affectation were broken down by this fearful exordium. She sobbed, shuddered, and, for once perhaps in her life, felt the real, not the assumed necessity, of putting her handkerchief to her eyes. Lord Etherington also was moved.

"Good woman," he said, "as far as relieving your personal wants can mitigate your distress, I will see that that is fully performed, and that your poor children are attended to."

"May God bless you!" said the poor woman, with a glance at the wretched forms beside her; "and may you," she added, after a momentary pause, "deserve the blessing of God, for it is bestowed in vain on those who are unworthy of it!"

Lord Etherington felt, perhaps, a twinge of conscience; for he said, something hastily, "Pray, go on, good woman, if you really have any thing to communicate to me as a magistrate—it is time your condition was somewhat mended, and I will cause you to be cared for directly."

"Stop yet a moment," she said; "let me unload my conscience before I go hence, for no earthly relief will long avail to prolong my time here.—I was well born, the more my present shame! well educated, the greater my present guilt!—I was always, indeed, poor, but I felt not of the ills of poverty. I only thought of it when my vanity demanded idle and expensive gratifications, for real wants I knew none. I was companion of a young lady of higher rank than my own, my relative however, and one of such exquisite kindness of disposition, that she treated me as a sister, and would have shared with me all that she had on earth——I scarce think I can go farther with my story!—something rises to my throat when I recollect how I rewarded her sisterly love!—I was elder than Clara—I should have directed her reading, and confirmed her understanding; but my own bent led me to peruse only works, which, though they burlesque nature are seductive to the imagination. We read these follies together, until we had fashioned out for ourselves a little world of romance, and prepared ourselves for a maze of adventures. Clara's imaginations were as pure as those of angels; mine were—but it is unnecessary to tell them. The fiend, always watchful, presented a tempter at the moment when it was most dangerous."

She paused here, as if she found difficulty in expressing herself; and Lord Etherington, turning, with great appearance of interest, to Lady Penelope, began to inquire, "Whether it were quite agreeable to her ladyship to remain any longer an ear-witness of this unfortunate confession?—it seems to be verging on some things—things that it might be unpleasant for your ladyship to hear."

"I was just forming the same opinion, my lord; *and, to say truth, was about to propose to your lordship to withdraw, and leave me alone* with the poor woman. My sex will make her necessary communications more frank in your lordship's absence."

"True, madam; but then I am called here in my capacity of a magistrate."

"Hush!" said Lady Penelope; "she speaks."

"They say every woman that yields, makes herself a slave to her seducer; but I sold my liberty not to a man, but a demon! He made me serve him in his vile schemes against my friend and patroness—and oh! he found in me an agent too willing, from mere envy, to destroy the virtue which I had lost myself. Do not listen to me any more—Go, and leave me to my fate! I am the most detestable wretch that ever lived—detestable to myself worst of all, because even in my penitence there is a secret whisper that tells me, that were I as I have been, I would again act over all the wickedness I have done, and much worse. Oh! for Heaven's assistance, to crush the wicked thought!"

She closed her eyes, folded her emaciated hands, and held them upwards in the attitude of one who prays internally; presently the hands separated, and fell gently down on the miserable couch; but her eyes did not open, nor was there the slightest sign of motion in the features. Lady Penelope shrieked faintly, hid her eyes, and hurried back from the bed, while Lord Etherington, his looks darkening with a complication of feelings, remained gazing on the poor woman, as if eager to discern whether the spark of life was totally extinct. Her grim old assistant hurried to the bedside, with some spirits in a broken glass.

"Have ye no had pennyworths for your charity?" she said, in spiteful scorn. "Ye buy the very life o' us wi' your shillings and sixpences, your groats and your boddles—ye hae garr'd the puir wretch speak till she swarfs, and now ye stand as if ye never saw a woman in a dwam before? Let me till her wi' the dram—mony words mickle drought, ye ken—Stand out o' my gate, my leddy, if sae be that ye are a leddy; there is little use of the like of you when there is death in the pot."

Lady Penelope, half affronted, but still more frightened by the manners of the old hag, now gladly embraced Lord Etherington's renewed offer to escort her from the hut. He left it not, however, without bestowing an additional gratuity on the old woman, who received it with a whining benediction.

"The Almighty guide your course through the troubles of this wicked warld—and the muckle deevil blaw wind in your sails," she added, in her natural tone, as the guests vanished from her miserable threshold—"A wheen cork-headed, barmy-brained gowks! that wunna let puir folks sae muckle as die in quiet, wi' their sossings and their soopings."*

"This poor creature's declaration," said Lord Etherington to Lady Penelope, "seems to refer to matters which the law has nothing to do with, and which, perhaps, as they seem to implicate the peace of

* The author has made an attempt in this character to draw a picture of what is too often seen, a wretched being whose heart becomes hardened and spited at the world, in which she is doomed to experience much misery and little sympathy. The system of compulsory charity by poor's rates, of which the absolute necessity can hardly be questioned, has connected with it on both sides some of the most odious and malevolent feelings that can agitate humanity. The quality of true charity is not strained. Like that of mercy, of which, in a large sense, it may be accounted a sister virtue, it blesses him that gives and him that takes. It awakens kindly feelings both in the mind of the donor and in that of the relieved object. The giver and receiver are recommended to each other by mutual feelings of good-will, and the pleasurable emotions connected with the consciousness of a good action fix the deed in recollection of the one, while a sense of gratitude renders it holy to the other. In the legal and compulsory assessment for the proclaimed parish pauper, there is nothing of all this. The alms are extorted from an unwilling hand, and a heart which desires the annihilation, rather than the relief, of the distressed object. The object of charity, sensible of the ill-will with which the pittance is bestowed, seizes on it as his right, not as a favour. The manner of conferring it being directly calculated to hurt and disgust his feelings, he revenges himself by becoming impudent and clamorous. A more odious picture, or more likely to deprave the feelings of those exposed to its influence, can hardly be imagined; and yet to such a point have we been brought by an artificial system of society, that we must either deny altogether the right of the poor to their just proportion of the fruits of the earth, or afford them some means of subsistence out of them by the institution of positive law.

of respectability, and the character of a
y, we ought to inquire no farther after."
r from your lordship," said Lady Penelope;
extremely—I suppose you guess whom her
touched upon ?"
l, your ladyship does my acuteness too
our."
he not mention a Christian name? said
slope; "your lordship is strangely dull this
"
istian name?—No, none that I heard—yes,
something about—a Catherine, I think it

rine!" answered the lady; "No, my lord,
ra—rather a rare name in this country, and
, I think, to a young lady of whom your
ould know something, unless your evening
with Lady Binks have blotted entirely out
emory your morning visits to Shaws-Cas-
are a bold man, my lord. I would advise
ude Mrs. Blower among the objects of your
and then you will have maid, wife, and
on your list."
my honour, your ladyship is too severe,"
Etherington; "you surround yourself every
rith all that is clever and accomplished
e people here, and then you ridicule a poor
onster, who dare not approach your charm-
because he seeks for some amusement else-
'his is to tyrannize, and not to reign—it is
espotism!"
ay lord, I know you well, my lord," said
slope—"Sorry would your lordship be, had
wer to render yourself welcome to any cir-
you may please to approach."
is to say," answered the lord, "you will
if I intrude on your ladyship's coterie this
"
is no society which Lord Etherington can
requenting, where he will not be a welcome

plead then at once my pardon and privilege
ag—And now," (speaking as if he had suc-
establishing some confidence with her la-
'what do you really think of this blind

ust believe it concerns Miss Mowbray. She
/s an odd girl—something about her I could
are—a sort of effrontery—that is, perhaps, a
d, but a kind of assurance—an air of confi-
that though I kept on a footing with her,
ne was an orphan girl of good family, and
really knew nothing positively bad of her,
metimes absolutely shocked me."
adyship, perhaps, would not think it right to
city to the story? at least, till you know ex-
t it is," said the Earl, in a tone of sugges-

d upon it, that it is quite the worst, the very
ou heard the woman say that she had ex-
ra to ruin—and you know she must have
ira Mowbray, because she was so anxious
story to her brother, St. Ronan's."
rue—I did not think of that," answered
erington; "still it would be hard on the poor
ould get abroad."
ill never get abroad for me," said Lady Pe-
I would not tell the very wind of it. But
anot meet Miss Mowbray as formerly—I
ation in life to maintain, my lord—and I
the necessity of being select in my society—
ly I owe the public, if it were even not my
iation."
nly, my lady Penelope," said Lord Ether-
but then consider, that, in a place where all
ecessarily observant of your ladyship's be-
he least coldness on your part to Miss
—and, after all, we have nothing like as-
any thing being wrong there—would ruin
he company here, and with the world at

my lord," answered *Lady Penelope*, "as
th of the story, I have some private reasons
for 'holding the strange tale devoutly

true;' for I had a mysterious hint from a very worthy, but a very singular man, (your lordship knows how I adore originality,) the clergyman of the parish, who made me aware there was something wrong about Miss Clara—something that—your lordship will excuse my speaking more plainly,—Oh, no!—I fear—I fear it is all too true—You know Mr. Cargill, I suppose, my lord?"

"Yes—no—I—I think I have seen him," said Lord Etherington. "But how came the lady to make the parson her father-confessor?—they have no auricular confession in the Kirk—it must have been with the purpose of marriage, I presume—let us hope that it took place—perhaps it really was so—did he, Cargill—the minister, I mean—say any thing of such a matter?"

"Not a word—not a word—I see where you are, my lord; you would put a good face on't.—

'They call'd it marriage, by that specious name
To veil the crime, and sanctify the shame.'

Queen Dido for that. How the clergyman came into the secret I cannot tell—he is a very close man. But I know he will not hear of Miss Mowbray being married to any one, unquestionably because he knows that, in doing so, she would introduce disgrace into some honest family—and, truly, I am much of his mind, my lord."

"Perhaps Mr. Cargill may know the lady is privately married already," said the Earl; "I think that is the more natural inference, begging your ladyship's pardon for presuming to differ in opinion."

Lady Penelope seemed determined not to take this view of the case.

"No, no—no, I tell you," she replied; "she cannot be married, for if she were married, how could the poor wretch say that she was ruined?—You know there is a difference betwixt ruin and marriage."

"Some people are said to have found them synonymous, Lady Penelope," answered the Earl.

"You are smart on me, my lord; but still, in common parlance, when we say a woman is ruined, we mean quite the contrary of her being married—it is impossible for me to be more explicit upon such a topic, my lord."

"I defer to your ladyship's better judgment," said Lord Etherington. "I only entreat you to observe a little caution in this business—I will make the strictest inquiries of this woman, and acquaint you with the result; and I hope, out of regard to the respectable family of St. Ronan's, your ladyship will be in no hurry to intimate any thing to Miss Mowbray's prejudice."

"I certainly am no person to spread scandal, my lord," answered the lady, drawing herself up; "at the same time, I must say, the Mowbrays have little claim on me for forbearance. I am sure I was the first person to bring this Spa into fashion, which has been a matter of such consequence to their estate; and yet Mr. Mowbray set himself against me, my lord, in every possible sort of way, and encouraged the underbred people about him to behave very strangely.—There was the business of building the Belvidere, which he would not permit to be done out of the stock-purse of the company, because I had given the workmen the plan and the orders—and then, about the tea-room—and the hour for beginning dancing—and about the subscription for Mr. Rymour's new Tale of Chivalry—in short, I owe no consideration to Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's."

"But the poor young lady?" said Lord Etherington.

"Oh! the poor young lady?—the poor young lady can be as saucy as a rich young lady, I promise you.—There was a business in which she used me scandalously, Lord Etherington—it was about a very trifling matter—a shawl. Nobody minds dress less than I do, my lord; I thank Heaven my thoughts turn upon very different topics—but it is in trifles that disrespect and unkindness are shown; and I have had a full share of both from Miss Clara, besides a good deal of impertinence from her brother upon the same subject."

"There is but one way remains," thought the Earl, as they approached the Spa, "and that is to work on the fears of this d—d vindictive blue-stocking'd wild

eat.—Your ladyship," he said aloud, "is aware what severe damages have been awarded in late cases where something approaching to scandal has been traced to ladies of consideration—the privileges of the tea-table have been found insufficient to protect some fair critics against the consequences of too frank and liberal animadversion upon the characters of their friends. So pray, remember, that as yet we know very little on this subject."

Lady Penelope loved money, and feared the law; and this hint, fortified by her acquaintance with Mowbray's love of his sister, and his irritable and revengeful disposition, brought her in a moment much nearer the temper in which Lord Etherington wished to leave her. She protested, that no one could be more tender than she of the fame of the unfortunate, even supposing their guilt was fully proved—promised caution on the subject of the pauper's declaration, and hoped Lord Etherington would join her tea-party early in the evening, as she wished to make him acquainted with one or two of her *protegés*, whom, she was sure, his lordship would find deserving of his advice and countenance. Being by this time at the door of her own apartment, her ladyship took leave of the Earl with a most gracious smile.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

On the lee-beam lies the land, boys,
See all clear to reef each course;
Let the fore-sheets go, don't mind, boys,
Though the weather should be worse.—*The Storm.*

"It darkens round me like a tempest," thought Lord Etherington, as, with slow step, folded arms, and his white hat slouched over his brows, he traversed the short interval of space betwixt his own apartments and those of the Lady Penelope. In a buck of the old school, one of Congreve's men of wit and pleasure about town, this would have been a departure from character; but the present fine man does not derogate from his quality, even by exhibiting all the moody and gentlemanlike solemnity of Master Stephen. So, Lord Etherington was at liberty to carry on his reflections, without attracting observation.—"I have put a stopper into the mouth of that old vinegar-cruet of quality, but the acidity of her temper will soon dissolve the charm—And what to do?"

As he looked round him, he saw his trusty valet Solmes, who, touching his hat with due respect, said as he passed him, "Your lordship's letters are in your private despatch-box."

Simple as these words were, and indifferent the tone in which they were spoken, their import made Lord Etherington's heart bound as if his fate had depended on the accents. He intimated no farther interest in the communication, however, than to desire Solmes to be below, in case he should ring; and with these words entered his apartment, and barred and bolted the door, even before he looked on the table where his despatch-box was placed.

Lord Etherington had, as is usual, one key to the box which held his letters, his confidential servant being intrusted with the other; so that, under the protection of a patent lock, his despatches escaped all risk of being tampered with,—a precaution not altogether unnecessary on the part of those who frequent hotels and lodging-houses.

"By your leave, Mr. Bramah," said the Earl as he applied the key, jesting, as it were, with his own agitation, as he would have done with that of a third party. The lid was raised, and displayed the packet, the appearance and superscription of which had attracted his observation but a short while before in the post-office. *Then* he would have given much to be possessed of the opportunity which was now in his power; but many pause on the brink of a crime, who have contemplated it at a distance without scruple. Lord Etherington's first impulse had led him to poke *the fire; and he* held in his hand the letter which he *was more than half tempted to commit*, without even *breaking the seal, to the fiery element.* But, though sufficiently familiarized with guilt, he was not as yet acquainted with it in its basest shapes—he had not yet acted with meanness, or at least with what the world terms such. He had been a duellist, the manners of the age authorized it—a libertine, the world excused it to his youth and condition—a bold and successful gambler, for that quality he was admired and envied; and a thousand other inaccuracies, to which these practices and habits lead, were easily slurred over in a man of quality, with fortune and spirit to support his rank. But his present meditated act was of a different kind. Tell it not in Bond Street, whisper it not on St. James's pavement!—it amounted to an act of petty larceny, for which the code of honour would admit of no composition.

Lord Etherington, under the influence of these recollections, stood for a few minutes suspended—But the devil always finds logic to convince his followers. He recollected the wrong done to his mother, and to himself, her offspring, to whom his father had, in the face of the whole world, imparted the hereditary rights, of which he was now, by a posthumous deed, endeavouring to deprive the memory of the one, and the expectations of the other. Surely, the right being his own, he had a full title, by the most effectual means, whatever such means might be, to repel all attacks on that right, and even destroy, if necessary, the documents by which his enemies were prosecuting their unjust plans against his honour and interest.

This reasoning prevailed, and Lord Etherington again held the devoted packet above the flames; when it occurred to him, that his resolution being taken, he ought to carry it into execution as effectually as possible; and to do so, it was necessary to know, that the packet actually contained the papers which he was desirous to destroy.

Never did a doubt arise in juster time; for no sooner had the seal burst, and the envelope rustled under his fingers, than he perceived, to his utter consternation, that he held in his hand only the copies of the deeds for which Francis Tyrrel had written, the originals of which he had too sanguinely concluded would be forwarded according to his requisition. A letter from a partner of the house with which they were deposited, stated that they had not felt themselves at liberty, in the absence of the head of their firm, to whom these papers had been committed, to part with them even to Mr. Tyrrel, though they had proceeded so far as to open the parcel, and now transmitted to him formal copies of the papers contained in it, which, they presumed, would serve Mr. Tyrrel's purpose for consulting counsel, or the like. They themselves, in a case of so much delicacy, and in the absence of their principal partner, were determined to retain the originals, unless called to produce them in a court of justice.

With a solemn imprecation on the formality and absurdity of the writer, Lord Etherington let the letter of advice drop from his hand into the fire, and throwing himself into a chair, passed his hand across his eyes, as if their very power of sight had been blighted by what he had read. His title, and his paternal fortune, which he thought but an instant before might be rendered unchallengeable by a single movement of his hand, seemed now on the verge of being lost for ever. His rapid recollection failed not to remind him of what was less known to the world, that his early and profuse expenditure had greatly dilapidated his maternal fortune; and that the estate of Nettlewood, which five minutes ago he only coveted as a wealthy man desires increase of his store, must now be acquired, if he would avoid being a poor and embarrassed spendthrift. To impede his possessing himself of this property, fate had restored to the scene the penitent of the morning, who, as he had too much reason to believe, was returned to this neighbourhood, to do justice to Clara Mowbray, and who was not unlikely to put the whole story of the marriage on its right footing. She, however, might be got rid of; and it might still be possible to hurry Miss Mowbray, by working on her fears, or through the agency of her brother, into a union with him while he still preserved the title of Lord Etherington. This

therefore, he resolved to secure, if effort or if intrigue could carry the point; nor was it the least consideration, that, should he succeed, he would obtain over Tyrrel, his successful rival, such a triumph, as would be sufficiently to embitter the tranquillity of his whole life.

In a few minutes, his rapid and contriving invention had formed a plan for securing the sole advantage which seemed to remain open for him; and conscious that he had no time to lose, he entered immediately upon the execution.

The bell summoned Solmes to his lordship's apartment, when the Earl, as coolly as if he had hoped to dupe his experienced valet by such an assertion, said, "You have brought me a packet designed for some man at the Aultoun—let it be sent to him—Stay, I will re-seal it first."

He accordingly re-sealed the packet, containing all the writings, excepting the letter of advice, (which he had burnt,) and gave it to the valet, with the caution, "I wish you would not make such blunders in future."

"I beg your lordship's pardon—I will take better care again—thought it was addressed to your lordship."

So answered Solmes, too knowing to give the least look of intelligence, far less to remind the Earl that his own directions had occasioned the mistake of which he complained.

"Solmes," continued the Earl, "you need not mention your blunder at the post-office; it would only occasion tattle in this idle place—but be sure that the gentleman has his letter.—And, Solmes, I see Mr. Mowbray walk across—ask him to dine with me today at five. I have a headache, and cannot face the clamour of the savages who feed at the public table.—And let me see—make my compliments to Lady Penelope Penfeather—I will certainly have the honour of waiting on her ladyship this evening to tea, agreeably to her very boreing invitation received—write her a proper card, and word it your own way. Bespeak dinner for two, and see you have some of that batch of Burgundy." The servant was retiring, when his master added, "Stay a moment—I have a more important business than I have yet mentioned.—Solmes, you have managed devilish ill about the woman Irwin!"

"I, my lord?" answered Solmes.

"Yes, you, sir—did you not tell me she had gone to the West Indies with a friend of yours, and did not I give them a couple of hundred pounds for passage-money?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the valet.

"Ay, but now it proves *no*, my lord," said Lord Etherington; "for she has found her way back to this country in miserable plight—half-starved, and, no doubt, willing to do or say any thing for a livelihood—How has this happened?"

"Biddulph must have taken her cash, and turned her loose, my lord," answered Solmes, as if he had been speaking of the most commonplace transaction in the world; "but I know the woman's nature so well, and am so much master of her history, that I can carry her off the country in twenty-four hours, and place her where she will never think of returning, provided your lordship can spare me so long."

"About it directly—but I can tell you, that you will find the woman in a very penitential humour, and very ill in health to boot."

"I am sure of my game," answered Solmes; "with submission to your lordship, I think if death and her good angel had hold of one of that woman's arms, the devil and I could make a shift to lead her away by the other."

"Away and about it, then," said Etherington. "But, hark ye, Solmes, be kind to her, and see all her wants relieved. I have done her mischief enough—though nature and the devil had done half the work to my hand."

Solmes at length was permitted to withdraw to execute his various commissions, with an assurance that his services would *not be wanted for the* next *twenty-four hours.*

"*So!*" *said the Earl, as his agent* withdrew,

"there is a spring put in motion, which, well oiled, will move the whole machine—And here, in lucky time, comes Harry Jekyl—I hear his whistle on the stairs.—There is a silly lightness of heart about that fellow, which I envy, while I despise it; but he is welcome now, for I want him."

Jekyl entered accordingly, and broke out with "I am glad to see one of your fellows laying a cloth for two in your parlour, Etherington—I was afraid you were going down among these confounded bores again to-day."

"*You* are not to be one of the two, Hal," answered Lord Etherington.

"No?—then I may be a third. I hope, if not second?"

"Neither first, second, nor third, Captain.—The truth is, I want a tête-à-tête with Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's," replied the Earl; "and, besides, I have to beg the very particular favour of you to go again to that fellow Martigny. It is time that he should produce his papers, if he has any—of which, for one, I do not believe a word. He has had ample time to hear from London; and I think I have delayed long enough in an important matter upon his bare assertion."

"I cannot blame your impatience," said Jekyl, "and I will go on your errand instantly. As you waited on my advice, I am bound to find an end to your suspense.—At the same time, if the man is not possessed of such papers as he spoke of, I must own he is happy in a command of consummate assurance, which might set up the whole roll of attorneys."

"You will be soon able to judge of that," said Lord Etherington; "and now, off with you—Why do you look at me so anxiously?"

"I cannot tell—I have strange forebodings about this tête-à-tête with Mowbray. You should spare him Etherington—he is not your match—wants both judgment and temper."

"Tell him so, Jekyl," answered the Earl, "and his proud Scotch stomach will be up in an instant, and he will pay you with a shot for your pains.—Why, he thinks himself cock of the walk, this strutting bantam, notwithstanding the lesson I gave him before—And what do you think?—He has the impudence to talk about my attentions to Lady Binks as inconsistent with the prosecution of my suit to his sister! Yes, Hal—this awkward Scotch laird, that has scarce tact enough to make love to a ewe-milker, or, at best, to some daggletailed soubrette, has the assurance to start himself as my rival!"

"Then, good-night to St. Ronan's!—this will be a fatal dinner to him.—Etherington, I know by that laugh you are bent on mischief—I have a great mind to give him a hint."

"I wish you would," answered the Earl; "it would all turn to my account."

"Do you defy me?—Well, if I meet him, I will put him on his guard."

The friends parted; and it was not long ere Jekyl encountered Mowbray on one of the public walks.

"You dine with Etherington to-day?" said the Captain—"Forgive me, Mr. Mowbray, if I say one single word—Beware."

"Of what should I beware, Captain Jekyl," answered Mowbray, "when I dine with a friend of your own, and a man of honour?"

"Certainly Lord Etherington is both, Mr. Mowbray; but he loves play, and is too hard for most people."

"I thank you for the hint, Captain Jekyl—I am a raw Scotchman, it is true; but yet I know a thing or two. Fair play is always presumed amongst gentlemen; and that taken for granted, I have the vanity to think I need no one's caution on the subject, not even Captain Jekyl's, though his experience must needs be so much superior to mine."

"In that case, sir," said Jekyl, bowing coldly, "I have no more to say, and I hope there is no harm done.—Conceited coxcomb!" he added, mentally, as they parted, "how truly did Etherington judge of him, and what an ass was I to intermeddle!—I hope Etherington will strip him of every feather!"

He pursued his walk in quest of Tyrrel, and Mowbray proceeded to the apartments of the Earl, in a

temper of mind well suited to the purposes of the latter, who judged of his disposition accurately when he permitted Jekyl to give his well-meant warning. To be supposed, by a man of acknowledged fashion, so decidedly inferior to his antagonist—to be considered as an object of compassion, and made the subject of a good-boy warning, was gall and bitterness to his proud spirit, which, the more that he felt a conscious inferiority in the arts which they all cultivated, struggled the more to preserve the footing of at least apparent equality.

Since the first memorable party at piquet, Mowbray had never hazarded his luck with Lord Etherington, except for trifling stakes; but his conceit led him to suppose that he now fully understood his play, and, agreeably to the practice of those who have habituated themselves to gambling, he had every now and then felt a yearning to try for his revenge. He wished also to be out of Lord Etherington's debt, feeling galled under a sense of pecuniary obligation, which hindered his speaking his mind to him fully upon the subject of his flirtation with Lady Binks, which he justly considered as an insult to his family, considering the footing on which the Earl seemed desirous to stand with Clara Mowbray. From these obligations a favourable evening might free him, and Mowbray was, in fact, indulging in a waking dream to this purpose, when Jekyl interrupted him. His untimely warning only excited a spirit of contradiction, and a determination to show the adviser how little he was qualified to judge of his talents; and in this humour, his ruin, which was the consequence of that afternoon, was far from seeming to be the premeditated, or even the voluntary work of the Earl of Etherington.

On the contrary, the victim himself was the first to propose play—deep play—double stakes; while Lord Etherington, on the other hand, often proposed to diminish their game, or to break off entirely; but it was always with an affectation of superiority, which only stimulated Mowbray to farther and more desperate risks; and, at last, when Mowbray became his debtor to an overwhelming amount, (his circumstances considered,) the Earl threw down the cards, and declared he should be too late for Lady Penelope's tea-party, to which he was positively engaged.

"Will you not give me my revenge?" said Mowbray, taking up the cards, and shuffling them with fierce anxiety.

"Not now, Mowbray; we have played too long already—you have lost too much—more than perhaps is convenient for you to pay."

Mowbray gnashed his teeth, in spite of his resolution to maintain an exterior, at least of firmness.

"You can take your time, you know," said the Earl; "a note of hand will suit me as well as the money."

"No, by G—!" answered Mowbray, "I will not be so taken in a second time—I had better have sold myself to the devil than to your lordship—I have never been my own man since."

"Those are not very kind expressions, Mowbray," said the Earl; "you *would* play, and they that will play must expect sometimes to lose"——

"And they who win will expect to be paid," said Mowbray, breaking in. "I know that as well as you, my lord, and you shall be paid—I will pay you—I will pay you, by G—! Do you make any doubt that I will pay you, my lord?"

"You look as if you thought of paying me in sharp coin," said Lord Etherington; "and I think that would scarce be consistent with the terms we stand upon towards each other."

"By my soul, my lord," said Mowbray, "I cannot tell what these terms are; and to be at my wit's end at once, I should be glad to know. You set out upon paying addresses to my sister, and with your visits and opportunities at Shaws-Castle, I cannot find the matter makes the least progress—it keeps moving without advancing, like a child's rocking-horse. Perhaps you think that you have curbed me up so tightly, that I dare not stir in the matter; but you will find it otherwise.—Your lordship may keep a haram if you will, but my sister shall not enter it."

"You are angry, and therefore you are unjust," said Etherington; "you know well enough it is your sister's fault that there is any delay. I am most willing—most desirous—to call her Lady Ethrington—nothing but her unlucky prejudices against me have retarded a union which I have so many reasons for desiring."

"Well," replied Mowbray, "that shall be my business. I know no reason she can pretend to decline a marriage so honourable to her house, and which is approved of by me, that house's head. That matter shall be arranged in twenty-four hours."

"It will do me the most sensible pleasure," said Lord Etherington; "you shall soon see how sincerely I desire your alliance; and as for the trifle you have lost"——

"It is no trifle to me, my lord—it is my ruin—but it shall be paid—and let me tell your lordship, you may thank your good luck for it more than your good play."

"We will say no more of it at present, if you please," said Lord Etherington," to-morrow is a new day; and if you will take my advice, you will not be too harsh with your sister. A little firmness is seldom amiss with young women, but severity"——

"I will pray your lordship to spare me your advice on this subject. However valuable it may be in other respects, I can, I take it, speak to my own sister in my own way."

"Since you are so caustically disposed, Mowbray," answered the Earl, "I presume you will not honour her ladyship's tea-table to-night, though I believe it will be the last of the season?"

"And why should you think so, my lord?" answered Mowbray, whose losses had rendered him testy and contradictory upon every subject that was started. "Why should not I pay my respects to Lady Penelope, or any other tabby of quality? I have no title, indeed; but I suppose that my family"——

"Entitles you to become a canon of Strasburgh, doubtless—But you do not seem in a very Christian mood for taking orders. All I meant to say was, that you and Lady Pen were not used to be on such a good footing."

"Well, she sent me a card for her blow-out," said Mowbray; "and so I am resolved to go. When I have been there half an hour, I will ride up to Shaws-Castle, and you shall hear of my speed in wooing for you to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A TEA-PARTY.

> Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round;
> And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
> Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
> That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
> Thus let us welcome peaceful evening in.
>
> COWPER'S *Task*.

THE approach of the cold and rainy season had now so far thinned the company at the Well, that, in order to secure the necessary degree of crowd upon her tea-nights, Lady Penelope was obliged to employ some coaxing towards those whom she had considered as much under par in society. Even the Doctor and Mrs. Blower were graciously smiled upon—for their marriage was now an arranged affair; and the event was of a nature likely to spread the reputation of the Spa among wealthy widows, and medical gentlemen of more skill than practice. So in they came, the Doctor smirking, gallanting, and performing all the bustling parade of settled and arranged courtship, with much of that grace wherewith a turkey-cock goes through the same ceremony. Old Touchwood had also attended her ladyship's summons, chiefly, it may be supposed, from his restless fidgety disposition, which seldom suffered him to remain absent even from those places of resort of which he usually professed his detestation. There was, besides, Mr. Winterblossom, who, in his usual spirit of quiet epicurism and self-indulgence, was, under the fire of a volley of compliments to Lady

Penelope, scheming to secure for himself an early cup of tea. There was Lady Binks also, with her wonted degree of sullenness in her beautiful face, angry at her husband as usual, and not disposed to be pleased with Lord Etherington for being absent, when she desired to excite Sir Bingo's jealousy. This she had discovered to be the most effectual way of tormenting the Baronet, and she rejoiced in it with the savage glee of a hackney coachman, who has found a *rank*, where he can make his poor jade feel the whip. The rest of the company were also in attendance as usual. MacTurk himself was present, notwithstanding that he thought it an egregious waste of hot water, to bestow it upon compounding any mixture saving punch. He had of late associated himself a good deal with the traveller; not that they by any means resembled each other in temper or opinions, but rather because there was that degree of difference betwixt them which furnished perpetual subject for dispute and discussion. They were not long, on the present occasion, ere they lighted on a fertile source of controversy.

"Never tell me of your points of honour," said Touchwood, raising his voice altogether above the general tone of polite conversation—"all humbug, Captain MacTurk—mere hair-traps to springe woodcocks—men of sense break through them."

"Upon my word, sir," said the Captain, "and myself is surprised to hear you—for, look you, sir, every man's honour is the breath of his nostrils—Cot tamn!"

"Then let men breathe through their mouths, and be d—d," returned the controversialist. "I tell you, sir, that, besides its being forbidden, both by law and gospel, it's an idiotical and totally absurd practice, that of duelling. An honest savage has more sense than to practise it—he takes his bow or his gun, as the thing may be, and shoots his enemy from behind a bush. And a very good way; for you see there can, in that case, be only one man's death between them."

"Saul of my body, sir," said the Captain, "gin ye promulgate sic doctrines amang the good company, it's my belief you will bring somebody to the gallows."

"Thank ye, Captain, with all my heart; but I stir up no quarrels—I leave war to them that live by it. I only say, that, except our old, stupid ancestors in the north-west here, I know no country so silly as to harbour this custom of duelling. It is unknown in Africa, among the negroes—in America."

"Don't tell me that," said the Captain; "a Yankee will fight with muskets and buck-shot, rather than sit still with an affront. I should know Jonathan, I think."

"Altogether unknown among the thousand tribes of India."

"I'll be tamned, then!" said Captain MacTurk. "Was I not in Tippoo's prison at Bangalore? and, when the joyful day of our liberation came, did we not solemnize it with fourteen little affairs, whereof we had been laying the foundation in our house of captivity, as holy writ has it, and never went farther to settle them than the glacis of the fort? By my soul, you would have thought there was a smart skirmish, the firing was so close; and did not I, Captain MacTurk, fight three of them myself, without moving my foot from the place I set it on?"

"And pray, sir what might be the result of this Christian mode of giving thanks for your deliverance?" demanded Mr. Touchwood.

"A small list of casualties, after all," said the Captain; "one killed on the spot, one died of his wounds —two wounded severely—three ditto slightly, and little Duncan Macphail reported missing. We were out of practice, after such long confinement. So you see how we manage matters in India, my dear friend."

"You are to understand," replied Touchwood, "that I spoke only of the heathen natives, who, heathen as they are, live in the light of their own moral reason, and among whom ye shall therefore see better examples of practical morality than among such as yourselves; who, though calling yourselves Christians, have no more knowledge of *the true acceptation and meaning of your religion, than if you had left your Christianity at the Cape of Good Hope, as they say* of you, and forgot to take it up when you come back again."

"Py Cot! and I can tell you, sir," said the Captain, elevating at once his voice and his nostrils, and snuffing the air with a truculent and indignant visage, "that I will not permit you or any man to throw any such scandal on my character.—I thank Cot, I can bring good witness that I am as good a Christian as another, for a poor sinner, as the best of us are; an I I am ready to justify my religion with my sword—Cot tamn!—Compare my own self with a parcel of black heathen bodies and natives, that were never in the inner side of a kirk whilst they lived, but go about worshipping stocks and stones, and swinging themselves upon bamboos, like peasts, as they are!"

An indignant growling in his throat, which sounded like the acquiescence of his inward man in the indignant proposition which his external organs thus expressed, concluded this haughty speech, which, however, made not the least impression on Touchwood, who cared as little for angry tones and looks as he did for fine speeches. So that it is likely a quarrel between the Christian preceptor and the peacemaker might have occurred for the amusement of the company, had not the attention of both, but particularly that of Touchwood, been diverted from the topic of debate by the entrance of Lord Etherington and Mowbray.

The former was, as usual, all grace, smiles, and gentleness. Yet contrary to his wonted custom, which usually was, after a few general compliments, to attach himself particularly to Lady Binks, the Earl, on the present occasion, avoided the side of the room on which that beautiful but sullen idol held her station, and attached himself exclusively to Lady Penelope Penfeather, enduring, without flinching, the strange variety of conceited *bavardage*, which that lady's natural parts and acquired information enabled her to pour forth with unparalleled profusion.

An honest heathen, one of Plutarch's heroes, if I mistake not, dreamed once upon a night, that the figure of Proserpina, whom he had long worshipped, visited his slumbers with an angry and vindictive countenance, and menaced him with vengeance, in resentment of his having neglected her altars, with the usual fickleness of a polytheist, for those of some more fashionable divinity. Not that goddess of the infernal regions herself could assume a more haughty or more displeased countenance than that with which Lady Binks looked from time to time upon Lord Etherington, as if to warn him of the consequence of this departure from the allegiance which the young Earl had hitherto manifested towards her, and which seemed now, she knew not why, unless it were for the purpose of public insult, to be transferred to her rival. Perilous as her eye-glances were, and much as they menaced, Lord Etherington felt at this moment the importance of soothing Lady Penelope to silence on the subject of the invalid's confession of that morning, to be more pressing than that of appeasing the indignation of Lady Binks. The former was a case of the most urgent necessity—the latter, if he was at all anxious on the subject, might, he perhaps thought, be trusted to time. Had the ladies continued on a tolerable footing together, he might have endeavoured to conciliate both. But the bitterness of their long-suppressed feud had greatly increased, now that it was probable the end of the season was to separate them, in all likelihood for ever; so that Lady Penelope had no longer any motive for countenancing Lady Binks, or the lady of Sir Bingo for desiring Lady Penelope's countenance. The wealth and lavish expense of the one was no longer to render more illustrious the suit of her right honourable friend, nor was the society of Lady Penelope likely to be soon again useful or necessary to Lady Binks. So that neither were any longer desirous to suppress symptoms of the mutual contempt and dislike which they had long nourished for each other; and whoever should, in this decisive hour, take part with one, had little henceforward to expect from her rival. What farther and more private reasons Lady Binks might have to resent the defection of Lord Etherington, have never come with certainty to our knowledge; but it was

said there had been high words between them on the floating report that his lordship's visits to Shaws-Castle were dictated by the wish to find a bride there.

Women's wits are said to be quick in spying the surest means of avenging a real or supposed slight. After biting her pretty lips, and revolving in her mind the readiest means of vengeance, fate threw in her way young Mowbray of St. Ronan's. She looked at him, and endeavoured to fix his attention with a nod and gracious smile, such as in an ordinary mood would have instantly drawn him to her side. On receiving in answer only a vacant glance and a bow, she was led to observe him more attentively, and was induced to believe, from his wavering look, varying complexion, and unsteady step, that he had been drinking unusually deep. Still his eye was less that of an intoxicated than of a disturbed and desperate man, one whose faculties were engrossed by deep and turbid reflection, which withdrew him from the passing scene.

"Do you observe how ill Mr. Mowbray looks?" said she, in a loud whisper; "I hope he has not heard what Lady Penelope was just now saying of his family?"

"Unless he hears it from you, my lady," answered Mr. Touchwood, who, upon Mowbray's entrance, had broken off his discourse with MacTurk, "I think there is little chance of his learning it from any other person."

"What is the matter?" said Mowbray, sharply, addressing Chatterly and Winterblossom; but the one shrunk nervously from the question, protesting, he indeed had not been precisely attending to what had been passing among the ladies, and Winterblossom bowed out of the scrape with quiet and cautious politeness—"he really had not given particular attention to what was passing—I was negotiating with Mrs. Jones for an additional lump of sugar to my coffee.—Egad, it was so difficult a piece of diplomacy," he added, sinking his voice, "that I have an idea her ladyship calculates the West India produce by grains and pennyweights."

The innuendo, if designed to make Mowbray smile, was far from succeeding. He stepped forward, with more than usual stiffness in his air, which was never entirely free from self-consequence, and said to Lady Binks, "May I request to know of your ladyship what particular respecting my family had the honour to engage the attention of the company?"

"I was only a listener, Mr. Mowbray," returned Lady Binks, with evident enjoyment of the rising indignation which she read in his countenance; "not being queen of the night, I am not at all disposed to be answerable for the turn of the conversation."

Mowbray, in no humour to bear jesting, yet afraid to expose himself by farther inquiry in a company so public, darted a fierce look at Lady Penelope, then in close conversation with Lord Etherington,—advanced a step or two towards them,—then, as if checking himself, turned on his heel, and left the room. A few minutes afterwards, and when certain satirical nods and winks were circulating among the assembly, a waiter slid a piece of paper into Mrs. Jones's hand, who, on looking at the contents, seemed about to leave the room.

"Jones—Jones!" exclaimed Lady Penelope, in surprise and displeasure.

"Only the key of the tea-caddie, your ladyship," answered Jones; "I will be back in an instant."

"Jones—Jones!" again exclaimed her mistress, "here is enough"—of tea, she would have said; but Lord Etherington was so near her, that she was ashamed to complete the sentence, and had only hope in Jones's quickness of apprehension, and the prospect that she would be unable to find the key which she went in search of.

Jones, mean while, tripped off to a sort of housekeeper's apartment, of which she was *locum tenens* for the evening, for the more ready supply of whatever might be wanted on Lady Penelope's night, as it was called. Here she found Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, whom she instantly began to assail with, "*La! now, Mr. Mowbray, you are such another gentleman!—I am sure you will make me lose my place*—I'll swear you will—what can you have to say, that you could not as well put off for an hour?"

"I want to know, Jones," answered Mowbray, in a different tone, perhaps, from what the damsel expected, "what your lady was just now saying about my family."

"Pshaw!—was that all?" answered Mrs. Jones. "What should she be saying?—nonsense—Who minds what she says?—I am sure I never do for one."

"Nay, but, my dear Jones," said Mowbray "I insist upon knowing—I must know, and I *will* know."

"La! Mr. Mowbray, why should I make mischief?—As I live, I hear some one coming! and if you were found speaking with me here—indeed, indeed, some one is coming."

"The devil may come, if he will!" said Mowbray, "but we do not part, pretty mistress, till you tell me what I wish to know."

"Lord, sir, you frighten me!" answered Jones "but all the room heard it as well as I—it was about Miss Mowbray—and that my lady would be shy of her company hereafter—for that she was—she was"—

"For that my sister was *what*?" said Mowbray, fiercely, seizing her arm.

"Lord, sir, you terrify me!" said Jones, beginning to cry; "at any rate, it was not I that said it—it was Lady Penelope."

"And what was it the old, adder-tongued madwoman dared to say of Clara Mowbray?—Speak out plainly, and directly, or, by Heaven, I'll make you!"

"Hold, sir—hold, for God's sake!—you will break my arm," answered the terrified handmaiden. "I am sure I know no harm of Miss Mowbray; only, my lady spoke as if she was no better than she ought to be.—Lord, sir, there is some one listening at the door!"—and making a spring out of his grasp, she hastened back to the room in which the company were assembled.

Mowbray stood petrified at the news he had heard, ignorant alike what could be the motive for a calumny so atrocious, and uncertain what he were best do to put a stop to the scandal. To his farther confusion, he was presently convinced of the truth of Mrs. Jones's belief that they had been watched, for, as he went to the door of the apartment, he was met by Mr. Touchwood.

"What has brought you here, sir?" said Mowbray sternly.

"Hoitie toitie," answered the traveller, "why, how came *you* here, if you go to that, squire?—Egad, Lady Penelope is trembling for her souchong, so I just took a step here to save her ladyship the trouble of looking after Mrs. Jones in person, which, I think, might have been a worse interruption than mine, Mr. Mowbray."

"Pshaw, sir, you talk nonsense," said Mowbray; "the tea-room is so infernally hot, that I had sat down here a moment to draw breath, when the young woman came in."

"And you are going to run away, now the old gentleman is come in?" said Touchwood—"Come, sir, I am more your friend than you may think."

"Sir, you are intrusive—I want nothing that you can give me," said Mowbray.

"That is a mistake," answered the senior; "for I can supply you with what most young men want—money and wisdom."

"You will do well to keep both till they are wanted," said Mowbray.

"Why, so I would, squire, only that I have taken something of a fancy for your family; and they are supposed to have wanted cash and good counsel for two generations, if not for three."

"Sir," said Mowbray, angrily, "you are too old either to play the buffoon, or to get buffoon's payment."

"Which is like monkey's allowance, I suppose," said the traveller, "more kicks than halfpence.—Well—at least I am not young enough to quarrel with boys for bullying. I'll convince you, however, Mr. Mowbray, that I know some more of your affairs than what you give me credit for."

"It may be," answered Mowbray, "but you will oblige me more by minding your own."

"Very like; mean time, your losses to-night to my Lord Etherington are no trifle, and no secret neither."

"Mr. Touchwood, I desire to know where you had your information?" said Mowbray.

"A matter of very little consequence compared to its truth or falsehood, Mr. Mowbray," answered the old gentleman.

"But of the last importance to me, sir," said Mowbray. "In a word, had you such information by or through means of Lord Etherington?—Answer me this single question, and then I shall know better what to think on the subject."

"Upon my honour," said Touchwood, "I neither had my information from Lord Etherington directly nor indirectly. I say thus much to give you satisfaction, and I now expect you will hear me with patience."

"Forgive me, sir," interrupted Mowbray, "one farther question. I understand something was said in disparagement of my sister just as I entered the tea-room?"

"Hem—hem—hem!" said Touchwood, hesitating. "I am sorry your ears have served you so well—something there *was* said lightly, something that can be easily explained, I dare say;—And now, Mr. Mowbray, let me speak a few serious words with you."

"And now, Mr. Touchwood, we have no more to say to each other—good evening to you."

He brushed past the old man, who in vain endeavoured to stop him, and hurrying to the stable, demanded his horse. It was ready saddled, and waited his orders; but even the short time that was necessary to bring it to the door of the stable was exasperating to Mowbray's impatience. Not less exasperating was the constant interceding voice of Touchwood, who, in tones alternately plaintive and snappish, kept on a string of expostulations.

"Mr. Mowbray, only five words with you—Mr. Mowbray, you will repent this—Is this a night to ride in, Mr. Mowbray?—My stars, sir, if you would but have five minutes' patience!"

Curses, not loud but deep, muttered in the throat of the impatient laird, were the only reply, until his horse was brought out, when, staying no farther question, he sprung into the saddle. The poor horse paid for the delay, which could not be laid to his charge. Mowbray struck him hard with his spurs so soon as he was in his seat—the noble animal reared, bolted, and sprung forward like a deer, over stock and stone, the nearest road—and we are aware it was a rough one—to Shaws-Castle. There is a sort of instinct by which horses perceive the humour of their riders, and are furious and impetuous, or dull and sluggish, as if to correspond with it; and Mowbray's gallant steed seemed on this occasion to feel all the stings of his master's internal ferment, although not again urged with the spur. The ostler stood listening to the clash of the hoofs, succeeding each other in thick and close gallop until they died away in the distant woodland.

"If St. Ronan's reach home this night, with his neck unbroken," muttered the fellow, "the devil must have it in keeping."

"Mercy on us!" said the traveller, "he rides like a Bedouin Arab! but in the desert there are neither trees to cross the road, nor cleughs, nor linns, nor floods, nor fords. Well, I must set to work myself, or this gear will get worse than even I can mend.—Here you, ostler, let me have your best pair of horses instantly to Shaws-Castle."

"To Shaws-Castle, sir?" said the man with some surprise.

"Yes—do you not know such a place?"

"In troth, sir, sae few company go there, except on the great ball day, that we have had time to forget the road to it—but St. Ronan's was here even now, sir."

"Ay, what of that?—he has ridden on to get supper ready—so, turn out without loss of time."

"At your pleasure, sir," *said the fellow, and called to the postilion accordingly.*

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEBATE.

Sedet post equitem atra cura——

Still though the headlong cavalier,
O'er rough and smooth, in wild career,
Seems racing with the wind;
His sad companion,—ghastly pale,
And darksome as a widow's veil,
CARE—keeps her seat behind.—HORACE.

WELL was it that night for Mowbray, that he had always piqued himself on his horses, and that the animal on which he was then mounted was as sure-footed and sagacious as he was mettled and fiery. For those who observed next day the print of the hoofs on the broken and rugged track through which the creature had been driven at full speed by his furious master, might easily see, that in more than a dozen of places the horse and rider had been within a few inches of destruction. One bough of a gnarled and stunted oak-tree, which stretched across the road, seemed in particular to have opposed an almost fatal barrier to the horseman's career. In striking his head against this impediment, the force of the blow had been broken in some measure by a high-crowned hat, yet the violence of the shock was sufficient to shiver the branch to pieces. Fortunately it was already decayed; but, even in that state, it was subject of astonishment to every one that no fatal damage had been sustained in so formidable an encounter. Mowbray himself was unconscious of the accident.

Scarcely aware that he had been riding at an unusual rate, scarce sensible that he had ridden faster perhaps than ever he followed the hounds, Mowbray alighted at his stable door, and flung the bridle to his groom, who held up his hands in astonishment when he beheld the condition of the favourite horse; but, concluding that his master must be intoxicated, he prudently forbore to make any observations.

No sooner did the unfortunate traveller suspend that rapid motion by which he seemed to wish to annihilate, as far as possible, time and space, in order to reach the place he had now attained, than it seemed to him as if he would have given the world that seas and deserts had lain between him and the house of his fathers, as well as that only sister with whom he was now about to have a decisive interview.

"But the place and the hour are arrived," he said, biting his lip with anguish; "this explanation must be decisive; and whatever evils may attend it, suspense must be ended now, at once and for ever."

He entered the Castle, and took the light from the old domestic, who, hearing the clatter of his horse's feet, had opened the door to receive him.

"Is my sister in her parlour?" he asked, but in so hollow a voice, that the old man only answered the question by another, "Was his honour well?"

"Quite well, Patrick—never better in my life," said Mowbray; and turning his back on the old man, as if to prevent his observing whether his countenance and his words corresponded, he pursued his way to his sister's apartment. The sound of his step upon the passage roused Clara from a reverie, perhaps a sad one; and she had trimmed her lamp, and stirred her fire, so slow did he walk, before he at length entered her apartment.

"You are a good boy brother," she said, "to come thus early home; and I have some good news for your reward. The groom has fetched back Trimmer—He was lying by the dead hare, and he had chased him as far as Drumlyford—the shepherd had carried him to the shieling, till some one should claim him."

"I would he had hanged him, with all my heart!" said Mowbray.

"How!—hang Trimmer?—your favourite Trimmer, that has beat the whole country?—and it was only this morning you were half-crying because he was a-missing, and like to murder man and mother's son?"

"The better I like any living thing," answered Mowbray, "the more reason I have for wishing it dead and at rest; for neither I, nor any thing that I love, will ever be happy more."

"You cannot frighten me, John, with these flights," answered Clara, trembling, although she endeavoured to look unconcerned—"You have used me to them too often."

"It is well for you then; you will be ruined without the shock of surprise."

"So much the better—We have been," said Clara,

> "'So constantly in poortith's sight,
> The thoughts on't gie us little fright.'

So say I with honest Robert Burns."

"D—n Burns and his trash!" said Mowbray, with the impatience of a man determined to be angry with every thing but himself, who was the real source of the evil.

"And why damn poor Burns?" said Clara composedly; "it is not his fault if you have not risen a winner, for that, I suppose, is the cause of all this uproar."

"Would it not make any one lose patience," said Mowbray, "to hear her quoting the rhapsodies of a hobnail'd peasant, when a man is speaking of the downfall of an ancient house! your ploughman, I suppose, becoming one degree poorer than he was born to be, would only go without his dinner, or without his usual potation of ale. His comrades would cry poor fellow!' and let him eat out of their kit, and drink out of their bicker without scruple, till his own was full again. But the poor gentleman—the down-fallen man of rank—the degraded man of birth—the disabled and disarmed man of power!—it is he that is to be pitied, who loses not merely drink and dinner, but honour, situation, credit, character, and name itself!"

"You are declaiming in this manner in order to terrify me," said Clara: "but, friend John, I know you and your ways, and I have made up my mind upon all contingences that can take place. I will tell you more—I have stood on this tottering pinnacle of rank and fashion, if our situation can be termed such, till my head is dizzy with the instability of my eminence; and I feel that strange desire of tossing myself down, which the devil is said to put into folk's heads when they stand on the top of steeples—at least, I had rather the plunge were over."

"Be satisfied, then; if that will satisfy you—the plunge *is* over, and we are—what they used to call it in Scotland—gentle beggars—creatures to whom our second, and third, and fourth, and fifth cousins may, if they please, give a place at the side-table, and a seat in the carriage with the lady's maid, if driving backwards will not make us sick."

"They may give it to those who will take it," said Clara; "but I am determined to eat bread of my own buying—I can do twenty things, and I am sure some one or other of them will bring me all the little money I will need. I have been trying, John, for several months, how little I can live upon, and you would laugh if you heard how low I have brought the account."

"There is a difference, Clara, between fanciful experiments and real poverty—the one is a masquerade, which we can end when we please, the other is wretchedness for life."

"Methinks, brother," replied Miss Mowbray, "it would be better for you to set me an example how to carry my good resolutions into effect, than to ridicule them."

"Why, what would you have me do?" said he, fiercely—"turn postilion, or rough-rider, or whipper-in?—I don't know any thing else that my education, as I have used it, has fitted me for—and then some of my old acquaintances would, I dare say, give me a crown to drink now and then for old acquaintance' sake."

"This is not the way, John, that men of sense think or speak of serious misfortunes," answered his sister; "and I do not believe that this is so serious as it is your pleasure to make it."

"Believe the very worst you can think," replied he, "and you will not believe bad enough!—You have *neither a guinea, nor a house, nor a friend*;—pass but *a day, and it is a chance that you will* not have a *brother.*"

"My dear John, you have drunk hard—rode hard."

"Yes—such tidings deserved to be carried express, especially to a young lady who receives them so well," answered Mowbray bitterly. "I suppose, now, it will make no impression, if I were to tell you that you have it in your power to stop all this ruin?"

"By consummating my own, I suppose?—Brother, I said you could not make me tremble, but you have found a way to do it."

"What, you expect I am again to urge you with Lord Etherington's courtship?—That *might* have saved all, indeed—But that day of grace is over."

"I am glad of it, with all my spirit," said Clara; "may it take with it all that we can quarrel about!—But till this instant I thought it was for this very point that this long voyage was bound, and that you were endeavouring to persuade me of the reality of the danger of the storm, in order to reconcile me to the harbour."

"You are mad, I think, in earnest," said Mowbray; "can you really be so absurd as to rejoice that you have no way left to relieve yourself and me from ruin, want, and shame?"

"From shame, brother?" said Clara. "No shame in honest poverty, I hope."

"That is according as folks have used their prosperity, Clara.—I must speak to the point.—There are strange reports going below—By Heaven! they are enough to disturb the ashes of the dead! Were I to mention them, I should expect our poor mother to enter the room—Clara Mowbray, can you guess what I mean?"

It was with the utmost exertion, yet in a faltering voice, that she was able, after an ineffectual effort, to utter the monosyllable, "*No!*"

"By Heaven! I am ashamed—I am even *afraid* to express my own meaning!—Clara, what is there which makes you so obstinately reject every proposal of marriage?—Is it that you feel yourself unworthy to be the wife of an honest man?—Speak out!—Evil Fame has been busy with your reputation—speak out!—Give me the right to cram their lies down the throats of the inventors, and when I go among them to-morrow, I shall know how to treat those who cast reflections on you! The fortunes of our house are ruined, but no tongue shall slander its honour.—Speak—speak, wretched girl! why are you silent?"

"Stay at home, brother!" said Clara; "stay at home, if you regard our house's honour—murder cannot mend misery—Stay at home, and let them talk of me as they will,—they can scarcely say worse of me than I deserve!"

The passions of Mowbray, at all times ungovernably strong, were at present inflamed by wine, by his rapid journey, and the previously disturbed state of his mind. He set his teeth, clenched his hands, looked on the ground, as one that forms some horrid resolution, and muttered almost unintelligibly, "It were charity to kill her!"

"Oh! no—no—no!" exclaimed the terrified girl, throwing herself at his feet; "Do not kill me, brother! I have wished for death—thought of death—prayed for death—but, oh! it is frightful to think that he is near—Oh! not a bloody death, brother, nor by your hand!"

She held him close by the knees as she spoke, and expressed in her looks and accents, the utmost terror. It was not, indeed, without reason; for the extreme solitude of the place, the violent and inflamed passions of her brother, and the desperate circumstances to which he had reduced himself, seemed all to concur to render some horrid act of violence not an improbable termination of this strange interview.

Mowbray folded his arms, without unclenching his hands, or raising his head, while his sister continued on the floor, clasping him round the knees with all her strength, and begging piteously for her life and for mercy.

"Fool!" he said, at last, "let me go!—Who cares for thy worthless life?—who cares if thou live or die? Live, if thou canst—and be the hate and scorn of every one else, as much as thou art mine!"

He grasped her by the shoulder, with one hand pushed her from him, and, as she arose from the floor,

and again pressed to throw her arms around his neck, he repulsed her with his arm and hand, with a push—or blow—it might be termed either one or the other,—violent enough in her weak state, to have again extended her on the ground, had not a chair received her as she fell. He looked at her with ferocity, grappled a moment in his pocket; then ran to the window, and throwing the sash violently up, thrust himself as far as he could without falling, into the open air. Terrified, and yet her feelings of his unkindness predominating even above her fears, Clara continued to exclaim,

"Oh, brother, say you did not mean this!—Oh, say you did not mean to strike me!—Oh, whatever I have deserved, be not you the executioner! It is not manly—it is not natural—there are but two of us in the world!"

He returned no answer; and, observing that he continued to stretch himself from the window, which was in the second story of the building, and overlooked the court, a new cause of apprehension mingled, in some measure, with her personal fears. Timidly, and with streaming eyes and uplifted hands, she approached her angry brother, and fearfully, yet firmly, seized the skirt of his coat, as if anxious to preserve him from the effects of that despair, which so lately seemed turned against her, and now against himself.

He felt the pressure of her hold, and drawing himself angrily back, asked her sternly what she wanted.

"Nothing," she said, quitting her hold of his coat; 'but what—what did he look after so anxiously?"

"After the devil!" he answered, fiercely; then drawing in his head, and taking her hand, "By my soul, Clara—it is true, if ever there was truth in such a tale!—He stood by me just now, and urged me to murder thee!—What else could have put my hunting-knife into my thought?—Ay, by God, and into my very hand—at such a moment?—Yonder I could almost fancy I see him fly, the wood, and the rock, and the water, gleaming back the dark-red furnace-light, that is shed on them by his dragon wings! By my soul, I can hardly suppose it fancy—I can hardly think but that I was under the influence of an evil spirit—under an act of fiendish possession! But gone as he is, gone let him be—and thou, too ready implement of evil, be thou gone after him!" He drew from his pocket his right hand, which had all this time held his hunting-knife, and threw the implement into the court-yard as he spoke; then with a sad quietness and solemnity of manner, shut the window, and led his sister by the hand to her usual seat, which her tottering steps scarce enabled her to reach. "Clara," he said, after a pause of mournful silence, "we must think what is to be done, without passion or violence—there may be something for us in the dice yet, if we do not throw away our game. A blot is never a blot till it is hit—dishonour concealed, is not dishonour in some respects.—Dost thou attend to me, wretched girl?" he said, suddenly and sternly raising his voice.

"Yes, brother—yes, indeed, brother!" she hastily replied, terrified even by delay again to awaken his ferocious and ungovernable temper.

"Thus it must be, then," he said. "You must marry this Etherington—there is no help for it, Clara—You cannot complain of what your own vice and folly have rendered inevitable."

"But, brother!"—said the trembling girl.

"Be silent. I know all that you would say. You love him not, you would say. I love him not, no more than you. Nay, what is more, he loves you not; if he did, I might scruple to give you to him, you being such as you have owned yourself. But you shall wed him out of hate, Clara—or for the interest of your family—or for what reason you will—But wed him you shall and must."

"Brother—dearest brother—one single word!"

"Not of refusal or expostulation—that time is gone by," said her stern censurer. "When I believed thee what I thought thee this morning, I might advise you, but I could not compel. But, since the honour of our family has been disgraced by your means, it is but just, that, if possible, its disgrace should be hidden; and it shall!—ay, if *selling you for a slave would tend to conceal it!*"

"You do worse—you do worse by me! A slave in an open market may be bought by a kind master—you do not give me that chance—you wed me to one who"——

"Fear him not, nor the worst that he can do, Clara," said her brother. "I know on what terms he marries; and being once more your brother, as your obedience in this matter will make me, he had better tear his flesh from his bones with his own teeth, than do thee any displeasure! By Heaven, I hate him so much—for he has outreached me every way—that methinks it is some consolation that he will not receive in thee the excellent creature I thought thee!—Fallen as thou art, thou art still too good for him."

Encouraged by the more gentle and almost affectionate tone in which her brother spoke, Clara could not help saying, although almost in a whisper, "I trust it will not be so—I trust he will consider his own condition, honour, and happiness, better than to share it with me."

"Let him utter such a scruple if he dares," said Mowbray—"But he dares not hesitate—he knows that the instant he recedes from addressing you, he signs his own death-warrant or mine, or perhaps that of both; and his views, too, are of a kind that will not be relinquished on a point of scrupulous delicacy merely. Therefore, Clara, nourish no such thought in your heart as that there is the least possibility of your escaping this marriage! The match is booked—Swear you will not hesitate."

"I will not," she said, almost breathlessly, terrified lest he was about to start once more into the fit of unbridled fury which had before seized on him.

"Do not even whisper or hint an objection, but submit to your fate, for it is inevitable."

"I will—submit"—answered Clara, in the same trembling accent.

"And I," he said, "will spare you—at least at present—and it may be for ever—all inquiry into the guilt which you have confessed. Rumours there were of misconduct, which reached my ears even in England; but who could have believed them that looked on you daily, and witnessed your late course of life? On this subject I will be at present silent—perhaps may no' again touch on it—that is, if you do nothing to thwart my pleasure, or to avoid the fate which circumstances render unavoidable. And now it is late—retire, Clara, to your bed—think on what I have said as what necessity has determined, and not my selfish pleasure."

He held out his hand, and she placed, but not without reluctant terror, her trembling palm in his. In this manner, and with a sort of mournful solemnity, as if they had been in attendance upon a funeral, he handed his sister through a gallery hung with old family pictures, at the end of which was Clara's bed-chamber. The moon, which at this moment looked out through a huge volume of mustering clouds that had long been boding storm, fell on the two last descendants of that ancient family, as they glided hand in hand, more like the ghosts of the deceased than like living persons, through the hall and amongst the portraits of their forefathers. The same thoughts were in the breast of both, but neither attempted to say, while they cast a flitting glance on the pallid and decayed representations, "How little did these anticipate this catastrophe of their house!" At the door of the bedroom Mowbray quitted his sister's hand, and said, "Clara, you should to-night thank God, that saved you from a great danger, and me from a deadly sin."

"I will," she answered—"I will." And, as if her terror had been anew excited by this allusion to what had passed, she bid her brother hastily good night, and was no sooner within her apartment, than he heard her turn the key in the lock, and draw two bolts besides.

"I understand you, Clara," muttered Mowbray between his teeth, as he heard one bar drawn after another. "But if you could earth yourself under Ben Nevis, you could not escape what fate has destined for you.—Yes!" he said to himself, as he walked with slow and moody pace through the moonlight gallery, uncertain whether to return to the parlour, or to retire to his solitary chamber, when his attention was roused by a noise in the court-yard.

The night was not indeed very far advanced, but it had been so long since Shaws-Castle received a guest, that had Mowbray not heard the rolling of wheels in the court-yard, he might have thought rather of housebreakers than of visiters. But, as the sound of a carriage and horses was distinctly heard, it instantly occurred to him, that the guest must be Lord Etherington, come, even at this late hour, to speak with him on the reports which were current to his sister's prejudice, and perhaps to declare his addresses to her were at an end. Eager to know the worst, and to bring matters to a decision, he re-entered the apartment he had just left, where the lights were still burning, and, calling loudly to Patrick, whom he heard in communing with the postilion, commanded him to show the visiter to Miss Mowbray's parlour. It was not the light step of the young nobleman which came tramping, or rather stamping, through the long passage, and up the two or three steps at the end of it. Neither was it Lord Etherington's graceful figure which was seen when the door opened, but the stout square substance of Mr. Peregrine Touchwood.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A RELATIVE.

Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed.
Deserted Village.

STARTING at the unexpected and undesired apparition which presented itself, in the manner described at the end of the last chapter, Mowbray yet felt, at the same time, a kind of relief, that his meeting with Lord Etherington, painfully decisive as that meeting must be, was for a time suspended. So it was with a mixture of peevishness and internal satisfaction, that he demanded what had procured him the honour of a visit from Mr. Touchwood at this late hour.

"Necessity, that makes the old wife trot," replied Touchwood; "no choice of mine, I assure you—Gad, Mr. Mowbray, I would rather have crossed Saint Gothard, than run the risk I have done to-night, rumbling through your breakneck roads in that d——d old wheelbarrow.—On my word, I believe I must be troublesome to your butler for a draught of something—I am as thirsty as a coal-heaver that is working by the piece. You have porter, I suppose, or good old Scotch two-penny?"

With a secret execration on his visiter's effrontery, Mr. Mowbray ordered the servant to put down wine and water, of which Touchwood mixed a gobletful, and drank it off.

"We are a small family," said his entertainer; "and I am seldom at home—still more seldom receive guests, when I chance to be here—I am sorry I have no malt liquor, if you prefer it."

"Prefer it?" said Touchwood, compounding, however, another glass of sherry and water, and adding a large piece of sugar, to correct the hoarseness which, he observed, his night journey might bring on, —"to be sure I prefer it, and so does every body, except Frenchmen and dandies.—No offence, Mr. Mowbray, but you should order a hogshead from Meux—the brown-stout, wired down for exportation to the colonies, keeps for any length of time, and in every climate—I have drank it where it must have cost a guinea a quart, if interest had been counted."

"When I *expect* the honour of a visit from you, Mr. Touchwood, I will endeavour to be better provided," answered Mowbray; "at present your arrival has been without notice, and I would be glad to know if it has any particular object."

"This is what I call coming to the point," said Mr. Touchwood, thrusting out his stout legs, accoutred as they were with the ancient defences, called boothose, so as to rest his heels upon the fender. "Upon my life, the fire turns the best flower in the garden at this season of the year—I'll take the freedom to throw on a log.—Is it not a strange thing, by-the-by, that one never sees a fagot in Scotland? You have much small wood, Mr. Mowbray. I wonder you do not get some fellow from the midland counties, to *teach your people how to make a fagot.*"

"*Did you come all the way to* Shaws-Castle," asked Mowbray, rather testily, "to instruct me in the mystery of fagot-making?"

"Not exactly—not exactly," answered the undaunted Touchwood; "but there is a right and a wrong way in every thing—a word by the way, on any useful subject, can never fall amiss.—As for my immediate and more pressing business, I can assure you, that it is of a nature sufficiently urgent, since it brings me to a house in which I am much surprised to find myself."

"The surprise is mutual, sir," said Mowbray, gravely, observing that his guest made a pause; "it is full time you should explain it."

"Well, then," replied Touchwood; "I must first ask you whether you have never heard of a certain old gentleman, called Scrogie, who took it into what he called his head, poor man, to be ashamed of the name he bore, though owned by many honest and respectable men, and chose to join it to your surname of Mowbray, as having a more chivalrous Norman sounding, and, in a word, a gentlemanlike twang?"

"I have heard of such a person, though only lately," said Mowbray. "Reginald Scrogie Mowbray was his name. I have reason to consider his alliance with my family as undoubted, though you seem to mention it with a sneer, sir. I believe Mr. S. Mowbray regulated his family settlements very much upon the idea that his heir was to intermarry with our house."

"True, true, Mr. Mowbray," answered Touchwood; "and certainly it is not your business to lay the axe to the root of the genealogical tree, that is like to bear golden apples for you—Ha!"

"Well, well, sir—proceed—proceed," answered Mowbray.

"You may also have heard that this old gentleman had a son, who would willingly have cut up the said family tree into fagots; who thought Scrogie sounded as well as Mowbray, and had no fancy for an imaginary gentility, which was to be attained by the change of one's natural name, and the disowning, as it were, of one's actual relations."

"I think I have heard from Lord Etherington," answered Mowbray, "to whose communications I owe most of my knowledge about these Scrogie people, that old Mr. Scrogie Mowbray was unfortunate in a son, who thwarted his father on every occasion,—would embrace no opportunity which fortunate chances held out, of raising and distinguishing the family,—had imbibed low tastes, wandering habits, and singular objects of pursuit,—on account of which his father disinherited him."

"It is very true, Mr. Mowbray," proceeded Touchwood, "that this person did happen to fall under his father's displeasure, because he scorned forms and flummery,—loved better to make money as an honest merchant, than to throw it away as an idle gentleman,—never called a coach when walking on foot would serve the turn,—and liked the Royal Exchange better than St. James's Park. In short, his father disinherited him, because he had the qualities for doubling the estate, rather than those for squandering it."

"All this may be quite correct, Mr. Touchwood," replied Mowbray; "but pray, what has this Mr. Scrogie, junior, to do with you or me?"

"Do with you or me!" said Touchwood, as if surprised at the question; "he has a great deal to do with me at least, since I am the very man myself."

"The devil you are!" said Mowbray, opening wide his eyes in turn; "Why, Mr. A—a—your name is Touchwood—P. Touchwood—Paul, I suppose, or Peter—I read it so in the subscription book at the Well."

"Peregrine, sir, Peregrine—my mother would have me so christened, because Peregrine Pickle came out during her confinement; and my poor foolish father acquiesced, because he thought it genteel, and derived from the Willoughbies. I don't like it, and I always write P. short, and you might have remarked an S. also before the surname—I use at present P. S. Touchwood. I had an old acquaintance in the city, who loved his jest—He always called me Postscript Touchwood."

"Then, sir," said Mowbray, "if you are really Mr. Scrogie, *tout court*, I must suppose the name of Touchwood is assumed?"

"What the devil!" replied Mr. P. S. Touchwood, "do you suppose there is no name in the English nation will couple up legitimately with my paternal name of Scrogie, except your own, Mr. Mowbray?—I assure you I got the name of Touchwood, and a pretty spell of money along with it, from an old godfather, who admired my spirit in sticking by commerce."

"Well, sir, every one has his taste—Many would have thought it better to enjoy a hereditary estate, by keeping your father's name of Mowbray, than to have gained another by assuming a stranger's name of Touchwood."

"Who told you Mr. Touchwood was a stranger to me?" said the traveller; "for aught I know, he had a better title to the duties of a son from me, than the poor old man who made such a fool of himself, by trying to turn gentleman in his old age. He was my grandfather's partner in the great firm of Touchwood, Scrogie, and Co.—Let me tell you there is as good inheritance in house as in field—a man's partners are his fathers and brothers, and a head clerk may be likened to a kind of first cousin."

"I meant no offence whatever, Mr. Touchwood Scrogie."

"Scrogie Touchwood, if you please," said the senior; "the scrog branch first, for it must become rotten ere it become touchwood—ha, ha, ha!—you take me."

"A singular old fellow this," said Mowbray to himself, "and speaks in all the dignity of dollars; but I will be civil to him, till I can see what he is driving at.—You are facetious Mr. Touchwood," he proceeded aloud. "I was only going to say, that although you set no value upon your connexion with my family, yet I cannot forget that such a circumstance exists; and therefore I bid you heartily welcome to Shaws-Castle."

"Thank ye, thank ye, Mr. Mowbray—I knew you would see the thing right. To tell you the truth, I should not have cared much to come a-begging for your acquaintance and cousinship, and so forth; but that I thought you would be more tractable in your adversity, than was your father in his prosperity."

"Did you know my father, sir?" said Mowbray.

"Ay, ay—I came once down here, and was introduced to him—saw your sister and you when you were children—had thoughts of making my will then, and should have clapped you both in before I set out to double Cape Horn. But, gad I wish my poor father had seen the reception I got! I did not let the old gentleman, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's that was then, smoke my money-bags—that might have made him more tractable—not but that we went on indifferent well for a day or two, till I got a hint that my room was wanted, for that the Duke of Devil-knows-what was expected, and my bed was to serve his valet-de-chambre.—'Oh, damn all gentle cousins!' said I, and off I set on the pad round the world again, and thought no more of the Mowbrays till a year or so ago."

"And, pray, what recalled us to your recollection?"

"Why," said Touchwood, "I was settled for some time at Smyrna, (for I turn the penny go where I will—I have done a little business even since I came here;)—but being at Smyrna as I said, I became acquainted with Francis Tyrrel."

"The natural brother of Lord Etherington," said Mowbray.

"Ay, so called," answered Touchwood; "but by and by he is more likely to prove the Earl of Etherington himself, and t'other fine fellow the bastard."

"The devil he is!—You surprise me, Mr. Touchwood."

"I thought I should—I thought I should—Faith, I am sometimes surprised myself at the turn things take in this world. But the thing is not the less certain—the proofs are lying in the strong chest of our house at London, *deposited there by the old* Earl, *who repented of his roguery to Miss Martigny long* before he died, but had not courage enough to do his legitimate son justice till the sexton had housed him."

"Good Heaven, sir!" said Mowbray; "and did you know all this while, that I was about to bestow the only sister of my house upon an impostor?"

"What was my business with that, Mr. Mowbray?" replied Touchwood; "you would have been very angry had any one suspected you of not being sharp enough to look out for yourself and your sister both. Besides, Lord Etherington, had enough as he may be in other respects, was, till very lately, no impostor, or an innocent one, for he only occupied the situation in which his father had placed him. And, indeed, when I understood, upon coming to England, that he was gone down here, and, as I conjectured, to pay his addresses to your sister, to say truth, I did not see he could do better. Here was a poor fellow that was about to cease to be a lord and a wealthy man; was it not very reasonable that he should make the most of his dignity while he had it? and if, by marrying a pretty girl while in possession of his title, he could get possession of the good estate of Nettlewood, why, I could see nothing in it but a very pretty way of breaking his fall."

"Very pretty for him, indeed, and very convenient too," said Mowbray; "but pray, sir, what was to become of the honour of my family?"

"Why, what was the honour of your family to me?" said Touchwood; "unless it was to recommend your family to my care, that I was disinherited on account of it. And if this Etherington, or Bulmer, had been a good fellow, I would have seen all the Mowbrays that ever wore broad cloth at Jericho, before I had interfered."

"I am really much indebted to your kindness," said Mowbray angrily.

"More than you are aware of," answered Touchwood; "for, though I thought this Bulmer, even when declared illegitimate, might be a reasonable good match for your sister, considering the estate which was to accompany the union of their hands; yet, now I have discovered him to be a scoundrel—every way a scoundrel—I would not wish any decent girl to marry him, were they to get all Yorkshire, instead of Nettlewood. So I have come to put you right."

The strangeness of the news which Touchwood so bluntly communicated, made Mowbray's head turn round like that of a man who grows dizzy at finding himself on the verge of a precipice. Touchwood observed his consternation, which he willingly construed into an acknowledgement of his own brilliant genius.

"Take a glass of wine, Mr. Mowbray," he said, complacently; "take a glass of old sherry—nothing like it for clearing the ideas—and do not be afraid of me, though I come thus suddenly upon you with such surprising tidings—you will find me a plain, simple, ordinary man, that have my faults and my blunders like other people. I acknowledge that much travel and experience have made me sometimes play the busybody, because I find I can do things better than other people, and I love to see folk stare—it's a way I have got. But, after all, I am *un bon diable*, as the Frenchman says; and here I have come four or five hundred miles to lie quiet among you all, and put all your little matters to rights, just when you think they are most desperate."

"I thank you for your good intentions," said Mowbray; "but I must needs say, that they would have been more effectual had you been less cunning in my behalf, and frankly told me what you knew of Lord Etherington; as it is, the matter has gone fearfully far. I have promised him my sister—I have laid myself under personal obligations to him—and there are other reasons why I fear I must keep my word to this man, earl or no earl."

"What!" exclaimed Touchwood, "would you give up your sister to a worthless rascal, who is capable of robbing the post-office, and of murdering his brother, because you have lost a trifle of money to him? Are you to let him go off triumphantly, because he is a gamester as well as a cheat?—You are a pretty fellow, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's—you are one of the happy sheep that go out for wool, and come home shorn. Egad, you think yourself a millstone, and

turn out a sack of grain—You flew abroad a hawk, and have come home a pigeon—You snarled at the Philistines, and they have drawn your eye-teeth with a vengeance!"

"This is all very witty, Mr. Touchwood," replied Mowbray; "but wit will not pay this man Etherington, or whatever he is, so many hundreds as I have lost to him."

"Why, then, wealth must do what wit cannot," said old Touchwood; "I must advance for you, that is all. Look ye, sir, I do not go afoot for nothing—if I have laboured, I have reaped—and, like the fellow in the old play, 'I have enough, and can maintain my humour'—it is not a few hundreds, or thousands either, can stand betwixt old P. S. Touchwood and his purpose; and my present purpose is to make you, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's a free man of the forest.—You still look grave on it, young man?—Why, I trust you are not such an ass as to think your dignity offended, because the plebeian Scrogie comes to the assistance of the terribly great and old house of Mowbray?"

"I am indeed not such a fool," answered Mowbray, with his eyes still bent on the ground, "to reject assistance that comes to me like a rope to a drowning man—but there is a circumstance"——he stopped short and drank a glass of wine—"a circumstance to which it is most painful to me to allude—but you seem my friend—and I cannot intimate to you more strongly my belief in your professions of regard than by saying, that the language held by Lady Penelope Penfeather on my sister's account, renders it highly proper that she were settled in life; and I cannot but fear, that the breaking off the affair with this man might be of great prejudice to her at this moment. They will have Nettlewood, and they may live separate—he has offered to make settlements to that effect, even on the very day of marriage. Her condition as a married woman will put her above scandal, and above necessity, from which, I am sorry to say, I cannot hope long to preserve her."

"For shame!—for shame!—for shame!" said Touchwood, accumulating his words thicker than usual on each other; "would you sell your own flesh and blood to a man like this Bulmer, whose character is now laid before you, merely because a disappointed old maid speaks scandal of her? A fine veneration you pay to the honoured name of Mowbray! If my poor, old, simple father had known what the owners of these two grand syllables could have stooped to do for merely ensuring subsistence, he would have thought as little of the noble Mowbrays as of the humble Scrogies. And, I dare say, the young lady is just such another—eager to get married—no matter to whom."

"Excuse me, Mr. Touchwood," answered Mowbray; "my sister entertains sentiments so very different from what you ascribe to her, that she and I parted on the most unpleasant terms, in consequence of my pressing this man's suit upon her. God knows, that I only did so, because I saw no other outlet from this most unpleasant dilemma. But, since you are willing to interfere, sir, and aid me to disentangle these complicated matters, which have, I own, been made worse by my own rashness, I am ready to throw the matter completely into your hands, just as if you were my father arisen from the dead. Nevertheless, I must needs express my surprise at the extent of your intelligence in these affairs."

"You speak very sensibly, young man," said the traveller; "and as for my intelligence, I have for some time known the finesses of this Master Bulmer as perfectly as if I had been at his elbow when he was playing all his dog's tricks with this family. You would hardly suspect now," he continued, in a confidential tone, "that what you were so desirous a while ago should take place, has in some sense actually happened, and that the marriage ceremony has really passed betwixt your sister and this pretended Lord Etherington?"

"*Have a care, sir!*" said Mowbray, fiercely; "*do not abuse my candour—this is no place, time, or subject, for impertinent jesting.*"

"As I live by bread, I am serious," said Touchwood; "Mr. Cargill performed the ceremony; and there are two living witnesses who heard them say the words, 'I, Clara, take you, Francis,' or whatever the Scottish church puts in place of that mystical formula."

"It is impossible," said Mowbray; "Cargill dared not have done such a thing—a clandestine proceeding, such as you speak of, would have cost him his living. I'll bet my soul against a horse-shoe, it is all an imposition; and you come to disturb me, sir, amid my family distress, with legends that have no more truth in them than the Alkoran."

"There are some true things in the Alkoran, (or rather, the Koran, for the Al is merely the article prefixed,) but let that pass—I will raise your wonder higher before I am done. It is very true, that your sister was indeed joined in marriage with this same Bulmer, that calls himself by the title of Etherington; but it is just as true, that the marriage is not worth a maravedi, for she believed him at the time to be another person—to be, in a word, Francis Tyrrel, who is actually what the other pretends to be, a nobleman of fortune."

"I cannot understand one word of all this," said Mowbray. "I must to my sister instantly, and demand of her if there be any real foundation for these wonderful averments."

"Do not go," said Touchwood, detaining him, "you shall have a full explanation from me; and to comfort you under your perplexity, I can assure you that Cargill's consent to celebrate the nuptials, was only obtained by an aspersion thrown on your sister's character, which induced him to believe that speedy marriage would be the sole means of saving her reputation; and I am convinced in my own mind it is only the revival of this report which has furnished the foundation of Lady Penelope's chattering."

"If I could think so,"—said Mowbray, "if I could but think this is truth—and it seems to explain, in some degree, my sister's mysterious conduct—if I could but think it true, I should fall down and worship you as an angel from heaven!"

"A proper sort of angel," said Touchwood, looking modestly down on his short, sturdy supporters—"Did you ever hear of an angel in boot-hose? Or, do you suppose angels are sent to wait on broken-down horse-jockeys?"

"Call me what you will, Mr. Touchwood," said the young man, "only make out your story true, and my sister innocent!"

"Very well spoken, sir," answered the senior, "very well spoken! But then I understand, you are to be guided by my prudence and experience? None of your G— damme doings, sir—your duels or your drubbings. Let *me* manage the affair for you, and I will bring you through with a flowing sail."

"Sir, I must feel as a gentleman,"—said Mowbray.

"Feel as a fool," said Touchwood, "for that is the true case. Nothing would please this Bulmer better than to fight through his rogueries—he knows very well, that he who can slit a pistol-ball on the edge of a penknife, will always preserve some sort of reputation amidst his scoundrelism—but I shall take care to stop that hole. Sit down—be a man of sense, and listen to the whole of this strange story."

Mowbray sat down accordingly; and Touchwood, in his own way, and with many characteristic interjectional remarks, gave him an account of the early loves of Clara and Tyrrel—of the reasons which induced Bulmer at first to encourage their correspondence, in hopes that his brother would, by a clandestine marriage, altogether ruin himself with his father—of the change which took place in his views when he perceived the importance annexed by the old Earl to the union of Miss Mowbray with his apparent heir—of the desperate stratagem which he endeavoured to play off, by substituting himself in the room of his brother—and all the consequences, which it is unnecessary to resume here, as they are

detailed at length by the perpetrator himself, in his correspondence with Captain Jekyl.

When the whole communication was ended, Mowbray, almost stupified by the wonders he had heard, remained for some time in a sort of reverie, from which he only started to ask what evidence could be produced of a story so strange.

"The evidence," answered Touchwood, "of one who was a deep agent in all these matters, from first to last—as complete a rogue, I believe, as the devil himself, with this difference, that our mortal fiend does not, I believe, do evil for the sake of evil, but for the sake of the profit which attends it. How far this plea will avail him in a court of conscience, I cannot tell; but his disposition was so far akin to humanity, that I have always found my old acquaintance as ready to do good as harm, providing he had the same *agio* upon the transaction."

"On my soul," said Mowbray, "you must mean Solmes! whom I have long suspected to be a deep villain—and now he proves traitor to boot. How the devil could you get into his intimacy, Mr. Touchwood?"

"The case was particular," said Touchwood. "Mr. Solmes, too active a member of the community to be satisfied with managing the affairs which his master intrusted to him, adventured in a little business on his own account; and thinking, I suppose, that the late Earl of Etherington had forgotten fully to acknowledge his services, as valet to his son, he supplied that defect by a small check on our house for L.100, in name, and bearing the apparent signature, of the deceased. This small mistake being detected, Mr. Solmes, *porteur* of the little billet, would have been consigned to the custody of a Bow-street officer, but that I found means to relieve him, on condition of his making known to me the points of private history which I have just been communicating to you. What I had known of Tyrrel at Smyrna, had given me much interest in him, and you may guess it was not lessened by the distresses which he had sustained through his brother's treachery. By this fellow's means, I have counterplotted all his master's fine schemes. For example, as soon as I learned Bulmer was coming down here, I contrived to give Tyrrel an anonymous hint, well knowing he would set off like the devil to thwart him, and so I should have the whole dramatis personæ together, and play them all off against each other, after my own pleasure."

"In that case," said Mr. Mowbray, "your expedient brought about the rencontre between the two brothers, when both might have fallen."

"Can't deny it—can't deny it," answered Scrogie, a little discountenanced—"a mere accident—no one can guard every point.—Egad, but I had like to have been baffled again, for Bulmer sent the lad Jekyl, who is not such a black sheep neither but what there are some white hairs about him, upon a treaty with Tyrrel, that my secret agent was not admitted to. Gad, but I discovered the whole—you will scarce guess how."

"Probably not easily, indeed, sir," answered Mowbray; "for your sources of intelligence are not the most obvious, any more than your mode of acting the most simple or most comprehensible."

"I would not have it so," said Touchwood; "simple men perish in their simplicity—I carry my eyeteeth about me.—And for my source of information—why, I played the eavesdropper, sir—listened—knew my landlady's cupboard with the double door—got into it as she has done many a time.—Such a fine gentleman as you would rather cut a man's throat, I suppose, than listen at a cupboard door, though the object were to prevent murder?"

"I cannot say I should have thought of the expedient, certainly, sir," said Mowbray.

"I did, though," said Scrogie, "and learned enough of what was going on, to give Jekyl a hint that sickened him of his commission, I believe—so the game is all in my own hands. Bulmer has no one to trust to but Solmes, and Solmes tells me every thing."

Here *Mowbray could not suppress a movement of impatience.*

"*I wish to God, sir, that since you were so kind as* to interest yourself in affairs so intimately concerning my family, you had been pleased to act with a little more openness towards me. Here have I been for weeks the intimate of a damned scoundrel, whose throat I ought to have cut for his scandalous conduct to my sister. Here have I been rendering her and myself miserable, and getting myself cheated every night by a swindler, whom you, if it had been your pleasure, could have unmasked by a single word. I do all justice to your intentions, sir; but, upon my soul, I cannot help wishing you had conducted yourself with more frankness and less mystery; and I am truly afraid your love of dexterity has been too much for your ingenuity, and that you have suffered matters to run into such a skain of confusion, as you yourself will find difficulty in unravelling."

Touchwood smiled, and shook his head in all the conscious pride of superior understanding. "Young man," he said, "when you have seen a little of the world, and especially beyond the bounds of this narrow island, you will find much more art and dexterity necessary in conducting these businesses to an issue, than occurs to a blind John Bull, or a raw Scotchman. You will be then no stranger to the policy of life, which deals in mining and countermining,—now in making feints, now in thrusting with forthright passes. I look upon you, Mr. Mowbray, as a young man spoiled by staying at home, and keeping bad company; and will make it my business, if you submit yourself to my guidance, to inform your understanding, so as to retrieve your estate.—Don't—don't answer me, sir! because I know too well, by experience, how young men answer on these subjects—they are conceited, sir, as conceited as if they had been in all the four quarters of the world. I hate to be answered, sir, I hate it. And, to tell you the truth, it is because Tyrrel has a fancy of answering me, that I rather make you my confidant on this occasion, than him. I would have had him throw himself into my arms, and under my directions; but he hesitated—he hesitated, Mr. Mowbray—and I despise hesitation. If he thinks he has wit enough to manage his own matters, let him try it—let him try it. Not but I will do all that I can for him, in fitting time and place; but I will let him dwell in his perplexities and uncertainties for a little while longer. And so, Mr. Mowbray, you see what sort of an odd fellow I am, and you can satisfy me at once whether you mean to come into my measures—only speak out at once, sir, for I abhor hesitation."

While Touchwood thus spoke, Mowbray was forming his resolution internally. He was not so inexperienced as the senior supposed; at least, he could plainly see that he had to do with an obstinate, capricious old man, who, with the best intentions in the world, chose to have every thing in his own way; and, like most petty politicians, was disposed to throw intrigue and mystery over matters which had much better be prosecuted boldly and openly. But he perceived at the same time, that Touchwood, as a sort of relation, wealthy, childless, and disposed to become his friend, was a person to be conciliated, the rather that the traveller himself had frankly owned that it was Francis Tyrrel's want of deference towards him, which had forfeited, or at least abated, his favour. Mowbray recollected also, that the circumstances under which he himself stood, did not permit him to trifle with returning gleams of good fortune. Subduing, therefore, the haughtiness of temper proper to him as an only son and heir, he answered respectfully, that, in his condition, the advice and assistance of Mr. Scrogie Touchwood were too important, not to be purchased at the price of submitting his own judgment to that of an experienced and sagacious friend.

"Well said, Mr. Mowbray," replied the senior, "well said. Let me once have the management of your affairs, and we will brush them up for you without loss of time.—I must be obliged to you for a bed for the night, however—it is as dark as a wolf's mouth; and if you will give orders to keep the poor devil of a postilion, and his horses too, why, I will be the more obliged to you."

Mowbray applied himself to the bell. Patrick an-

swered the call, and was much surprised, when the old gentleman, taking the word out of his entertainer's mouth, desired a bed to be got ready, with a little fire in the grate; "for I take it, friend," he went on, "you have not guests here very often.—And see that my sheets be not damp, and bid the housemaid take care not to make the bed upon an exact level, but let it slope from the pillow to the footposts, at a declivity of about eighteen inches.—And hark ye—get me a jug of barley-water, to place by my bedside, with the squeeze of a lemon—or stay, you will make it as sour as Beelzebub—bring the lemon on a saucer, and I will mix it myself."

Patrick listened like one of sense forlorn, his head turning like a mandarin, alternately from the speaker to his master, as if to ask the latter whether this was all reality. The instant that Touchwood stopped, Mowbray added his fiat.

"Let every thing be done to make Mr. Touchwood comfortable, in the way he wishes."

"Aweel, sir," said Patrick, "I shall tell Mally, to be sure, and we maun do our best, and—but it's unco late"——

"And, therefore," said Touchwood, "the sooner we get to bed the better, my old friend. I, for one, must be stirring early—I have business of life and death—it concerns you too, Mr. Mowbray—but no more of that till to-morrow.—And let the lad put up his horses, and get him a bed somewhere."

Patrick here thought he had gotten upon firm ground for resistance, for which, displeased with the dictatorial manner of the stranger, he felt considerably inclined.

"Ye may catch us at that, if ye can," said Patrick; "there's nae post cattle come into our stables—What do we ken, but that they may be glandered, as the groom says?"

"We must take the risk to-night, Patrick," said Mowbray, reluctantly enough—"unless Mr. Touchwood will permit the horses to come back early next morning?"

"Not I, indeed," said Touchwood; "safe bind safe find—it may be once away and aye away, and we shall have enough to do to-morrow morning. Moreover, the poor carrion are tired, and the merciful man is merciful to his beast—and, in a word, if the horses go back to St. Ronan's Well to-night, I go there for company."

It often happens, owing, I suppose, to the perversity of human nature, that subserviency in trifles is more difficult to a proud mind, than compliance in matters of more importance. Mowbray, like other young gentlemen of his class, was finically rigid in his stable discipline, and even Lord Etherington's horses had not been admitted into that *sanctum sanctorum*, into which he now saw himself obliged to induct two wretched post-hacks. But he submitted with the best grace he could; and Patrick, while he left their presence, with lifted-up hands and eyes to execute the orders he had received, could scarcely help thinking that the old man must be the devil in disguise, since he could thus suddenly control his fiery master, even in the points which he had hitherto seemed to consider as of most vital importance.

"The Lord in his mercy haud a grip of this puir family! for I, that was born in it, am like to see the end of it." Thus ejaculated Patrick.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE WANDERER.

'Tis a naughty night to swim in.—King Lear.

THERE was a wild uncertainty about Mowbray's ideas, after he started from a feverish sleep on the morning succeeding this memorable interview, that his sister, whom he really loved as much as he was capable of loving any thing, had dishonoured him and her name; and the horrid recollection of their last interview was the first idea which his waking imagination was thrilled with. Then came Touchwood's tale of exculpation—and he persuaded himself, or strove to do so, that Clara must have understood the charge he had brought against her as referring to her attachment to Tyrrel, and its fatal consequences. Again, still he doubted how that could be—still feared that there must be more behind than her reluctance to confess the fraud which had been practised on her by Bulmer; and then, again, he strengthened himself in the first and more pleasing opinion, by recollecting that, averse as she was to espouse the person he proposed to her, it must have appeared to her the completion of ruin, if he, Mowbray, should obtain knowledge of the clandestine marriage.

"Yes—O yes," he said to himself, "she would think that this story would render me more eager in the rascal's interest, as the best way of hushing up such a discreditable affair—faith, and she would have judged right too; for, had he actually been Lord Etherington, I do not see what else she could have done. But, not being Lord Etherington, and an anointed scoundrel into the bargain, I will content myself with cudgelling him to death so soon as I can get out of the guardianship of this old, meddling, obstinate, self-willed, busybody.—Then, what is to be done for Clara?—This mock marriage was a mere bubble, and both parties must draw stakes. She likes this grave Don, who proves to be the stick of the right tree, after all—so do not I, though there be something lordlike about him. I was sure a strolling painter could not have carried it off so. She may marry him, I suppose, if the law is not against it—then she has the earldom, and the Oaklands, and Nettlewood, all at once.—Gad, we should come in winners, after all—and, I dare say, this old boy Touchwood is as rich as a Jew—worth a hundred thousand at least—He is too peremptory to be cut up for sixpence under a hundred thousand.—And he talks of putting me to rights—I must not wince—must stand still to be curried a little—Only, I wish the law may permit Clara's being married to this other earl.—A woman cannot marry two brothers, that is certain:—but then, if she is not married to the one of them in good and lawful form, there can be no bar to her marrying the other, I should think—I hope the lawyers will talk no nonsense about it—I hope Clara will have no foolish scruples.—But, by my word, the first thing I have to hope is, that the thing is true, for it comes through but a suspicious channel. I'll away to Clara instantly—get the truth out of her—and consider what is to be done."

Thus partly thought and partly spoke the young Laird of St. Ronan's, hastily dressing himself, in order to inquire into the strange chaos of events which perplexed his imagination.

When he came down to the parlour where they had supped last night, and where breakfast was prepared this morning, he sent for a girl who acted as his sister's immediate attendant, and asked, "if Miss Mowbray was yet stirring?"

The girl answered, "she had not rung her bell."

"It is past her usual hour," said Mowbray, "but she was disturbed last night. Go, Martha, tell her to get up instantly—say I have excellent good news for her—or, if her head aches, I will come and tell them to her before she rises—go like lightning."

Martha went, and returned in a minute or two. "I cannot make my mistress hear, sir, knock as loud as I will. I wish," she added, with that love of evil presage which is common in the lower ranks, "that Miss Clara may be well, for I never knew her sleep so sound."

Mowbray jumped from the chair into which he had thrown himself, ran through the gallery, and knocked smartly at his sister's door; there was no answer. "Clara, dear Clara!—Answer me but one word—say but you are well. I frightened you last night—I had been drinking wine—I was violent—forgive me!—Come, do not be sulky—speak but a single word—say but you are well."

He made the pauses longer between every branch of his address, knocked sharper and louder, listened more anxiously for an answer; at length he attempted to open the door, but found it locked, or otherwise secured. "Does Miss Mowbray always lock her door?" he asked the girl.

"Never knew her to do it before, sir; she leaves

it open that I may call her, and open the window-shutters."

She had too good reason for precaution last night, thought her brother, and then remembered having heard her bar the door.

"Come, Clara," he continued, greatly agitated, "do not be silly; if you will not open the door, I must force it, that's all; for how can I tell but that you are sick, and unable to answer?—if you are only sullen, say so.—She returns no answer," he said, turning to the domestic, who was now joined by Touchwood.

Mowbray's anxiety was so great, that it prevented his taking any notice of his guest, and he proceeded to say, without regarding his presence, "What is to be done?—she may be sick—she may be asleep—she may have swooned; if I force the door, it may terrify her to death in the present weak state of her nerves.—Clara, dear Clara! do but speak a single word, and you shall remain in your own room as long as you please."

There was no answer. Miss Mowbray's maid, hitherto too much flustered and alarmed to have much presence of mind, now recollected a back-stair which communicated with her mistress's room from the garden, and suggested she might have gone out that way.

"Gone out," said Mowbray, in great anxiety, and looking at the heavy fog, or rather small rain, which blotted the November morning,—"Gone out, and in weather like this!—But we may get into her room from the back-stair."

So saying, and leaving his guest to follow or remain as he thought proper, he flew rather than walked to the garden, and found the private door which led into it, from the bottom of the back-stair above mentioned, was wide open. Full of vague, but fearful apprehensions, he rushed up to the door of his sister's apartment, which opened from her dressing-room to the landing-place of the stair; it was ajar, and that which communicated betwixt the bedroom and dressing-room was half open. "Clara, Clara!" exclaimed Mowbray, invoking her name rather in an agony of apprehension, than as any longer hoping for a reply. And his apprehension was but too prophetic.

Miss Mowbray was not in that apartment; and, from the order in which it was found, it was plain she had neither undressed on the preceding night, nor occupied the bed. Mowbray struck his forehead in an agony of remorse and fear. "I have terrified her to death," he said; "she has fled into the woods, and perished there!"

Under the influence of this apprehension, Mowbray, after another hasty glance around the apartment, as if to assure himself that Clara was not there, rushed again into the dressing-room, almost overturning the traveller, who, in civility, had not ventured to enter the inner apartment. "You are as mad as a *Hamake*,"* said the traveller; "let us consult together, and I am sure I can contrive"——

"Oh, d—n your contrivance!" said Mowbray, forgetting all proposed respect in his natural impatience, aggravated by his alarm; "if you had behaved straightforward, and like a man of common sense, this would not have happened!"

"God forgive you, young man, if your reflections are unjust," said the traveller, quitting the hold he had laid upon Mowbray's coat; "and God forgive me too, if I have done wrong while endeavouring to do for the best!—But may not Miss Mowbray have gone down to the Well? I will order my horses, and set off instantly."

"Do, do," said Mowbray, recklessly; "I thank you, I thank you;" and hastily traversing the garden, as if desirous to get rid at once of his visiter and his own thoughts, he took the shortest road to a little postern-gate, which led into the extensive copsewood, through some part of which Clara had caused a walk to be cut to a little summer-house built of rough shingles, covered with creeping shrubs.

As Mowbray hastened through the garden, he met the old *man by whom it was kept, a native of the south country, and an old dependent on the family.*

"Have you seen my sister?" said Mowbray, hurrying his words on each other with the eagerness of terror.

"What's your will, St. Ronan's?" answered the old man, at once dull of hearing, and slow of apprehension.

"Have you seen Miss Clara?" shouted Mowbray, and muttered an oath or two at the gardener's stupidity.

"In troth have I," replied the gardener, deliberately; "what suld ail me to see Miss Clara, St. Ronan's?"

"When, and where?" eagerly demanded the querist.

"Oh, just yestreen, after tey-time—afore ye cam hame yourself galloping sae fast," said old Joseph.

"I am as stupid as he, to put off my time in speaking to such an old cabbage-stock!" said Mowbray, and hastened on to the postern-gate already mentioned, leading from the garden into what was usually called Miss Clara's walk. Two or three domestics, whispering to each other, and with countenances that showed grief, fear, and suspicion, followed their master, desirous to be employed, yet afraid to force their services on the fiery young man.

At the little postern he found some trace of her he sought. The pass-key of Clara was left in the lock. It was then plain that she must have passed that way; but at what hour, or for what purpose, Mowbray dared not conjecture. The path, after running a quarter of a mile or more through an open grove of oaks and sycamores, attained the verge of the large brook, and became there steep and rocky, difficult to the infirm, and alarming to the nervous; often approaching the brink of a precipitous ledge of rock, which in this place overhung the stream, in some places brawling and foaming in hasty current, and in others seeming to slumber in deep and circular eddies. The temptations which this dangerous scene must have offered an excited and desperate spirit, came on Mowbray like the blight of the Simoom, and he stood a moment to gather breath and overcome these horrible anticipations, ere he was able to proceed. His attendants felt the same apprehension. "Puir thing—puir thing!—O, God send she may not have been left to herself!—God send she may have been upholden!" were whispered by Patrick to the maidens, and by them to each other.

At this moment the old gardener was heard behind them, shouting, "Master—St. Ronan's—Master—I have fund—I have fund"——

"Have you found my sister?" exclaimed the brother, with breathless anxiety.

The old man did not answer till he came up, and then, with his usual slowness of delivery, he replied to his master's repeated inquiries, "Na, I haena fund Miss Clara, but I hae fund something ye wad be wae to lose—your braw hunting-knife."

He put the implement into the hand of its owner, who, recollecting the circumstances under which he had flung it from him last night, and the now too probable circumstances of that interview, bestowed on it a deep imprecation, and again hurled it from him into the brook. The domestics looked at each other, and recollecting each at the same time that the knife was a favourite tool of their master, who was rather curious in such articles, had little doubt that his mind was affected, in a temporary way at least, by his anxiety on his sister's account. He saw their confused and inquisitive looks, and assuming as much composure and presence of mind as he could command, directed Martha, and her female companions, to return and search the walks on the other side of Shaws-Castle; and, finally, ordered Patrick back to ring the bell, "which," he said, assuming a confidence that he was far from entertaining, "might call Miss Mowbray home from some of her long walks." He farther desired his groom and horses might meet him at the Clattering Brig, so called from a noisy cascade which was formed by the brook, above which was stretched a small foot-bridge of planks. Having thus shaken off his attendants, he proceeded himself, with all the speed he was capable of exerting, to follow out the path in which he was at present engaged, which, being a favourite walk with his sister, she might perhaps have adopted from mere

* *A boat is so termed in Turkey.*

habit, when in a state of mind, which, he had too much reason to fear, must have put choice out of the question.

He soon reached the summer-house, which was merely a seat covered overhead and on the sides, open in front, and neatly paved with pebbles. This little bower was perched, like a hawk's nest, almost upon the edge of a projecting crag, the highest point of the line of rock which we have noticed; and had been selected by poor Clara, on account of the prospect which it commanded down the valley. One of her gloves lay on the small rustic table in the summer-house. Mowbray caught it eagerly up. It was drenched with wet—the preceding day had been dry; so that, had she forgot it there in the morning, or in the course of the day, it could not have been in that state. She had certainly been there during the night, when it rained heavily.

Mowbray, thus assured that Clara had been in this place, while her passions and fears were so much afloat as they must have been at her flight from her father's house, cast a hurried and terrified glance from the brow of the precipice into the deep stream that eddied below. It seemed to him that, in the sullen roar of the water, he heard the last groans of his sister—the foam-flakes caught his eye, as if they were a part of her garments. But a closer examination showed that there was no appearance of such a catastrophe. Descending the path on the other side of the bower, he observed a foot-print in a place where the clay was moist and tenacious, which, from the small size, and the shape of the shoe, it appeared to him must be a trace of her whom he sought. He hurried forward, therefore, with as much speed, as yet permitted him to look out keenly for similar impressions, of which it seemed to him he remarked several, although less perfect than the former, being much obliterated by the quantity of rain that had since fallen,—a circumstance seeming to prove that several hours had elapsed since the person had passed.

At length, through the various turnings and windings of a long and romantic path, Mowbray found himself, without having received any satisfactory intelligence, by the side of the brook, called St. Ronan's Burn, at the place where it was crossed by foot-passengers, by the Clattering Brig, and by horsemen through a ford a little lower. At this point the fugitive might have either continued her wanderings through her paternal woods, by a path which, after winding about a mile, returned to Shaws-Castle, or she might have crossed the bridge, and entered a broken horse-way, common to the public, leading to the Aultoun of St. Ronan's.

Mowbray, after a moments consideration, concluded that the last was her most probable option. —He mounted his horse, which the groom had brought down according to order, and commanding the man to return by the footpath, which he himself could not examine, he proceeded to ride towards the ford. The brook was swollen during the night, and the groom could not forbear intimating to his master, that there was considerable danger in attempting to cross it. But Mowbray's mind and feelings were too high-strung to permit him to listen to cautious counsel. He spurred the snorting and reluctant horse into the torrent, though the water, rising high on the upper side, broke both over the pommel and the croupe of his saddle. It was by exertion of great strength and sagacity, that the good horse kept the ford-way. Had the stream forced him down among the rocks, which lie below the crossing-place, the consequences must have been fatal. Mowbray, however, reached the opposite side in safety, to the joy and admiration of the servant, who stood staring at him during the adventure. He then rode hastily towards the Aultoun, determined, if he could not hear tidings of his sister in that village, that he would spread the alarm, and institute a general search after her, since her elopement from Shaws-Castle could, in that case, no longer be concealed. We must leave him, however, in his present state of uncertainty, in *order to acquaint our readers with the reality of those evils, which his foreboding mind and disturbed conscience could only anticipate.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CATASTROPHE.

> What sheeted ghost is wandering through the storm?
> For never did a maid of middle earth
> Choose such a time or spot to vent her sorrows.—*Old Play.*

Grief, shame, confusion, and terror, had contributed to overwhelm the unfortunate Clara Mowbray at the moment when she parted with her brother, after the stormy and dangerous interview which it was our task to record in a former chapter. For years, her life, her whole tenor of thought, had been haunted by the terrible apprehension of a discovery, and now the thing which she feared had come upon her. The extreme violence of her brother, which went so far as to menace her personal safety, had united with the previous conflict of passions, to produce a rapture of fear, which probably left her no other free agency, than that which she derived from the blind instinct which urges flight, as the readiest resource in danger.

We have no means of exactly tracing the course of this unhappy young woman. It is probable she fled from Shaws-Castle, on hearing the arrival of Mr. Touchwood's carriage, which she might mistake for that of Lord Etherington; and thus, while Mowbray was looking forward to the happier prospects which the traveller's narrative seemed to open, his sister was contending with rain and darkness, amidst the difficulties and dangers of the mountain path which we have described. These were so great, that a young woman more delicately brought up, must either have lain down exhausted, or have been compelled to turn her steps back to the residence she had abandoned. But the solitary wanderings of Clara had inured her to fatigue and to night-walks; and the deeper causes of terror which urged her to flight, rendered her insensible to the perils of her way. She had passed the bower, as was evident from her glove remaining there, and had crossed the foot-bridge; although it was almost wonderful, that, in so dark a night, she should have followed with such accuracy a track, where the missing a single turn by a cubit's length, might have precipitated her into eternity.

It is probable, that Clara's spirits and strength began in some degree to fail her, after she had proceeded a little way on the road to the Aultoun; for she had stopped at the solitary cottage inhabited by the old female pauper, who had been for a time the hostess of the penitent and dying Hannah Irwin. Here, as the inmate of the cottage acknowledged, she had made some knocking, and she owned she had heard her moan bitterly, as she entreated for admission. The old hag was one of those whose hearts adversity turns to very stone, and obstinately kept her door shut, impelled more probably by general hatred to the human race, than by the superstitious fears which seized her; although she perversely argued that she was startled at the supernatural melody and sweetness of tone, with which the benighted wanderer made her supplication. She admitted, that when she heard the poor petitioner turn from the door, her heart was softened, and she did intend to open with the purpose of offering her at least a shelter; but that before she could "hirple to the door, and get the bar taken down," the unfortunate supplicant was not to be seen; which strengthened the old woman's opinion, that the whole was a delusion of Satan.

It is conjectured that the repulsed wanderer made no other attempt to awaken pity or obtain shelter, until she came to Mr. Cargill's Manse, in the upper room of which a light was still burning, owing to a cause which requires some explanation.

The reader is aware of the reasons which induced Bulmer, or the titular Lord Etherington, to withdraw from the country the sole witness, as he conceived, who could, or at least who might choose to bear witness to the fraud which he had practised on the unfortunate Clara Mowbray. Of three persons present at the marriage, besides the parties, the clergyman was completely deceived. Solmes he conceived to be at his own exclusive devotion; and therefore, if by his means this Hannah Irwin could be removed from the scene, he argued plausibly that all evidence

reachery which he had practised would be
ly stifled. Hence his agent, Solmes, had
a commission, as the reader may remember,
her removal without loss of time, and had
to his master that his efforts had been

olmes, since he had fallen under the influ-
Touchwood, was constantly employed in
cting the schemes which he seemed most
forwarding, while the traveller enjoyed (to
exquisite gratification) the amusement of
ining as fast as Bulmer could mine, and
rospect the pleasing anticipation of blowing
ioneer with his own petard. For this pur-
soon as Touchwood learned that his house
be applied to for the original deeds left in
y the deceased Earl of Etherington, he ex-
letter directing that only the copies should be
l thus rendered nugatory Bulmer's desperate
f possessing himself of that evidence. For
reason, when Solmes announced to him his
anxious wish to have Hannah Irwin con-
it of the country, he appointed him to cause
woman to be carefully transported to the
where Mr. Cargill was easily induced to give
orary refuge.
a good man, who might be termed an Israel-
out guile, the distress of the unhappy wo-
uld have proved a sufficient recommenda-
r was he likely to have inquired whether her
might not be infectious, or to have made any
other previous investigations which are some-
gs upon the bounty or hospitality of more pru-
lanthropists. But to interest him yet farther,
chwood informed him by letter that the pa-
t otherwise unknown to him) was possessed
n most material information affecting a fami-
nour and consequence, and that he himself,
. Mowbray of St. Ronan's in the quality of a
ite, intended to be at the Manse that evening,
ner declaration upon this important subject.
leed was the traveller's purpose, which might
n carried into effect, but for his own self-im-
ove of manœuvring on the one part, and the
atience of Mowbray on the other, which, as
r knows, sent the one at full gallop to Shaws-
nd obliged the other to follow him post haste.
cessity he intimated to the clergyman by a
ich he despatched express as he himself was
t of stepping into the chaise.
quested that the most particular attention
e paid to the invalid—promised to be at the
with Mr. Mowbray early on the morrow—
h the lingering and inveterate self-conceit
lways induced him to conduct every thing
own hand, directed his friend, Mr. Cargill,
oceed to take the sick woman's declaration
sion until he arrived, unless in case of ex-

been an easy matter for Solmes to transfer
lid from the wretched cottage to the clergy-
lanse. The first appearance of the associate
of her guilt had indeed terrified her; but he
not to assure her, that his penitence was
her own, and that he was conveying her
heir joint deposition would be formally re-
n order that they might, so far as possible,
r the evil of which they had been jointly
He also promised her kind usage for herself,
port for her children; and she willingly ac-
ed him to the clergyman's residence, he him-
lving to abide in concealment the issue of
tery, without again facing his master, whose
ne well discerned, was about to shoot speedily
exalted sphere.
ergyman visited the unfortunate patient, as
done frequently during her residence in his
and desired that she might be carefully at-
During the whole day, she seemed better;
ther the means of supporting her exhausted
id been too liberally administered, or whether
ights which gnawed her conscience had re-
with double severity when she was released
pressure of immediate want, it is certain
that, about midnight, the fever began to gain ground, and the person placed in attendance on her came to inform the clergyman, then deeply engaged with the siege of Ptolemais, that she doubted if the woman would live till morning, and that she had something lay heavy at her heart, which she wished, as the emissary expressed it, "to make a clean breast of" before she died, or lost possession of her senses.

Awakened by such a crisis, Mr. Cargill at once became a man of this world, clear in his apprehension, and cool in his resolution, as he always was when the path of duty lay before him. Comprehending, from the various hints of his friend Touchwood, that the matter was of the last consequence, his own humanity, as well as inexperience, dictated his sending for skilful assistance. His man-servant was accordingly despatched on horseback to the Well for Dr. Quackleben; while, upon the suggestion of one of his maids, "that Mrs. Dods was an uncommon skeely body about a sick-bed," the wench was dismissed to supplicate the assistance of the gudewife of the Cleikum, which she was not, indeed, wont to refuse whenever it could be useful. The male emissary proved, in Scottish phrase, a "corbie messenger;" for either he did not find the doctor, or he found him better engaged than to attend the sick-bed of a pauper, at a request which promised such slight remuneration as that of a parish minister. But the female ambassador was more successful; for, though she found our friend Luckie Dods preparing for bed at an hour unusually late, in consequence of some anxiety on account of Mr. Touchwood's unexpected absence, the good old dame only growled a little about the minister's fancies in taking puir bodies into his own house; and then, instantly donning cloak, hood, and pattens, marched down the gate with all the speed of the good Samaritan, one maid bearing the lantern before her, while the other remained to keep the house, and to attend to the wants of Mr. Tyrrel, who engaged willingly to sit up to receive Mr. Touchwood.

But, ere Dame Dods had arrived at the Manse, the patient had summoned Mr. Cargill to her presence, and required him to write her confession while she had life and breath to make it.

"For I believe," she added, raising herself in the bed, and rolling her eyes wildly around, "that, were I to confess my guilt to one of a less sacred character, the Evil Spirit, whose servant I have been, would carry away his prey, both body and soul, before they had severed from each other, however short the space that they must remain in partnership!"

Mr. Cargill would have spoken some ghostly consolation, but she answered with pettish impatience, "Waste not words—waste not words!—Let me speak that which I must tell, and sign it with my hand; and do you, as the more immediate servant of God, and therefore bound to bear witness to the truth, take heed you write that which I tell you, and nothing else. I desired to have told this to St. Ronan's—I have even made some progress in telling it to others—but I am glad I broke short off—for I know you, Josiah Cargill, though you have long forgotten me."

"It may be so," said Cargill. "I have indeed no recollection of you."

"You once knew Hannah Irwin, though," said the sick woman, "who was companion and relation to Miss Clara Mowbray, and who was present with her on that sinful night, when she was wedded in the kirk of St. Ronan's."

"Do you mean to say that you are that person?" said Cargill, holding the candle so as to throw some light on the face of the sick woman. "I cannot believe it."

"No?" replied the penitent; "there is indeed a difference between wickedness in the act of carrying through its successful machinations, and wickedness surrounded by all the horrors of a death-bed!"

"Do not yet despair," said Cargill. "Grace is omnipotent—to doubt this is in itself a great crime."

"Be it so!—I cannot help it!—my heart is hardened, Mr. Cargill; and there is something here," she pressed her bosom, "which tells me, that, with prolonged life and renewed health, even my present agonies would

be forgotten, and I should become the same I have been before. I have rejected the offer of grace, Mr. Cargill, and not through ignorance, for I have sinned with my eyes open. Care not for me, then, who am a mere outcast." He again endeavoured to interrupt her, but she continued, "Or if you really wish my welfare, let me relieve my bosom of that which presses it, and it may be that I shall then be better able to listen to you. You say you remember me not—but if I tell you how often you refused to perform in secret the office which was required of you—how much you urged that it was against your canonical rules—if I name the argument to which you yielded—and remind you of your purpose, to acknowledge your transgression to your brethren in the church courts, to plead your excuse, and submit to their censure, which you said could not be a light one—you will be then aware, that, in the voice of the miserable pauper, you hear the words of the once artful, gay, and specious Hannah Irwin."

"I allow it—I allow it!" said Mr. Cargill; "I admit the tokens, and believe you to be indeed her whose name you assume."

"Then one painful step is over," said she; "for I would ere now have lightened my conscience by confession, saving for the cursed pride of spirit, which was ashamed of poverty, though it had not shrunk from guilt.—Well—In these arguments, which were urged to you by a youth best known to you by the name of Francis Tyrrel, though more properly entitled to that of Valentine Bulmer, we practised on you a base and gross deception.—Did you not hear some one sigh?—I hope there is no one in the room—I trust I shall die when my confession is signed and sealed, without my name being dragged through the public—I hope ye bring not in your menials to gaze on my abject misery—I cannot brook that."

She paused and listened; for the ear, usually deafened by pain, is sometimes, on the contrary, rendered morbidly acute. Mr. Cargill assured her, there was no one present but himself. "But, O, most unhappy woman!" he said, "what does your introduction prepare me to expect?"

"Your expectation, be it ever so ominous, shall be fully satisfied. I was the guilty confidant of the false Francis Tyrrel. Clara loved the true one. When the fatal ceremony passed, the bride and the clergyman were deceived alike—and I was the wretch—the fiend—who, aiding another yet blacker, if blacker could be—mainly helped to accomplish this cureless misery!"

"Wretch!" exclaimed the clergyman, "and had you not then done enough?—Why did you expose the betrothed of one brother to become the wife of another?"

"I acted," said the sick woman, "only as Bulmer instructed me; but I had to do with a master of the game. He contrived, by his agent Solmes, to match me with a husband imposed on me by his devices as a man of fortune—a wretch, who maltreated me—plundered me—sold me. Oh! if fiends laugh, as I have heard they can, what a jubilee of scorn will there be, when Bulmer and I enter their place of torture! Hark! I am sure of it—some one draws breath, as if shuddering!"

"You will distract yourself if you give way to these fancies. Be calm—speak on—but, oh! at last, and for once, speak the truth!"

"I will, for it will best gratify my hatred against him, who, having first robbed me of my virtue, made me a sport and a plunder to the basest of the species. For that I wandered here to unmask him. I had heard he again stirred his suit to Clara, and I came here to tell young Mowbray the whole. But do you wonder that I shrunk from doing so till this last decisive moment?—I thought of my conduct to Clara, and how could I face her brother? And yet I hated her not after I learned her utter wretchedness—her deep misery, verging even upon madness—I hated her not then. I was sorry that she was not to fall to the lot of a better man than Bulmer;—and I pitied her after she was rescued by Tyrrel, and you may remember it was I who prevailed on you to conceal her marriage."

"I remember it," answered Cargill, "and that you alleged, as a reason for secrecy, danger from her family. I did conceal it, until reports that she was again to be married reached my ears."

"Well, then," said the sick woman, "Clara Mowbray ought to forgive me—since what ill I have done her was inevitable, while the good I did was voluntary. I must see her, Josiah Cargill,—I must see her before I die—I shall never pray till I see her—I shall never profit by word of godliness till I see her! If I cannot obtain the pardon of a worm like myself, how can I hope for that of"——

She started at these words with a faint scream; for slowly, and with a feeble hand, the curtains of the bed opposite to the side at which Cargill sat, were opened, and the figure of Clara Mowbray, her clothes and long hair drenched and dripping with rain, stood in the opening by the bedside. The dying woman sat upright, her eyes starting from their sockets, her lips quivering, her face pale, her emaciated hands grasping the bed-clothes, as if to support herself, and looking as much aghast as if her confession had called up the apparition of her betrayed friend.

"Hannah Irwin," said Clara, with her usual sweetness of tone, "my early friend—my unprovoked enemy! Betake thee to Him who hath pardon for us all, and betake thee with confidence—*for* I pardon you as freely as if you had never wronged me—as freely as I desire my own pardon. Farewell—Farewell!"

She retired from the room, ere the clergyman could convince himself that it was more than a phantom which he beheld. He ran down stairs—he summoned assistants, but no one could attend his call; for the deep rueckling groans of the patient satisfied every one that she was breathing her last; and Mrs. Dods, with the maid-servant, ran into the bedroom, to witness the death of Hannah Irwin, which shortly after took place.

That event had scarcely occurred, when the maid-servant who had been left in the inn, came down in great terror to acquaint her mistress, that a lady had entered the house like a ghost, and was dying in Mr. Tyrrel's room. The truth of the story we must tell our own way.

In the irregular state of Miss Mowbray's mind, a less violent impulse than that which she had received from her brother's arbitrary violence, added to the fatigues, dangers, and terrors of her night-walk, might have exhausted the powers of her body, and alienated those of her mind. We have before said, that the lights in the clergyman's house had probably attracted her attention, and in the temporary confusion of a family, never remarkable for its regularity, she easily mounted the stairs, and entered the sick chamber undiscovered, and thus overheard Hannah Irwin's confession, a tale sufficient to have greatly aggravated her mental malady.

We have no means of knowing whether she actually sought Tyrrel, or whether it was, as in the former case, the circumstance of a light still burning where all around was dark, that attracted her; but her next apparition was close by the side of her unfortunate lover, then deeply engaged in writing, when something suddenly gleamed on a large, old-fashioned mirror, which hung on the wall opposite. He looked up, and saw the figure of Clara, holding a light (which she had taken from the passage) in her extended hand. He stood for an instant with his eyes fixed on this fearful shadow, ere he dared turn round on the substance which was thus reflected. When he did so, the fixed and pallid countenance almost impressed him with the belief that he saw a vision, and he shuddered when, stooping beside him, she took his hand. "Come away!" she said, in a hurried voice—"Come away, my brother follows to kill us both. Come Tyrrel, let us fly—we shall easily escape him.—Hannah Irwin is on before—but, if we are overtaken, I will have no more fighting—you must promise me that we shall not—we have had but too much of that—but you will be wise in future."

"Clara Mowbray!" exclaimed Tyrrel. "Alas! is it thus?—Stay—do not go," for she turned to make her escape—"stay—stay—sit down."

"I must go," she replied, "I must go—I am called—Hannah Irwin is gone before to tell all, and I must

Will you not let me go?—Nay, if you will
e by force, I know I must sit down—but you
be able to keep me for all that."
nvulsion fit followed, and seemed, by its vio-
explain that she was indeed bound for the
darksome journey. The maid, who at length
d Tyrrel's earnest and repeated summons,
ified at the scene she witnessed, and carried
llance the alarm which we before mentioned.
ld landlady was compelled to exchange one
sorrow for another, wondering within herself
nality could have marked this single night
much misery. When she arrived at home,
se her astonishment to find there the daughter
ouse, which, even in their alienation, she had
eased to love, in a state little short of dis-
, and tended by Tyrrel, whose state of mind
scarce more composed than that of the un-
atient. The oddities of Mrs. Dods were merely
which had accumulated upon her character,
out impairing its native strength and energy;
sympathies were not of a kind acute enough
le her from thinking and acting as decisively
mstances required.
Tyrrel," she said, "this is nae sight for men
maun rise and gang to another room."
ll not stir from her," said Tyrrel—"I will not
from her either now, or as long as she or I
."
t will be nae lang space, Maister Tyrrel, if ye
e ruled by common sense."
l started up, as if half comprehending what
, but remained motionless.
se, come," said the compassionate landlady;
stand looking on a sight sair enough to break
r heart than yours, hinny—your ain sense tells
canna stay here—Miss Clara shall be weel
e, and I'll bring word to your room-door frae
r to half-hour how she is."
necessity of the case was undeniable, and
uffered himself to be led to another apartment,
Miss Mowbray to the care of the hostess and
ale assistants. He counted the hours in an
less by the watch than by the visits which
ods, faithful to her promise, made from inter-
nterval, to tell him that Clara was not better—
e was worse—and, at last, that she did not
ne could live over morning. It required all the
tory influence of the good landlady to restrain
who, calm and cold on common occasions,
portionally fierce and impetuous when his
were aflaat, from bursting into the room, and
ning, with his own eyes, the state of the pa-
tient. At length there was a long interval—
rval of hours—so long indeed, that Tyrrel
from it the flattering hope that Clara slept,
t sleep might bring refreshment both to mind
dy. Mrs. Dods, he concluded, was prevented
ving, for fear of disturbing her patient's slum-
d, as if actuated by the same feeling which he
to her, he ceased to traverse his apartment,
gitation had hitherto dictated, and throwing
into a chair, forbore to move even a finger,
held his respiration as much as possible, just
had been seated by the pillow of the patient.
g was far advanced, when his landlady ap-
in his room with a grave and anxious coun-

Tyrrel," she said, "ye are a Christian man."
sh, hush, for Heaven's sake!" he replied;
ill disturb Miss Mowbray."
thing will disturb her, puir thing," answered
ods; "they have muckle to answer for that
her to this!"
y have—they have indeed," said Tyrrel, strik-
forehead; "and I will see her avenged on
ne of them!—Can I see her?"
ter not—better not," said the good woman;
urst from her, and rushed into the apartment.
ife gone?—Is every spark extinct?" he ex-
eagerly to a country surgeon, a sensible man,
d been *summoned from Marchthorn in the*
of the night. The medical man shook his
rave rushed to the bedside, and was con-
vinced by his own eyes that the being whose sorrows he had both caused and shared, was now insensible to all earthly calamity. He raised almost a shriek of despair, as he threw himself on the pale hand of the corpse, wet it with tears, devoured it with kisses, and played for a short time the part of a distracted person. At length, on the repeated expostulation of all present, he suffered himself to be again conducted to another apartment, the surgeon following, anxious to give such sad consolation as the case admitted of.

"As you are so deeply concerned for the untimely fate of this young lady," he said, "it may be some satisfaction to you, though a melancholy one, to know that it has been occasioned by a pressure on the brain, probably accompanied by a suffusion; and I feel authorized in stating from the symptoms, that if life had been spared, reason would, in all probability, never have returned. In such a case, sir, the most affectionate relation must own, that death, in comparison to life, is a mercy."

"Mercy?" answered Tyrrel; "but why, then, is it denied to me?—I know—I know!—My life is spared till I revenge her."

He started from his seat, and hurried eagerly down stairs. But, as he was about to rush from the door of the inn, he was stopped by Touchwood, who had just alighted from a carriage, with an air of stern anxiety imprinted on his features, very different from their usual expression. "Whither would ye? Whither would ye?" he said, laying hold of Tyrrel, and stopping him by force.

"For revenge—for revenge!" said Tyrrel, "Give way, I charge you, on your peril!"

"Vengeance belongs to God," replied the old man, "and his bolt has fallen.—This way—this way," he continued, dragging Tyrrel into the house. "Know," he said, so soon as he had led or forced him into a chamber, "that Mowbray of St. Ronan's has met Bulmer within this half hour, and has killed him on the spot."

"Killed?—whom?" answered the bewildered Tyrrel.

"Valentine Bulmer, the titular Earl of Etherington."

"You bring tidings of death to the house of death," answered Tyrrel; "and there is nothing in this world left that I should live for!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CONCLUSION.

Here come we to our close—for that which follows
Is but the tale of dull, unvaried misery.
Steep crags and headlong linns may court the pencil,
Like sudden haps, dark plots, and strange adventures;
But who would paint the dull and fog-wrapt moor,
In its long track of steril desolation?—*Old Play.*

When Mowbray crossed the brook, as we have already detailed, his mind was in that wayward and uncertain state, which seeks something whereon to vent the self-engendered rage with which it labours, like a volcano before eruption. On a sudden, a shot or two, followed by loud voices and laughter, reminded him he had promised, at that hour, and in that sequestered place, to decide a bet respecting pistol-shooting, to which the titular Lord Etherington, Jekyl, and Captain Mac Turk, to whom such a pastime was peculiarly congenial, were parties as well as himself. The prospect this recollection afforded him, of vengeance on the man whom he regarded as the author of his sister's wrongs, was, in the present state of his mind, too tempting to be relinquished; and, setting spurs to his horse, he rushed through the copse to the little glade, where he found the other parties, who, despairing of his arrival, had already begun their amusement. A jubilee shout was set up as he approached.

"Here comes Mowbray, dripping, by Cot, like a watering-pan," said Captain MacTurk.

"I fear him not," said Etherington, (we may as well still call him so,) "he has ridden too fast to have steady nerves."

"We shall soon see that, my Lord Etherington, or rather Mr. Valentine Bulmer," said Mowbray, upon the

ing from his horse, and throwing the bridle over the bough of a tree.

"What does this mean, Mr. Mowbray?" said Etherington, drawing himself up, while Jekyl and Captain MacTurk looked at each other in surprise.

"It means, sir, that you are a rascal and impostor," replied Mowbray, "who have assumed a name to which you have no right."

"That, Mr. Mowbray, is an insult I cannot carry farther than this spot," said Etherington.

"If you had been willing to do so, you should have carried with it something still harder to be borne," answered Mowbray.

"Enough, enough, my good sir; no use in spurring a willing horse.—Jekyl, you will have the kindness to stand by me in this matter?"

"Certainly, my lord," said Jekyl.

"And, as there seems to be no chance of taking up the matter amicably," said the pacific Captain MacTurk, "I will be most happy, so help me, to assist my worthy friend, Mr. Mowbray of St. Ronan's, with my countenance and advice.—Very goot chance that we were here with the necessary weapons, since it would have been an unpleasant thing to have such an affair long upon the stomach, any more than to settle it without witnesses."

"I would fain know first," said Jekyl, "what all this sudden heat has arisen about."

"About nothing," said Etherington, "except a mare's nest of Mr. Mowbray's discovering. He always knew his sister played the madwoman, and he has now heard a report, I suppose, that she has likewise in her time played the——fool."

"O, crimini!" cried Captain MacTurk, "my good Captain, let us pe loading and measuring out—for, by my soul, if these sweetmeats be passing between them, it is only the twa ends of a handkercher that can serve the turn—Cot tamn!"

With such friendly intentions, the ground was hastily meted out. Each was well known as an excellent shot; and the Captain offered a bet to Jekyl of a mutchkin of Glenlivat, that both would fall by the first fire. The event showed that he was nearly right; for the ball of Lord Etherington grazed Mowbray's temple, at the very second of time when Mowbray's pierced his heart. He sprung a yard from the ground, and fell down a dead man. Mowbray stood fixed like a pillar of stone, his arm dropped to his side, his hand still clenched on the weapon of death, reeking at the touch-hole and muzzle. Jekyl ran to raise and support his friend, and Captain MacTurk, having adjusted his spectacles, stooped on one knee to look him in the face. "We should have had Dr. Quackleben here," he said, wiping his glasses, and returning them to the shagreen case, "though it would have been only for form's sake—for he is as dead as a toor-nail, poor boy.—But come, Mowbray, my bairn," he said, taking him by the arm, "we must be ganging our ain gait, you and me, before waur comes of it.—I have a bit powney here, and you have your horse till we get to Marchthorn.—Captain Jekyl, I wish you a good morning. Will you have my umbrella back to the inn, for I surmeese it is going to rain?"

Mowbray had not ridden a hundred yards with his guide and companion, when he drew his bridle, and refused to proceed a step farther, till he had learned what was become of Clara. The Captain began to find he had a very untractable pupil to manage, when, while they were arguing together, Touchwood drove past in his hack chaise. As soon as he recognized Mowbray, he stopped the carriage to inform him that his sister was at the Aultoun, which he had learned from finding there had been a messenger sent from thence to the Well for medical assistance, which could not be afforded, the Esculapius of the place, Dr. Quackleben, having been privately married to Mrs. Blower on that morning, by Mr. Chatterly, and having set out on the usual nuptial tour.

In return for this intelligence, Captain MacTurk communicated the fate of Lord Etherington. The *old man earnestly pressed instant flight, for which he supplied at the same time ample means, engaging to furnish every kind of assistance and support to the* unfortunate young lady; and representing to Mowbray, that if he staid in the vicinity, a prison would soon separate them. Mowbray and his companion then departed southward upon the spur, reached London in safety, and from thence went together to the Peninsula, where the war was then at the hottest.

There remains little more to be told. Mr. Touchwood is still alive, forming plans which have no object, and accumulating a fortune, for which he has apparently no heir. The old man had endeavoured to fix this character, as well as his general patronage, upon Tyrrel, but the attempt only determined the latter to leave the country; nor has he been since heard of, although the title and estates of Etherington lie vacant for his acceptance. It is the opinion of many, that he has entered into a Moravian mission, for the use of which he had previously drawn considerable sums.

Since Tyrrel's departure, no one pretends to guess what old Touchwood will do with his money. He often talks of his disappointments, but can never be made to understand, or at least to admit, that they were in some measure precipitated by his own talent for intrigue and manœuvring. Most people think that Mowbray of St. Ronan's will be at last his heir. That gentleman has of late shown one quality which usually recommends men to the favour of rich relations, namely, a close and cautious care of what is already his own. Captain MacTurk's military ardour having revived when they came within smell of gunpowder, the old soldier contrived not only to get himself on full pay, but to induce his companion to serve for some time as a volunteer. He afterwards obtained a commission, and nothing could be more strikingly different than was the conduct of the young Laird of St. Ronan's and of Lieutenant Mowbray. The former, as we know, was gay, venturous, and prodigal; the latter lived on his pay, and even within it—denied himself comforts, and often decencies, when doing so could save a guinea; and turned pale with apprehension, if, on any extraordinary occasion, he ventured sixpence a corner at whist. This meanness, or closeness of disposition, prevents his holding the high character to which his bravery and attention to his regimental duties might otherwise entitle him. The same close and accurate calculation of pounds, shillings, and pence, marked his communications with his agent Meiklewham, who might otherwise have had better pickings out of the estate of St. Ronan's, which is now at nurse, and thriving full fast; especially since some debts, of rather an usurious character, have been paid up by Mr. Touchwood, who contented himself with more moderate usage.

On the subject of this property, Mr. Mowbray, generally speaking, gave such minute directions for acquiring and saving, that his old acquaintance, Mr. Winterblossom, tapping his morocco snuff-box with the sly look which intimated the coming of a good thing, was wont to say, that he had reversed the usual order of transformation, and was turned into a grub after having been a butterfly. After all, this narrowness, though a more ordinary modification of the spirit of avarice, may be founded on the same desire of acquisition, which in his earlier days sent him to the gaming-table.

But there was one remarkable instance in which Mr. Mowbray departed from the rules of economy, by which he was guided in all others. Having acquired, for a large sum of money, the ground which he had formerly feued out for the erection of the hotel, lodging-houses, shops, &c., at St. Ronan's Well, he sent positive orders for the demolition of the whole, nor would he permit the existence of any house of entertainment on his estate, except that in the Aultoun, where Mrs. Dods reigns with undisputed sway, her temper by no means improved either by time, or her arbitrary disposition by the total absence of competition.

Why Mr. Mowbray, with his acquired habits of frugality, thus destroyed a property which might have produced a considerable income, no one could pretend to affirm. Some said that he remembered his own early follies; and others, that he connected the buildings with the misfortunes of his sister. The vulgar

reported, that Lord Etherington's ghost had been seen in the ball-room, and the learned talked of the association of ideas. But it all ended in this, that Mr. Mowbray was independent enough to please himself, and that such was Mr. Mowbray's pleasure.

The little watering-place has returned to its primitive obscurity; and lions and lionesses, with their several jackals, blue surtouts, and bluer stockings, fiddlers and dancers, painters and amateurs, authors and critics, dispersed like pigeons by the demolition of a dovecot, have sought other scenes of amusement and rehearsal, and have deserted ST. RONAN'S WELL.*

* *Blue stands service.* Saint Ronan's, since this veracious history was given to the public, has revived as a sort of *alias*, or assumed title, to the very pleasant village of Inverleithen upon Tweed, where there is a medicinal spring much frequented by visitors. Prizes for some of the manly and athletic sports, common in the pastoral districts around, are competed for under the title of the Saint Ronan's Games. May, Meg Dods has produced herself of late from obscurity as authoress of a work on Cookery, of which, in justice to a lady who makes so distinguished a figure as this excellent dame, we insert the title-page:

"'The Cook and Housewife's Manual: A Practical System of Modern Domestic Cookery and Family Management.

——— '*Cook, see all your sauces*
Be sharp and poynant in the palate, that they may
Commend you: look to your roast and baked meats handsomely,
And what new kickshaws and delicate made things.'
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

By Mistress Margaret Dods, of the Cleikum Inn, St. Ronan's."

Though it is rather unconnected with our immediate subject, we cannot help adding, that Mrs. Dods has preserved the recipes of certain excellent old dishes which we would be loath should fall into oblivion in our day; and in bearing this testimony, we protest that we are no way biassed by the receipt of two bottles of excellent sauce for cold meat, which were sent to us by the said Mrs. Dods, as a mark of her respect and regard, for which we return her our unfeigned thanks, having found them capital.

THE END OF ST. RONAN'S WELL.

REDGAUNTLET.

A TALE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Master, go on; and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty.
As You Like It.

INTRODUCTION TO REDGAUNTLET.

Jacobite enthusiasm of the eighteenth century, particu- urinr the rebellion of 1715, afforded a theme, perhaps the hat coul i be selected, for fictitious composition, founded ral or probable incident. This civil war, and its remark- cents were remembered by the existing generation with- r degree of the bitterness of spirit which seldom fails to internal dissension. The Highlanders, who formed the al strength of Charles Edward's army, were an ancient gh-spirited race, peculiar in their habits of war and of brave to romance, and exhibiting a character turning wouts more adapted to poetry than to the prose of real Their Prince, young, valiant, patient of fatigue, and de- danger, heading his army on foot in the most toilsome s, and defeating a regular force in three battles,—all vere circumstances fascinating to the imagination, and well be supposed to seduce young and enthusiastic minds cause in which they were found united, although wis- id reason frowned upon the enterprise.

adventurous Prince, as is well known, proved to be one se personages who distinguish themselves during some and extraordinarily brilliant period of their lives, like urse of a shooting star, at which men wonder, as well on it of the briefness, as the brilliancy of its splendour. A ace of darkness overshadowed the subsequent life of a who, in his youth, showed himself so capable of great un- ings; and, without the painful task of tracing his course r, we may say the latter pursuits and habits of this un- Prince, are those painfully evincing a broken heart, which refuge from its own thoughts in sordid enjoyments.

, however, it was long ere Charles Edward appeared to haps it was long ere he altogether became, so much de- l from his original self; as he enjoyed for a time the lus- ending the progress and termination of his enterprise. who thought they discerned in his subsequent conduct nsibility to the distresses of his followers, coupled with gotistical attention to his own interests, which has been attributed to the Stewart Family, and which is the na- ffect of the principles of divine right in which they were it up, were now generally considered as dissatisfied and tic persons, who, displeased with the issue of their ad- e, and finding themselves involved in the ruins of a fall- se, indulged themselves in undeserved reproaches against eader. Indeed, such censures were by no means frequent those of his followers, who, if what was alleged had ust, had the best right to complain. Far the greater num- those unfortunate gentlemen suffered with the most dig- patience, and were either too proud to take notice of ill ient on the part of their Prince, or so prudent as to be their complaints would meet with little sympathy from orld. It may be added, that the greater part of the ba- l Jacobites, and those of high rank and consequence, not much within reach of the influence of the Prince's cter and conduct, whether well regulated or otherwise.

e mean time, that great Jacobite conspiracy, of which surrection of 1745-6 was but a small part, precipitated into on the failure of a far more general scheme, was resumed rain put into motion by the Jacobites of England, whose had never been broken, as they had prudently avoided ng it into the field. The surprising effect which had been ced by small means, in 1745-6, animated their hopes for important successes, when the whole nonjuring interest tain, identified as it then was with great part of the land- tlemen, should come forward to finish what had been tly attempted by a few Highland chiefs.

probable, indeed, that the Jacobites of the day were in- le of considering that the very small scale on which the was made, was in one great measure the cause of its un- ted success. The remarkable speed with which the in- ts marched, the singularly good discipline which they ved, the union and unanimity which for some time ani- their councils, were all in a considerable degree pro- by the smallness of their numbers. Notwithstanding scomfiture of Charles Edward, the nonjurors of the period ontinued to nurse unlawful schemes, and to drink trea- e toasts, until age stole upon them. Another generation who did not share the sentiments which they cherished; t length the sparkles of disaffection, which had long dered, but had never been heated enough to burst into flame, became entirely extinguished. But in proportion political enthusiasm died gradually away among men of ry temperament, it influenced those of warm imagina- and weak understandings, and hence wild schemes were l, as desperate as they were adventurous.

a young Scotchman of rank is said to have stooped so to plot the surprisal of St. James's palace, and the assas- on of the royal family. While these ill-digested and des- conspiracies were agitated among the few Jacobites who dhered with more obstinacy to their purpose, there is no on but that other plots might have been brought to an explosion, had it not suited the policy of Sir Robert Wal- rather to prevent or disable the conspirators in their pro- than to promulgate the tale of danger, which might thus been believed to be more widely diffused than was really se.

e instance alone, this very prudential and humane line of conduct was departed from, and the event seemed to confirm the policy of the general course. Doctor Archibald Cameron, brother of the celebrated Donald Cameron of Lochiel, attainted for the rebellion of 1745, was found by a party of soldiers lurk- ing with a comrade in the wilds of Loch Katrine, five or six years after the battle of Culloden, and was there seized. There were circumstances in his case, so far as was made known to the public, which attracted much compassion, and gave to the judicial proceedings against him an appearance of cold-blooded revenge on the part of government; and the following argu- ment of a zealous Jacobite in his favour was received as con- clusive by Dr. Johnson, and other persons who might pretend to impartiality. Dr. Cameron had never borne arms, although engaged in the Rebellion, but used his medical skill for the service, indifferently, of the wounded of both parties. His re- turn to Scotland was ascribed exclusively to family affairs. His behaviour at the bar was decent, firm, and respectful. His wife threw herself, on three different occasions, before George II. and the members of his family, was rudely repulsed from their presence, and at length placed, it was said, in the same prison with her husband, and confined with unmanly severity.

Dr. Cameron was finally executed, with all the severities of the law of treason; and his death remains in popular estima- tion a dark blot upon the memory of George II., being almost publicly imputed to a mean and personal hatred of Donald Ca- meron of Lochiel, the sufferer's heroic brother.

Yet the fact was, that whether the execution of Archibald Cameron was political or otherwise, it might certainly have been justified, had the King's ministers so pleased, upon rea- sons of a public nature. The unfortunate sufferer had not come to the Highlands solely upon his private affairs, as was the ge- neral belief; but it was not judged prudent by the English mi- nistry to let it be generally known that he came to inquire about a considerable sum of money which had been remitted from France to the friends of the exiled family. He had also a com- mission to hold intercourse with the well known M'Pherson of Cluny, chief of the clan Vourich, whom the Chevalier had left behind at his departure from Scotland in 1746, and who re- mained during ten years of proscription and danger, skulking from place to place in the Highlands, and maintaining an unin- terrupted correspondence between Charles and his friends. That Dr. Cameron should have held a commission to assist this chief in raking together the dispersed embers of disaffection, is in itself sufficiently natural, and, considering his political principles, in no respect dishonourable to his memory. But neither ought it to be imputed to George II., that he suffered the laws to be enforced against a person taken in the act of breaking them. When he lost his hazardous game Dr. Came- ron only paid the forfeit which he must have calculated upon. The ministers, however, thought it proper to leave Dr. Came- ron's new schemes in concealment, lest by divulging them they had indicated the channel of communication which, it is now well known, they possessed to all the plots of Charles Edward. But it was equally ill advised and ungenerous to sacrifice the character of the king to the policy of the administration. Both points might have been gained by sparing the life of Dr. Came- ron after conviction, and limiting his punishment to perpetual exile.

These repeated and successive Jacobite plots rose and burst like bubbles on a fountain, and one of them, at least, the Che- valier judged of importance enough to induce him to risk him- self within the dangerous precincts of the British capital. This appears from Dr. King's Anecdotes of his Own Times.

"September, 1750.—I received a note from my Lady Primrose, who desired to see me immediately. As soon as I waited on her, she led me into her dressing-room, and presented me to ———," [the Chevalier, doubtless.] "If I was surprised to find him there, I was still more astonished when he acquainted me with the motives which had induced him to hazard a journey to England at this juncture. The impatience of his friends who were in exile, had formed a scheme which was impracticable; but although it had been as feasible as they had represented it to him, yet no preparation had been made, nor was any thing ready to carry it into execution. He was soon convinced that he had been deceived; and, therefore, after a stay in London of five days only, he returned to the place from whence he came." Dr. King was in 1750 a keen Jacobite, as may be in- ferred from the visit made by him to the Prince under such cir- cumstances, and from his being one of that unfortunate per- son's chosen correspondents. He, as well as other men of sense and observation, began to despair of making their fortune in the party which they had chosen. It was indeed sufficiently dangerous, for, during the short visit just described, one of Dr. King's servants remarked the stranger's likeness to Prince Charles, whom he recognised from the common busts.

The occasion taken for breaking up the Stewart interest, we shall tell in Dr. King's own words:—"When he (Charles Ed- ward) was in Scotland, he had a mistress whose name was Walkinshaw, and whose sister was at that time, and is still, housekeeper at Leicester House. Some years after he was re- leased from his prison, and conducted out of France, he sent for this girl, who soon acquired such a dominion over him, that she was acquainted with all his schemes, and trusted with his most secret correspondence. As soon as this was known in England, all those persons of distinction who were attached

to him were greatly alarmed: they imagined that this wench had been placed in his family by the English ministers; and, considering her sister's situation, they seemed to have some ground for their suspicion; wherefore, they despatched a gentleman to Paris, where the Prince then was, who had instructions to insist that Mrs. Walkinshaw should be removed to a convent for a certain term; but her gallant absolutely refused to comply with this demand; and although Mr. M'Namara, the gentleman who was sent to him, who has a natural eloquence, and an excellent understanding, urged the most cogent reasons, and used all the arts of persuasion, to induce him to part with his mistress, and even proceeded so far as to assure him, according to his instructions, that an immediate interruption of all correspondence with his most powerful friends in England, and, in short, that the ruin of his interest, which was now daily increasing, would be the infallible consequence of his refusal; yet he continued inflexible, and all M'Namara's entreaties and remonstrances were ineffectual. M'Namara staid in Paris some days beyond the time prescribed him, endeavouring to reason the Prince into a better temper; but finding him obstinately persevere in his first answer, he took his leave with concern and indignation, saying, as he passed out, 'What has your family done, sir, thus to draw down the vengeance of Heaven on every branch of it, through so many ages?' It is worthy of remark, that in all the conferences which M'Namara had with the Prince on this occasion, the latter declared that it was not a violent passion, or indeed any particular regard, which attached him to Mrs. Walkinshaw, and that he could see her removed from him without any concern; but he would not receive directions, in respect to his private conduct, from any man alive. When M'Namara returned to London, and reported the Prince's answer to the gentlemen who had employed him, they were astonished and confounded. However, they soon resolved on the measures which they were to pursue for the future, and determined no longer to serve a man who could not be persuaded to serve himself, and chose rather to endanger the lives of his best and most faithful friends, than part with a harlot, whom, as he often declared, he neither loved nor esteemed."

From this anecdote, the general truth of which is indubitable, the principal fault of Charles Edward's temper is sufficiently obvious. It was a high sense of his own importance, and an obstinate adherence to what he had once determined on—qualities which, if he had succeeded in his bold attempt, gave the nation little room to hope that he would have been found free from the love of prerogative and desire of arbitrary power, which characterized his unhappy grandfather. He gave a notable instance how far this was the leading feature of his character, when, for no reasonable cause that can be assigned, he placed his own single will in opposition to the necessities of France, which, in order to purchase a peace become necessary to the kingdom, was reduced to gratify Britain by prohibiting the residence of Charles within any part of the French dominions. It was in vain that France endeavoured to lessen the disgrace of this step, by making the most flattering offers, in hopes to induce the Prince of himself to anticipate this disagreeable alternative, which, if seriously enforced, as it was likely to be, he had no means whatever of resisting, by leaving the kingdom as of his own free will. Inspired, however, by the spirit of hereditary obstinacy, Charles preferred a useless resistance to a dignified submission, and by a series of idle bravadoes, laid the French court under the necessity of arresting their late ally, and sending him to close confinement in the Bastile, from which he was afterwards sent out of the French dominions, much in the manner in which a convict is transported to the place of his destination.

In addition to these repeated instances of a rash and inflexible temper, Dr. King also adds faults alleged to belong to the Prince's character, of a kind less consonant with his noble birth and high pretensions. He is said by this author to have been avaricious, or parsimonious at least, to such a degree of meanness, as to fail, even when he had ample means, in relieving the sufferers who had lost their fortune, and sacrificed their all, in his ill-fated attempt.* We must receive, however, with some degree of jealousy, what is said by Dr. King on this subject, recollecting that he had left at least, if he did not desert, the standard of the unfortunate Prince, and was not therefore a person who was likely to form the fairest estimate of his virtues and faults. We must also remember, that if the exiled Prince gave little, he had but little to give, especially considering how late he nourished the scheme of another expedition to Scotland, for which he was long endeavouring to hoard money.

The case, also, of Charles Edward must be allowed to have been a difficult one. He had to satisfy numerous persons, who, having lost their all in his cause, had, with that all, seen the extinction of hopes which they accounted nearly as good as certainties; some of these were perhaps clamorous in their applications, and certainly ill pleased with their want of success. Other parts of the Chevalier's conduct may have afforded grounds for charging him with coldness to the sufferings of his devoted followers. One of these was a sentiment which has nothing in it that is generous, but it was certainly a principle in which the young Prince was trained, and which may be too probably denominated peculiar to his family, educated in all the high notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. If the unhappy Prince gave implicit faith to the professions of statesmen holding such notions, which is implied by his whole conduct, it must have led to the natural, though ungracious inference, that the services of a subject could not, to whatever degree of ruin they might bring the individual, create a debt against his sovereign. Such a person could only boast that he had done his duty: nor was he entitled to be a claimant for a greater reward than it was convenient for the Prince to bestow, or to hold his sovereign his debtor for losses which he had sustained through his loyalty. To a certain extent the Jacobite principles inevitably led to this cold and egotistical mode of reasoning on the part of the sovereign; nor, with all our natural pity for the situation of royalty in distress, do we feel entitled to affirm that Charles did not use this opiate to his feelings, on viewing the misery of his followers, while he certainly possessed, though in no great degree, the means of affording them more relief than he practised. His own history, after leaving France, is brief and melancholy. For a time he seems to have held the firm belief that Providence, which had borne him through so many hazards, still reserved him for some distant occasion, in which he should be empowered to vindicate the honours of his birth. But opportunity after opportunity slipt by unimproved, and the death of his father gave him the fatal proof that none of the principal powers of Europe were, after that event, likely to interest themselves in his quarrel. They refused to acknowledge him under the title of the King of England, and, on his part, he declined to be then recognised as the Prince of Wales.

Family discord came to add its sting to those of disappointed ambition; and, though a humiliating circumstance, it is generally acknowledged, that Charles Edward, the adventurous, the gallant, and the handsome, the leader of a race of pristine valour, whose romantic qualities may be said to have died along with him, had, in his latter days, yielded to those humiliating habits of intoxication, in which the meanest mortals seek to drown the recollection of their disappointments and miseries. Under such circumstances, the unhappy Prince lost the friendship even of those faithful followers who had most devoted themselves to his misfortunes, and was surrounded, with some honourable exceptions, by men of a lower description, regardless of the character which he was himself no longer able to protect.

It is a fact consistent with the author's knowledge, that persons totally unentitled to, and unfitted for, such a distinction, were presented to the unfortunate Prince in moments unfit for presentation of any kind. Amid these clouds was at length extinguished the torch which once shook itself over Britain with such terrific glare, and at last sunk in its own ashes, scarce remembered and scarce noted.

Meantime, while the life of Charles Edward was gradually wasting in disappointed solitude, the number of those who had shared his misfortunes and dangers had shrunk into a small handful of veterans, the heroes of a tale which had been told. Most Scottish readers who can count the number of sixty years, must recollect many respected acquaintances of their youth, who, as the established phrase gently worded it, had been *out in the Forty-five*. It may be said, that their political principles and plans no longer either gained proselytes or attracted terror,—those who held them had ceased to be the subjects either of fear or opposition. Jacobites were looked upon in society as men who had proved their sincerity by sacrificing their interest to their principles; and in well-regulated companies, it was held a piece of ill-breeding to injure their feelings or ridicule the compromises by which they endeavoured to keep themselves abreast of the current of the day. Such, for example, was the evasion of a gentleman of fortune in Perthshire, who, in having the newspapers read to him, caused the King and Queen to be designated by the initial letters of K. and Q., as if, by naming the full word, he might imply an acquiescence in the usurpation of the family of Hanover. George III., having heard of this gentleman's custom in the above and other particulars, commissioned the member for Perthshire to carry his compliments to the steady Jacobite—"that is," said the excellent old King, "not the compliments of the King of England, but those of the Elector of Hanover, and tell him how much I respect him for the steadiness of his principles."

Those who remember such old men, will probably agree that the progress of time, which has withdrawn all of them from the field, has removed, at the same time, a peculiar and striking feature of ancient manners. Their love of past times, their tales of bloody battles fought against romantic odds, were all dear to the imagination, and their little idolatry of locks of hair, pictures, rings, ribands, and other memorials of the time in which they still seemed to live, was an interesting enthusiasm; and although their political principles, had they existed in the relation of fathers, might have rendered them dangerous to the existing dynasty, yet, as we now recollect them, there could not be on the earth supposed to exist persons better qualified to sustain the capacity of innocuous and respectable grandsires.

It was while reflecting on these things that the novel of Redgauntlet was undertaken. But various circumstances in the composition induced the author to alter its purport considerably, as it passed through his hands, and to carry the action to that point of time when the Chevalier Charles Edward, though fallen into the sear and yellow leaf, was yet meditating a second attempt, which could scarcely have been more hopeless than his first; although one, to which, as we have seen, the unfortunate Prince, at least as late as seventeen hundred and fifty three, still looked with hope and expectation.

1st April, 1832.

* The reproach is thus expressed by Dr. King, who brings the charge; "But the most odious part of his character is his love of money, a vice which I do not remember to have been imputed by our historians to any of his ancestors, and is the certain index of a base and little mind. I know it may be urged in his vindication, that a Prince in exile ought to be an economist. And so he ought; but, nevertheless, his purse should be always open as long as there is any thing in it, to relieve the necessities of his friends and adherents. King Charles II., during his banishment, would have shared the last pistole in his pocket with his little family. But I have known this gentleman with two thousand louis-d'ors in his strong-box, pretend he was in great distress, and borrow money from a lady in Paris who was not in affluent circumstances. His most *faithful servants*, who had closely attended him in all his difficulties, *were ill rewarded.*"—*King's Memoirs.*

REDGAUNTLET.

LETTER I.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Dumfries.

Cur me exanimas querelis tuis?—In plain English, Why do you deafen me with your croaking? The disconsolate tone in which you bade me farewell at Noble-House,* and mounted your miserable hack to return to your law drudgery, still sounds in my ears. It seemed to say, "Happy dog! you can ramble at pleasure over hill and dale, pursue every object of curiosity that presents itself, and relinquish the chase when it loses interest; while I, your senior and your better, must, in this brilliant season, return to my narrow chamber and my musty books."

Such was the import of the reflections with which you saddened our parting bottle of claret, and thus I must needs interpret the terms of your melancholy adieu.

And why should this be so, Alan? Why the deuce should you not be sitting precisely opposite to me at this moment, in the same comfortable George Inn; thy heels on the fender, and thy juridical brow expanding its plications as a pun rose in your fancy? Above all, why, when I fill this very glass of wine, cannot I push the bottle to you, and say, "Fairford, you are chased!" Why, I say, should not all this be, except because Alan Fairford has not the same true sense of friendship as Darsie Latimer, and will not regard our purses as common as well as our sentiments?

I am alone in the world; my only guardian writes to me of a large fortune, which will be mine when I reach the age of twenty-five complete; my present income is, thou knowest, more than sufficient for all my wants; and yet thou—traitor as thou art to the cause of friendship—dost deprive me of the pleasure of thy society, and submittest, besides, to self-denial on thine own part, rather than my wanderings should cost me a few guineas more! Is this regard for my purse, or for thine own pride? Is it not equally absurd and unreasonable, whichever source it springs from? For myself, I tell thee, I have, and shall have, more than enough for both. This same methodical Samuel Griffiths, of Ironmonger-Lane, Guildhall, London, whose letter arrives as duly as quarter-day, has sent me, as I told thee, double allowance for this my twenty-first birthday, and an assurance, in his brief fashion, that it will be again doubled for the succeeding years, until I enter into possession of my own property. Still I am to refrain from visiting England until my twenty-fifth year expires; and it is recommended that I shall forbear all inquiries concerning my family, and so forth, for the present.

Were it not that I recollect my poor mother in her deep widow's weeds, with a countenance that never smiled but when she looked on me—and then, in such wan and woful sort, as the sun when he glances through an April cloud—were it not, I say, that her mild and matron-like form and countenance forbid such a suspicion, I might think myself the son of some Indian director, or rich citizen, who had more wealth than grace, and a handful of hypocrisy to boot, and who was breeding up privately, and obscurely enriching, one of whose existence he had some reason to be ashamed. But, as I said before, I think on my mother, and am convinced as much as of the existence of my own soul, that no touch of shame could arise from aught in which she was implicated. Mean time, I am wealthy, and I am alone, and why does my friend scruple to share my wealth?

Are you not my only friend? and have you not acquired a right to share my wealth? Answer me that, Alan Fairford. When I was brought from the solitude of my mother's dwelling into the tumult of the Gaits' Class at the High School—when I was mocked for my English accent—salted with snow as a Southern—rolled in the gutter for a Saxon pock-pudding, —who, with stout arguments, and stouter blows, stood forth my defender?—why, Alan Fairford. Who beat me soundly when I brought the arrogance of an only son, and of course a spoiled urchin, to the forms of the little republic?—why, Alan. And who taught me to smoke a cobbler, pin a losen, head a bicker, and hold the bannets?*—Alan, once more. If I became the pride of the Yards, and the dread of the hucksters in the High-School Wynd, it was under thy patronage; and, but for thee, I had been contented with humbly passing through the Cowgate-Port, without climbing over the top of it, and had never seen the *Kittle nine stepet* nearer than from Bareford's Parks. You taught me to keep my fingers off the weak, and to clench my fist against the strong—to carry no tales out of school—to stand forth like a true man—obey the stern order of a *Pande manum*, and endure my pawmies without wincing, like one that is determined not to be the better for them. In a word, before I knew thee, I knew nothing.

At college it was the same. When I was incorrigibly idle, your example and encouragement roused me to mental exertion, and showed me the way to intellectual enjoyment. You made me a historian, a metaphysician, (*invita Minerva*,)—nay, by Heaven! you had almost made an advocate of me, as well as of yourself. Yes, rather than part with you, Alan, I attended a weary season at the Scotch Law Class; a wearier at the Civil; and with what excellent advantage, my note-book filled with caricatures of the professors and my fellow-students, is it not yet extant to testify?

"Thus far have I held on with thee untired;"

and, to say truth, purely and solely that I might travel the same road with thee. But it will not do, Alan. By my faith, man, I could as soon think of being one of those ingenious traders who cheat little Master Jackies on the outside of the partition with tops, balls, bats, and battledores, as a member of the long-robed fraternity within, who impose on grown country gentlemen with bouncing brocards of law.‡ Now, don't

* Break a window, head a skirmish with stones, and hold the bonnet or handkerchief, which used to divide high-school boys when fighting.

† A pass on the very brink of the Castle-rock to the north, by which it is just possible for a goat, or a high-school boy, to turn the corner of the building where it rises from the edge of the precipice. This was so favourite a feat with the "hell and neck boys" of the higher classes, that at one time sentinels were posted to prevent its repetition. One of the nine-steps was rendered more secure because the climber could take hold of the root of a nettle, so precarious were the means of passing this celebrated spot. The manning the Cowgate Port, especially in snow-ball time, was also a choice amusement, as it offered an inaccessible station to the boys who used those missiles to the annoyance of the passengers. The gateway is now demolished; and probably most of its garrison lie as low as the fortress. To recollect that the author himself, however naturally disqualified, was one of those juvenile dreadnaughts, is a sad reflection to one who cannot now step over a brook without assistance.

‡ The Hall of the Parliament House of Edinburgh was, in former days, divided into two unequal portions by a partition, the inner side of which was consecrated to the use of the Courts of Justice and the gentlemen of the law; while the outer division was occupied by the stalls of stationers, laymen, and

* *The first stage on the road from Edinburgh to Dumfries, ride Moffat.*

you read this to your worthy father, Alan—he loves me well enough, I know, of a Saturday night; but he thinks me but idle company for any other day of the week. And here, I suspect, lies your real objection to taking a ramble with me through the southern counties in this delicious weather. I know the good gentleman has hard thoughts of me for being so unsettled as to leave Edinburgh before the Session rises; perhaps, too, he quarrels a little—I will not say, with my want of ancestry, but with my want of connexions. He reckons me a lone thing in this world, Alan, and so in good truth I am; and it seems a reason to him why you should not attach yourself to me, that I can claim no interest in the general herd.

Do not suppose I forget what I owe him, for permitting me to shelter for four years under his roof: My obligations to him are not the less, but the greater, if he never heartily loved me. He is angry, too, that I will not, or cannot, be a lawyer, and, with reference to you, considers my disinclination that way as *pessimi exempli*, as he might say.

But he need not be afraid that a lad of your steadiness will be influenced by such a reed shaken by the winds as I am. You will go on doubting with Dirleton, and resolving those doubts with Stewart,* until the cramp speech† has been spoken *more solito* from the corner of the bench, and with covered head—until you have sworn to defend the liberties and privileges of the College of Justice—until the black gown is hung on your shoulders, and you are as free as any of the Faculty to sue or defend. Then will I step forth, Alan, and in a character which even your father will allow may be more useful to you than had I shared this splendid termination of your legal studies. In a word, if I cannot be a counsel, I am determined to be a *client*, a sort of person without whom a lawsuit would be as dull as a supposed case. Yes, I am determined to give you your first fee. One can easily, I am assured, get into a lawsuit—it is only the getting out that is sometimes found troublesome; —and, with your kind father for an agent, and you for my counsel learned in the law, and the worshipful Master Samuel Griffiths to back me, a few sessions shall not tire my patience. In short, I will make my way into Court, even if it should cost me the committing a *delict*, or at least a *quasi delict*.—You see all is not lost of what Erskine wrote, and Wallace taught.

Thus far I have fooled it off well enough; and yet, Alan, all is not at ease within me. I am affected with a sense of loneliness, the more depressing, that it seems to me to be a solitude peculiarly my own. In a country where all the world have a circle of consanguinity, extending to sixth cousins at least, I am a solitary individual, having only one kind heart to throb in unison with my own. If I were condemned to labour for my bread, methinks I should less regard this peculiar species of deprivation. The necessary communication of master and servant would be at least a tie which would attach me to the rest of my kind—as it is, my very independence seems to enhance the peculiarity of my situation. I am in the world as a stranger in the crowded coffeehouse, where he enters, calls for what refreshments he wants, pays his bill, and is forgotten so soon as the waiter's mouth has pronounced his "Thank ye, sir."

I know your good father would term this *sinning my mercies*,* and ask how I should feel if, instead of being able to throw down my reckoning, I were obliged to deprecate the resentment of the landlord for consuming that which I could not pay for. I cannot tell how it is; but, though this very reasonable reflection comes across me, and though I do confess that four hundred a-year in possession, eight hundred in near prospect, and the L—d knows how many hundreds more in the distance, are very pretty and comfortable things, yet I would freely give one half of them to call your father *father*, though he should scold me for my idleness every hour of the day, and to call you *brother*, though a brother whose merits would throw my own so completely into the shade.

The faint, yet not improbable belief often has come across me, that your father knows something more about my birth and natural condition than he is willing to communicate; it is so unlikely that I should have been left in Edinburgh at six years old, without any other recommendation than the regular payment of my board to old M———† of the High School. Before that time, as I have often told you, I have but a recollection of unbounded indulgence on my mother's part, and the most tyrannical exertion of caprice on my own. I remember still how bitterly she sighed, how vainly she strove to soothe me, while, in the full energy of despotism, I roared like ten bull calves, for something which it was impossible to procure for me. She is dead, that kind, that ill rewarded mother! I remember the long faces—the darkened room—the black hangings—the mysterious impression made upon my mind by the hearse and mourning coaches, and the difficulty which I had to reconcile all this to the disappearance of my mother. I do not think I had before this event formed any idea of death, or that I had even heard of that final consummation of all that lives. The first acquaintance which I formed with it deprived me of my only relation.

A clergyman of venerable appearance, our only visiter, was my guide and companion in a journey of considerable length; and in the charge of another elderly man, substituted in his place, I know not how or why, I completed my journey to Scotland—and this is all I recollect.

I repeat the little history now, as I have a hundred times done before, merely because I would wring some sense out of it. Turn, then, thy sharp, wire-drawing, lawyer-like ingenuity to the same task—make up my history as though thou wert shaping the blundering allegations of some blue-bonneted, hard-headed client, into a condescendence of facts and circumstances, and thou shalt be, not my Apollo—*quid tibi cum lyra?*—but my Lord Stair.‡ Mean while, I have written myself out of my melancholy and blue devils, merely by prosing about them; so I will now converse half an hour with Roan Robin in his stall—the rascal knows me already, and snickers whenever I cross the threshold of the stable.

The black which you bestrode yesterday morning, promises to be an admirable roadster, and ambled as easily with Sam and the portmanteau, as with you and your load of law-learning. Sam promises to be steady, and has hitherto been so. No long trial, you will say. He lays the blame of former inaccuracies on evil company—the people who were at the livery-stable were too seductive, I suppose—he denies he ever did the horse injustice—would rather have wanted his own dinner, he says. In this I believe him, as Roan Robin's ribs and coat show no marks of contradiction. However, as he will meet with no saints in the inns we frequent, and as oats are sometimes as speedily converted into ale as John Barleycorn himself, I shall keep a look-out after Master Sam. Stupid fellow! had he not abused my good nature, I might have chatted to him to keep my tongue in exercise; whereas now, I must keep him at a distance.

Do you remember what Mr. Fairford said to me on

like, as in a modern bazaar. From the old play of the Plain Dealer, it seems such was formerly the case with Westminster-Hall. Mines has now purified his courts in both cities from all traffic but his own.

* "Sir John Nisbett of Dirleton's Doubts and Questions upon the Law, especially of Scotland;" and, "Sir James Stewart's Dirleton's Doubts and Questions on the Law of Scotland resolved and answered," are works of authority in Scottish jurisprudence. As is generally the case, the Doubts are held more in respect than the solution.

† Till of late years, every advocate who entered at the Scottish bar made a Latin address to the Court, faculty, and audience, in set terms, and said a few words upon a text of the civil law, to show his Latinity and jurisprudence. He also wore his hat for a minute, in order to vindicate his right of being covered before the court, which is said to have originated from the celebrated lawyer, Sir Thomas Hope, having two sons on the Bench while he himself remained at the bar. Of late this ceremony has been dispensed with, as occupying the time of the court unnecessarily. The entrant lawyer merely takes the oaths to government, and swears to maintain the rules and privileges of his order.

* A peculiar Scottish phrase, expressive of ingratitude for the favours of Providence.

† Probably Mathieson, the predecessor of Dr. Adams, to whose memory the author and his contemporaries owe a deep debt of gratitude.

‡ Celebrated as a Scottish lawyer.

this subject,—it did not become my father's son to speak in that manner to Sam's father's son? I asked you what your father could possibly know of mine; and you answered, "As much, you supposed, as he knew of Sam's—it was a proverbial expression." This did not quite satisfy me, though I am sure I cannot tell why it should not. But I am returning to a fruitless and exhausted subject. Do not be afraid that I shall come back on this well-trodden yet pathless field of conjecture. I know nothing so useless, so utterly feeble and contemptible, as the groaning forth one's helpless lamentations into the ears of our friends.

I would fain promise you that my letters shall be as entertaining, as I am determined they shall be regular and well filled. We have an advantage over the dear friends of old, every pair of them. Neither David and Jonathan, nor Orestes and Pylades, nor Damon and Pythias—although, in the latter case particularly, a letter by post would have been very acceptable—ever corresponded together; for they probably could not write, and certainly had neither posts nor franks to speed their effusions to each other; whereas yours, which you had from the old peer, being handled gently, and opened with precaution, may be returned to me again, and serve to make us free of his Majesty's post-office, during the whole time of my proposed tour.* Mercy upon us, Alan! what letters I shall have to send you, with an account of all that I can collect, of pleasant or rare, in this wildgoose jaunt of mine! All I stipulate is, that you do not communicate them to the Scots Magazine; for though you used, in a left-handed way, to compliment me on my attainments in the lighter branches of literature, at the expense of my deficiency in the weightier matters of the law, I am not yet audacious enough to enter the portal which the learned Ruddiman so kindly opened for the acolytes of the Muses.—*Vale, sis memor mei.* D. L.

P. S.—Direct to the Post-Office here: I shall leave orders to forward your letters wherever I may travel.

LETTER II.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

Negatur, my dear Darsie—you have logic and law enough to understand the word of denial. I deny your conclusion. The premises I admit, namely, that when I mounted on that infernal hack, I might utter what seemed a sigh, although I deemed it lost amid the puffs and groans of the broken-winded brute, matchless in the complication of her compaints by any save she, the poor man's mare, renowned in song, that died

"A mile aboon Dundee."†

But credit me, Darsie, the sigh which escaped me, concerned thee more than myself, and regarded neither the superior mettle of your cavalry, nor your greater command of the means of travelling. I could certainly have cheerfully have ridden on with you for a few days; and assure yourself I would not have hesitated to tax your better-filled purse for our joint expenses. But you know my father considers every moment taken from the law as a step down hill; and I owe much to his anxiety on my account, although its effects are sometimes troublesome. For example.

I found, on my arrival at the shop in Brown's Square, that the old gentleman had returned that very evening, impatient, it seems, of remaining a night out of the guardianship of the domestic Lares. Having this information from James, whose brow wore rather an anxious look on the occasion, I despatched a Highland chairman to the livery stable with my Bucephalus, and slunk, with as little noise as might be, into my own den, where I began to mumble certain half-gnawed and not half-digested doctrines of our municipal code. I was not long seated, when my father's visage was thrust, in a peering sort of way, through the half-opened door; and withdrawn, on seeing my occupation, with a half-articulated *humph!* which seemed to convey a doubt of the seriousness of my application. If it were so, I cannot condemn him; for recollection of thee occupied me so entirely during an hour's reading, that although Stair lay before me, and notwithstanding that I turned over three or four pages, the sense of his lordship's clear and perspicuous style so far escaped me, that I had the mortification to find my labour was utterly in vain.

Ere I had brought up my lee-way, James appeared with his summons to our frugal supper—radishes, cheese, and a bottle of the old ale—only two plates though—and no chair set for Mr. Darsie, by the attentive James Wilkinson. Said James, with his long face, lank hair, and very long pigtail in its leathern strap, was placed, as usual, at the back of my father's chair, upright as a wooden sentinel at the door of a puppet-show. "You may go down, James," said my father; and exit Wilkinson.—What is to come next? thought I; for the weather, is not clear on the paternal brow.

My boots encountered his first glance of displeasure, and he asked me, with a sneer, which way I had been riding. He expected me to answer, "Nowhere," and would then have been at me with his usual sarcasm, touching the humour of walking in shoes at twenty shillings a pair. But I answered with composure, that I had ridden out to dinner as far as Noble-House. He started, (you know his way,) as if I had said that I had dined at Jericho; and as I did not choose to seem to observe his surprise, but continued munching my radishes in tranquillity, he broke forth in ire.

"To Noble-House, sir! and what had you to do at Noble-House, sir?—Do you remember you are studying law sir?—that your Scots law trials are coming on, sir?—that every moment of your time just now is worth hours at another time?—and have you leisure to go to Noble-House, sir?—and to throw your books behind you for so many hours?—Had it been a turn in the Meadows, or even a game at golf—but Noble-House, sir!"

"I went so far with Darsie Latimer, sir, to see him begin his journey."

"Darsie Latimer?" he replied in a softened tone—"Humph!—Well, I do not blame you for being kind to Darsie Latimer; but it would have done as much good if you had walked with him as far as the toll-bar, and then made your farewells—it would have saved horse-hire—and your reckoning, too, at dinner."

"Latimer paid that, sir," I replied, thinking to soften the matter; but I had much better have left it unspoken.

"The reckoning, sir?" replied my father. "And did you sponge upon any man for a reckoning? Sir, no man should enter the door of a public-house without paying his lawing."

"I admit the general rule, sir," I replied; "but this was a parting-cup between Darsie and me; and I should conceive it fell under the exception of *Doch an dorroch*."

"You think yourself a wit," said my father, with as near an approach to a smile as ever he permits to gild the solemnity of his features; "But I reckon you did not eat your dinner standing, like the Jews at their Passover? and it was decided in a case before the town-bailies of Cupar-Angus when Luckie Simpson's cow had drunk up Luckie Jameson's browst of ale, while it stood in the door to cool, that there was no damage to pay, because the crummie drank without sitting down; such being the very circumstance constituting *Doch an dorroch*, which is a standing drink, for which no reckoning is paid. Ha, sir! what says your advocateship (*fieri*) to that? Exceptio firmat *regulam*—But come, fill your glass, Alan; I am no

* It is well known and remembered, that when Members of Parliament enjoyed the unlimited privilege of franking by the mere writing the name on the cover, it was extended to the most extraordinary occasions. One noble lord, to express his regard for a particular regiment, franked a letter for every rank and file. It was customary also to save the covers and return them, in order that the correspondence might be carried on as long as the envelopes could hold together.

† Alluding, as all Scotsmen know, to the humorous old song:—

"The auld man's mare's dead,
The puir man's mare's dead,
The auld man's mare's dead,
A mile aboon Dundee."

sorry ye have shown this attention to Darsie Latimer, who is a good lad, as times go; and having now lived under my roof since he left the school, why, there is really no great matter in coming under this small obligation to him."

As I saw my father's scruples were much softened by the consciousness of his superiority in the legal argument, I took care to accept my pardon as a matter of grace, rather than of justice; and only replied, we should feel ourselves duller of an evening, now that you were absent. I will give you my father's exact words in reply, Darsie. You know him so well, that they will not offend you; and you are also aware, that there mingles with the good man's preciseness and formality, a fund of shrewd observation and practical good sense.

"It is very true," he said; "Darsie was a pleasant companion—but over waggish, over waggish, Alan, and somewhat scatter-brained.—By the way, Wilkinson must get our ale bottled in English pints now, for a quart bottle is too much, night after night, for you and me, without his assistance.—But Darsie, as I was saying, is an arch lad, and somewhat light in the upper story—I wish him well through the world; but he has little solidity, Alan, little solidity."

I scorn to desert an absent friend, Darsie, so I said for you a little more than my conscience warranted: but your defection from your legal studies had driven you far to leeward in my father's good opinion.

"Unstable as water, he shall not excel," said my father; "or, as the Septuagint hath it, *Effusa est sicut aqua—non crescat.* He goeth to dancing-houses, and readeth novels—*sat est.*"

I endeavoured to parry these texts by observing, that the dancing-houses amounted only to one night at La Pique's ball—the novels (so far as matter of notoriety, Darsie) to an odd volume of Tom Jones.

"But he danced from night to morning," replied my father, "and he read the idle trash, which the author should have been scourged for, at least twenty times over. It was never out of his hand."

I then hinted, that in all probability your fortune was now so easy as to dispense with your prosecuting the law any farther than you had done; and therefore you might think you had some title to amuse yourself. This was the least palatable argument of all.

"If he cannot amuse himself with the law," said my father, snappishly, "it is the worse for him. If he needs not law to teach him to make a fortune, I am sure he needs it to teach him how to keep one; and it would better become him to be learning this, than to be scouring the country like a landlouper, going he knows not where, to see he knows not what, and giving treats at Noble-House to fools like himself," (an angry glance at poor me.) "Noble-House, indeed!" he repeated, with elevated voice and sneering tone, as if there were something offensive to him in the very name, though I will venture to say that any place in which you had been extravagant enough to spend five shillings, would have stood as deep in his reprobation.

Mindful of your idea, that my father knows more of your real situation than he thinks proper to mention, I thought I would hazard a fishing observation. "I did not see," I said, "how the Scottish law would be useful to a young gentleman whose fortune would seem to be vested in England."—I really thought my father would have beat me.

"D'ye mean to come round me, sir, *per ambages*, as Counseller Pest says? What is it to you where Darsie Latimer's fortune is vested, or whether he hath any fortune, ay or no?—And what ill would the Scottish law do to him, though he had as much of it as either Stair or Bankton, sir? Is not the foundation of our municipal law the ancient code of the Roman Empire, devised at a time when it was so much renowned for its civil polity, sir, and wisdom? Go to your bed, sir, after your expedition to Noble-House, and see that your lamp be burning, and your book *before you, ere the sun peeps. Ars longa, vita brevis,—were it not a sin to call the divine science of the law by the inferior name of art.*"

So my lamp did burn, dear Darsie, the next morning, though the owner took the risk of a domiciliary visitation, and lay snug in bed, trusting its glimmer might, without farther inquiry, be received as sufficient evidence of his vigilance. And now, upon this the third morning after your departure, things are but little better; for though the lamp burns in my den, and Voet on the Pandects hath his wisdom spread open before me, yet as I only use him as a reading-desk on which to scribble this sheet of nonsense to Darsie Latimer, it is probable the vicinity will be of little furtherance to my studies.

And now, methinks, I hear thee call me an affected hypocritical varlet, who, living under such a system of distrust and restraint as my father chooses to govern by, nevertheless pretends not to envy you your freedom and independence.

Latimer, I will tell you no lies. I wish my father would allow me a little more exercise of my free will, were it but that I might feel the pleasure of doing what would please him of my own accord. A little more spare time, and a little more money to enjoy it, would, besides, neither misbecome my age nor my condition; and it is, I own, provoking to see so many in the same situation winging the air at freedom, while I sit here, caged up like a cobbler's linnet, to chant the same unvaried lesson from sunrise to sunset, not to mention the listening to so many lectures against idleness, as if I enjoyed or was making use of the means of amusement! But then I cannot at heart blame either the motive or the object of this severity. For the motive, it is and can only be my father's anxious, devoted, and unremitting affection and zeal for my improvement, with a laudable sense of the honour of the profession to which he has trained me.

As we have no near relations, the tie betwixt us is of even unusual closeness, though in itself one of the strongest which nature can form. I am, and have all along been, the exclusive object of my father's anxious hopes, and his still more anxious and engrossing fears; so what title have I to complain, although now and then these fears and hopes lead him to take a troublesome and incessant charge of all my motions? Besides, I ought to recollect, and, Darsie, I do recollect, that my father, upon various important occasions, has shown that he can be indulgent as well as strict. The leaving his old apartments in the Luckenbooths was to him like divorcing the soul from the body; yet Dr. R—— did but hint that the better air of this new district was more favourable to my health, as I was then suffering under the penalties of too rapid a growth, when he exchanged his old and beloved quarters, adjacent to the very Heart of Mid-Lothian, for one of those new tenements [entire within themselves] which modern taste has so lately introduced.—Instance also the inestimable favour which he conferred on me by receiving you into his house, when you had only the unpleasant alternative of remaining, though a grown-up lad, in the society of mere boys.* This was a thing so contrary to all my father's ideas of seclusion, of economy, and of the safety to my morals and industry, which he wished to attain, by preserving me from the society of other young people, that, upon my word, I am always rather astonished how I should have had the impudence to make the request, and that he should have complied with it.

Then for the object of his solicitude—Do not laugh, or hold up your hands, my good Darsie; but upon my word I like the profession to which I am in the course of being educated, and am serious in prosecuting the preliminary studies. The law is my vocation—in an especial, and, I may say, in a hereditary way, my vocation; for although I have not the honour to belong to any of the great families who form in Scotland, as in France, the noblesse of the robe, and with us, at least, carry their heads as high, or rather higher,

* The diminutive and obscure *place* called Brown's Square, was hailed about the time of its erection as an extremely elegant improvement upon the style of designing and erecting Edinburgh residences. Each house was, in the phrase used by appraisers, "finished within itself," or, in the still newer phraseology, "self-contained." It was built about the year 1763-4; and the old part of the city being near and accessible, this square soon received many inhabitants, who ventured to remove to so moderate a distance from the High Street.

than the noblesse of the sword,—for the former consist more frequently of the "first-born of Egypt,"—yet my grandfather, who, I dare say, was a most excellent person, had the honour to sign a bitter protest against the Union, in the respectable character of town-clerk to the ancient Borough of Birlthegrout; and there is some reason—shall I say to hope, or to suspect?—that he may have been a natural son of a first cousin of the then Fairford of that Ilk, who had been long numbered among the minor barons. Now my father mounted a step higher, on the ladder of legal promotion, being, as you know, as well as I do, an eminent and respected Writer to his Majesty's Signet; and I myself am destined to mount a round higher still, and wear the honoured robe which is sometimes supposed, like Charity, to cover a multitude of sins. I have, therefore, no choice but to climb upwards, since we have mounted thus high, or else to fall down at the imminent risk of my neck. So that I reconcile myself to my destiny; and while you are looking from mountain peaks at distant lakes and friths, I am, *deapicibus juris*, consoling myself with visions of crimson and scarlet gowns—with the appendages of handsome cowls, well lined with salary.

You smile, Darsie, *more tuo*, and seem to say it is little worth while to cozen one's self with such vulgar dreams: yours being, on the contrary, of a high and heroic character, bearing the same resemblance to mine, that a bench, covered with purple cloth, and plentifully loaded with session papers, does to some Gothic throne, rough with Barbaric pearl and gold. But what would you have?—*Sua quemque trahit voluptas*. And my visions of preferment, though they may be as unsubstantial at present, are nevertheless more capable of being realized, than your aspirations after the Lord knows what. What says my father's proverb? "Look to a gown of gold, and you will at least get a sleeve of it." Such is my pursuit; but what dost thou look to? The chance that the mystery, as you call it, which at present overclouds your birth and connexions, will clear up into something inexpressibly and inconceivably brilliant; and this without any effort or exertion of your own, but purely by the good will of Fortune. I know the pride and haughtiness of thy heart, and sincerely do I wish that thou hadst more beatings to thank me for, than those which thou dost acknowledge so gratefully. Then had I thumped these Quixotical expectations out of thee, and thou hadst not, as now, conceived thyself to be the hero of some romantic history, and converted in thy vain imagination, honest Griffiths, citizen and broker, who never bestows more than the needful upon his quarterly epistles, into some wise Alcander or sage Alquife, the mystical and magical protector of thy peerless destiny. But I know not how it was, thy skull got harder, I think, and my knuckles became softer; not to mention that at length thou didst begin to show about thee a spark of something dangerous, which I was bound to respect at least, if I did not fear it.

And while I speak of this, it is not much amiss to advise thee to correct a little this cock-a-hoop courage of thine. I fear much that, like a hot mettled horse, it will carry the owner into some scrape, out of which he will find it difficult to extricate himself, especially if the daring spirit which bore thee thither should chance to fail thee at a pinch. Remember, Darsie, thou art not naturally courageous; on the contrary, we have long since agreed, that, quiet as I am, I have the advantage in this important particular. My courage consists, I think, in strength of nerves and constitutional indifference to danger; which, though it never pushes me on adventure, secures me in full use of my recollection, and tolerably complete self-possession, when danger actually arrives. Now, thine seems more what may be called intellectual courage; highness of spirit, and desire of distinction; impulses which render thee alive to the love of fame, and deaf to the apprehension of danger, until it forces itself suddenly upon thee. I own that whether it is from my having caught my father's apprehensions, or that I have *reason to entertain doubts of my own*, I often *think that this wildfire chase, of romantic situation and adventure, may lead thee into some mischief*; and then what would become of Alan Fairford? They might make whom they pleased Lord-Advocate, or Solicitor-General, I should never have the heart to strive for it. All my exertions are intended to vindicate myself one day in your eyes; and I think I should not care a farthing for the embroidered silk gown, more than for an old woman's apron, unless I had hopes that thou shouldst be walking the boards to admire, and perhaps to envy me.

That this may be the case, I prithee—beware! See not a Dulcinea in every slipshod girl, who, with blue eyes, fair hair, a tattered plaid, and a willow-wand in her gripe, drives out the village cows to the loaning. Do not think you will meet a gallant Valentine in every English rider, or an Orson in every Highland drover. View things as they are, and not as they may be magnified through thy teeming fancy. I have seen thee look at an old gravel pit, till thou madest out capes, and bays, and inlets, crags, and precipices, and the whole stupendous scenery of the isle of Feroe, in what was to all ordinary eyes a mere horsepond. Besides, did I not once find thee gazing with respect at a lizard, in the attitude of one who looks upon a crocodile? Now this is, doubtless, so far a harmless exercise of your imagination, for the puddle cannot drown you, nor the Lilliputian alligator eat you up. But it is different in society, where you cannot mistake the character of those you converse with, or suffer your fancy to exaggerate their qualities, good or bad, without exposing yourself not only to ridicule, but to great and serious inconveniences. Keep guard, therefore on your imagination, my dear Darsie; and let your old friend assure you, it is the point of your character most pregnant with peril to its good and generous owner. Adieu! let not the franks of the worthy peer remain unemployed; above all, *Sis memor mei*.

A. F.

LETTER III.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Shepherd's Bush.

I HAVE received thine absurd and most conceited epistle. It is well for thee that, Lovelace and Belford like, we came under a convention to pardon every species of liberty which we may take with each other; since, upon my word, there are some reflections in your last, which would otherwise have obliged me to return forthwith to Edinburgh, merely to show you I was not what you took me for.

Why, what a pair of prigs hast thou made of us! —I plunging into scrapes, without having courage to get out of them—thy sagacious self, afraid to put one foot before the other, lest it should run away from its companion; and so standing still like a post, out of mere faintness and coldness of heart, while all the world were driving full speed past thee. Thou a portrait-painter!—I tell thee, Alan, I have seen a better seated on the fourth round of a ladder, and painting a bare-breeched Highlander, holding a pint-stoup as big as himself, and a booted Lowlander, in a bobwig, supporting a glass of like dimensions; the whole being designed to represent the sign of the Salutation.

How hadst thou the heart to represent thine own individual self, with all thy motions, like those of a great Dutch doll, depending on the pressure of certain springs, as duty, reflection, and the like; without the impulse of which, thou wouldst doubtless have me believe thou wouldst not budge an inch? But have I not seen Gravity out of his bed at midnight? and must I, in plain terms, remind thee of certain mad pranks? Thou hadst ever, with the gravest sentiments in thy mouth, and the most starched reserve in thy manner, a kind of lumbering proclivity towards mischief, although with more inclination to set it a-going, than address to carry it through; and I cannot but chuckle internally, when I think of having seen my most venerable monitor, the future President of some high Scottish Court, puffing, blowing, and floundering, like a clumsy cart-horse in a bog, whose his efforts to extricate himself only plunge him deeper at every awkward struggle, till some one—I myself,

for example—took compassion on the moaning monster, and dragged him out by mane and tail.

As for me, my portrait is, if possible, even more scandalously caricatured. *I* fail or quail in spirit at the upcome! Where canst thou show me the least symptom of the recreant temper with which thou hast invested me, (as I trust,) merely to set off the solid and impassible dignity of thine own stupid indifference? If you ever saw me tremble, be assured that my flesh, like that of the old Spanish general, only quaked at the dangers into which my spirit was about to lead it. Seriously, Alan, this imputed poverty of spirit is a shabby charge to bring against your friend. I have examined myself as closely as I can, being, in very truth, a little hurt at your having such hard thoughts of me, and on my life I can see no reason for them. I allow you have, perhaps, some advantage of me in the steadiness and indifference of your temper; but I should despise myself, if I were conscious of the deficiency in courage which you seem willing enough to impute to me. However, I suppose this ungracious hint proceeds from sincere anxiety for my safety; and so viewing it, I swallow it as I would do medicine from a friendly doctor, although I believed in my heart he had mistaken my complaint.

This offensive insinuation disposed of, I thank thee, Alan, for the rest of thy epistle. I thought I heard your good father pronouncing the word Noble-House, with a mixture of contempt and displeasure, as if the very name of the poor little hamlet were odious to him, or, as if you had selected, out of all Scotland, the very place at which you had no call to dine. But if he had had any particular aversion to that blameless village, and very sorry inn, is it not his own fault that I did not accept the invitation of the Laird of Glengallacher, to shoot a buck in what he emphatically calls his "country?" Truth is, I had a strong desire to have complied with his Lairdship's invitation. To shoot a buck! Think how magnificent an idea to one who never shot any thing but hedge-sparrows, and that with a horse-pistol, purchased at a broker's stand in the Cowgate!—You, who stand upon your courage, may remember that I took the risk of firing the said pistol for the first time, while you stood at twenty yards' distance; and that, when you were persuaded it would go off without bursting, forgetting all law but that of the biggest and strongest, you possessed yourself of it exclusively for the rest of the holydays. Such a day's sport was no complete introduction to the noble art of deer-stalking, as it is practised in the Highlands; but I should not have scrupled to accept honest Glengallacher's invitation, at the risk of firing a rifle for the first time, had it not been for the outcry which your father made at my proposal, in the full ardour of his zeal for King George, the Hanover succession, and the Presbyterian faith. I wish I had stood out, since I have gained so little upon his good opinion by submission. All his impressions concerning the Highlanders are taken from the recollections of the Forty-five, when he retreated from the West-Port with his brother volunteers, each to the fortalice of his own separate dwelling, so soon as they heard the Adventurer was arrived with his clans as near them as Kirkliston. The flight of Falkirk—*parma non bene selecta*—in which I think your sire had his share with the undaunted western regiment, does not seem to have improved his taste for the company of the Highlanders; (quere, Alan, dost thou derive the courage thou makest such boast of from a hereditary source?)—and stories of Rob Roy Macgregor, and Sergeant Alan Mhor Cameron,* have served to paint them in still more sable colours to his imagination.

Now, from all I can understand, these ideas, as applied to the present state of the country, are absolutely chimerical. The Pretender is no more remembered in the Highlands, than if the poor gentleman were gathered to his hundred and eight fathers, whose portraits adorn the ancient walls of Holyrood; the broadswords have passed into other hands; the targets are used to cover the butter churns; and the race has sunk, or is fast sinking, from ruffling bullies into tame cheaters. Indeed, it was partly my conviction that there is little to be seen in the north, which, arriving at your father's conclusion, though from different premises, inclined my course in this direction, where perhaps I shall see as little.

One thing, however, I *have* seen; and it was with pleasure the more indescribable, that I was debarred from treading the land which my eyes were permitted to gaze upon, like those of the dying prophet from the top of Mount Pisgah,—I have seen, in a word, the fruitful shores of merry England; merry England! of which I boast myself a native, and on which I gaze, even while raging floods and unstable quicksands divide us, with the filial affection of a dutiful son.

Thou canst not have forgotten, Alan—for when didst thou ever forget what was interesting to thy friend?—that the same letter from my friend Griffiths, which doubled my income, and placed my motions at my own free disposal, contained a prohibitory clause, by which, reason none assigned, I was interdicted, as I respected my present safety and future fortunes, from visiting England; every other part of the British dominions, and a tour, if I pleased, on the continent, being left to my own choice.—Where is the tale, Alan, of a covered dish in the midst of a royal banquet, upon which the eyes of every guest were immediately fixed, neglecting all the dainties with which the table was loaded? This clause of banishment from England—from my native country—from the land of the brave, and the wise, and the free—affects me more than I am rejoiced by the freedom and independence assigned to me in all other respects. Thus in seeking this extreme boundary of the country which I am forbidden to tread, I resemble the poor tethered horse which, you may have observed, is always grazing on the very verge of the circle to which it is limited by its halter.

Do not accuse me of romance for obeying this impulse towards the South; nor suppose that, to gratify the imaginary longing of an idle curiosity, I am in any danger of risking the solid comforts of my present condition. Whoever has hitherto taken charge of my motions, has shown me, by convincing proofs, more weighty than the assurances which they have withheld, that my real advantage is their principal object. I should be, therefore, worse than a fool did I object to their authority, even when it seems somewhat capriciously exercised; for assuredly, at my age, I might—intrusted as I am with the care and management of myself in every other particular—expect that the cause of excluding me from England should be frankly and fairly stated for my own consideration and guidance. However, I will not grumble about the matter. I shall know the whole story one day, I suppose; and perhaps, as you sometimes surmise, I shall not find there is any mighty matter in it after all.

Yet one cannot help wondering—but, plague on it, if I wonder any longer, my letter will be as full of wonders as one of Katterfelto's advertisements. I have a montis mind, instead of this damnable iteration of guesses and forebodings, to give thee the history of a little adventure which befel me yesterday; though I am sure you will, as usual, turn the opposite end of the spy-glass on my poor narrative, and reduce, *more tuo*, to the most petty trivialties, the circumstances to which thou accusest me of giving undue consequence. Hang thee, Alan, thou art as unfit a confidant for a youthful gallant with some spice of imagination, as the old taciturn secretary of Fucardin of Trebizond. Nevertheless, we must each perform our separate destinies. I am doomed to see, act, and tell:—thou like a Dutchman, enclosed in the same Diligence with a Gascon, to hear, and shrug thy shoulders.

Of Dumfries, the capital town of this county, I have but little to say, and will not abuse your patience by reminding you, that it is built on the gallant river Nith, and that its churchyard, the highest place of the whole town, commands an extensive and fine prospect. Neither will I take the traveller's privilege of inflicting upon you the whole history of Bruce poniarding the Red Comyn in the Church of the

* *Of Rob Roy we have had more than enough. Alan Cameron, commonly called Sergeant Mhor, a freebooter of the same period, was equally remarkable for strength, courage, and generosity.*

at this place, and becoming a king and
use he had been a church-breaker and
The present Dumfriezers remember and
d, observing, it was only a papist church
whereof, its walls have been so com-
ished, that no vestiges of them remain.
rdy set of true-blue Presbyterians, these
Dumfries; men after your father's own
e for the Protestant succession—the
any of the great families around are sus-
a different way of thinking, and shared,
y of them, in the insurrection of the
some in the more recent business of
. The town itself suffered in the latter
d Elcho, with a large party of the
a severe contribution upon Dumfries, on
citizens having annoyed the rear of the
ing his march into England.
ese particulars I learned from Provost
happening to see me in the market-
bered that I was an intimate of your fa-
ry kindly asked me to dinner. Pray tell
at the effects of his kindness to me fol-
where. I became tired, however, of this
the course of twenty-four hours, and
e coast eastwards, amusing myself with
r objects of antiquity, and sometimes
ttempting to make use of my new an-
r the way, old Cotton's instructions, by
I to qualify myself for one of the gentle
lers, are not worth a farthing in this
earned this by mere accident, after I had
ortal hours. I shall never forget an im-
, a cowherd, about twelve years old,
brogue or bonnet, barelegged, and with
rent pair of breeches—how the villain
rn at my landing-net, my plummet, and
jury of flies which I had assembled to
fish in the river. I was induced at last
I to the sneering scoundrel, to see what
e of it; and he not only half filled my
our, but literally taught me to kill two
y own hand. This, and Sam having
and oats, not forgetting the ale, very
mall inn, first made me take the fancy
e for a day or two; and I have got my
guard of a Piscator leave to attend on
sixpence a-day for a herdboy in his

lean Englishwoman keeps this small
bedroom is sweetened with lavender,
ash-window, and the walls are, more-
with ballads of Fair Rosamond and
Allan. The woman's accent, though
gh, sounds yet kindly in my ear; for I
forgotten the desolate effect produced
organs, when I heard on all sides your
d northern pronunciation, which was to
a foreign land. I am sensible I my-
e that time acquired Scotch in perfec-
y a Scotticism withal. Still the sound
accentuation comes to my ears as the
end; and even when heard from the
e wandering beggar, it has seldom failed
h my mite. You Scotch, who are so
own nationality, must make due allow-
of other folks.

morning I was about to set forth to the
I had commenced angler the night be-
prevented by a heavy shower of rain,
abroad the whole forenoon; during all
heard my varlet of a guide as loud with
jokes in the kitchen, as a footman in
llery;—so little are modesty and inno-
parable companions of rusticity and se-

dinner the day cleared, and we at length
the river side, I found myself subjected
: on the part of my accomplished pre-
rently, he liked fishing himself better
ible of instructing an awkward novice,
d in *hopes of exhausting my* patience,
no to resign the rod, as I had done on
day, my friend contrived to keep me
thrashing the water more than an hour with a point-
less hook. I detected this trick at last, by observing
the rogue grinning with delight when he saw a large
trout rise and dash harmless away from the angle. I
gave him a sound cuff, Alan; but the next moment
was sorry, and, to make amends, yielded possession
of the fishing-rod for the rest of the evening, he un-
dertaking to bring me home a dish of trouts for my
supper, in atonement for his offences.

Having thus got honourably rid of the trouble of
amusing myself in a way I cared not for, I turned my
steps towards the sea, or rather the Solway Frith,
which here separates the two sister kingdoms, and
which lay at about a mile's distance, by a pleasant
walk over sandy knolls, covered with short herbage,
which you call Links, and we English, Downs.

But the rest of my adventure would weary out my
fingers, and must be deferred until to-morrow, when
you shall hear from me by way of continuation; and,
in the mean while, to prevent overhasty conclusions,
I must just hint to you, we are but yet on the verge of
the adventure which it is my purpose to communi-
cate.

LETTER IV.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Shepherd's Bush.

I MENTIONED in my last, that having abandoned
my fishing-rod as an unprofitable implement, I
crossed over the open downs which divided me from
the margin of the Solway. When I reached the
banks of the great estuary, which are here very bare
and exposed, the waters had receded from the large
and level space of sand, through which a stream,
now feeble and fordable, found its way to the ocean.
The whole was illuminated by the beams of the low
and setting sun, who showed his ruddy front like a
warrior prepared for defence, over a huge battlemented
and turreted wall of crimson and black clouds, which
appeared like an immense Gothic fortress, into which
the lord of day was descending. His setting rays
glimmered bright upon the wet surface of the sands,
and the numberless pools of water by which it was
covered, where the inequality of the ground had occa-
sioned their being left by the tide.

The scene was animated by the exertions of a
number of horsemen, who were actually employed in
hunting salmon. Ay, Alan, lift up your hands and
eyes as you will, I can give their mode of fishing no
name so appropriate; for they chased the fish at full
gallop, and struck them with their barbed spears, as
you see hunters spearing boars in the old tapestry.
The salmon, to be sure, take the thing more quietly
than the boars; but they are so swift in their own
element, that to pursue and strike them is the task of
a good horseman, with a quick eye, a determined hand,
and full command both of his horse and weapon. The
shouts of the fellows as they galloped up and down
in the animating exercise—their loud bursts of laugh-
ter when any of their number caught a fall—and still
louder acclamations when any of the party made a
capital stroke with his lance—gave so much anima-
tion to the whole scene, that I caught the enthusiasm
of the sport, and ventured forward a considerable
space on the sands. The feats of one horseman, in
particular, called forth so repeatedly the clamorous
applause of his companions, that the very banks rang
again with their shouts. He was a tall man, well
mounted on a strong black horse, which he caused to
turn and wind like a bird in the air, carried a longer
spear than the others, and wore a sort of fur cap or
bonnet, with a short feather in it, which gave him on
the whole, rather a superior appearance to the other
fishermen. He seemed to hold some sort of authority
among them, and occasionally directed their motions
both by voice and hand; at which times I thought
his gestures were striking, and his voice uncommonly
sonorous and commanding.

The riders began to make for the shore, and the
interest of the scene was almost over, while I lin-
gered on the sands, with my looks turned to the
shores of England, still gilded by the sun's last rays,

and, as it seemed, scarce distant a mile from me. The anxious thoughts which haunt me began to muster in my bosom, and my feet slowly and insensibly approached the river which divided me from the forbidden precints, though without any formed intention, when my steps were arrested by the sound of a horse galloping; and as I turned, the rider (the same fisherman whom I had formerly distinguished) called out to me, in an abrupt manner, "Soho, brother! you are too late for Bowness to-night—the tide will make presently."

I turned my head and looked at him without answering; for, to my thinking, his sudden appearance (or rather, I should say his unexpected approach) had, amidst the gathering shadows and lingering light, something in it which was wild and ominous.

"Are you deaf?" he added—"or are you mad?—or have you a mind for the next world?"

"I am a stranger," I answered, "and had no other purpose than looking on at the fishing—I am about to return to the side I came from."

"Best make haste then," said he. "He that dreams on the bed of the Solway, may wake in the next world. The sky threatens a blast that will bring in the waves three feet a-breast."

So saying, he turned his horse and rode off, while I began to walk back towards the Scottish shore, a little alarmed at what I had heard; for the tide advances with such rapidity upon these fatal sands, that well-mounted horsemen lay aside hopes of safety, if they see its white surge advancing while they are yet at a distance from the bank.

These recollections grew more agitating, and, instead of walking deliberately, I began a race as fast as I could, feeling, or thinking I felt, each pool of salt water through which I splashed, grow deeper and deeper. At length the surface of the sand did seem considerably more intersected with pools and channels full of water—either that the tide was really beginning to influence the bed of the estuary, or, as I must own is equally probable, that I had, in the hurry and confusion of my retreat, involved myself in difficulties which I had avoided in my more deliberate advance. Either way, it was rather an unpromising state of affairs, for the sands at the same time turned softer, and my footsteps, so soon as I had passed, were instantly filled with water. I began to have odd recollections concerning the smugness of your father's parlour, and the secure footing afforded by the pavement of Brown's Square and Scot's close, when my better genius, the tall fisherman, appeared once more close to my side, he and his sable horse looming gigantic in the now darkening twilight.

"Are you mad?" he said, in the same deep tone which had before thrilled on my ear, "or are you weary of your life?—You will be presently amongst the quicksands."—I professed my ignorance of the way, to which he only replied, "There is no time for prating—get up behind me."

He probably expected me to spring from the ground with the activity which these Borderers have, by constant practice, acquired in every thing relating to horsemanship; but as I stood irresolute, he extended his hand, and grasping mine, bid me place my foot on the toe of his boot, and thus raised me in a trice to the croupe of his horse. I was scarce securely seated, ere he shook the reins of his horse, who instantly sprung forward; but annoyed, doubtless, by the unusual burden, treated us to two or three bounds, accompanied by as many flourishes of his hind heels. The rider sat like a tower, notwithstanding that the unexpected plunging of the animal threw me forward upon him. The horse was soon compelled to submit to the discipline of the spur and bridle, and went off at a steady hand gallop; thus shortening the devious, for it was by no means a direct path, by which the rider, avoiding the loose quicksands, made for the northern bank.

My friend, perhaps I may call him my preserver,—for, to a stranger, my situation was fraught with real danger,—continued to press on at the same speedy pace, but in perfect silence, and I was under too much anxiety of mind to disturb him with any questions. At length we arrived at a part of the shore with which I was utterly unacquainted, when I alighted and began to return, in the best fashion I could, my thanks for the important service which he had just rendered me.

The stranger only replied by an impatient "pshaw!" and was about to ride off, and leave me to my own resources, when I implored him to complete his work of kindness, by directing me to Shepherd's Bush, which was, as I informed him, my home for the present.

"To Shepherd's Bush?" he said; "it is but three miles, but if you know not the land better than the sand, you may break your neck before you get there, for it is no road for a moping boy in a dark night, and, besides, there are the brook and the fens to cross."

I was a little dismayed at this communication of such difficulties as my habits have not called on me to contend with. Once more the idea of thy father's fireside came across me; and I could have been well contented to have swop'd the romance of my situation, together with the glorious independence of control which I possessed at the moment, for the comforts of the chimney-corner, though I were obliged to keep my eyes chained to Erskine's Larger Institutes.

I asked my new friend whether he could not direct me to any house of public entertainment for the night, and, supposing it probable he was himself a poor man, I added, with the conscious dignity of a well-filled pocketbook, that I could make it worth any man's while to oblige me. The fisherman making no answer, I turned away from him with as gallant an appearance of indifference as I could command, and began to take, as I thought, the path which he had pointed out to me.

His deep voice immediately sounded after me to recall me. "Stay, young man, stay—you have mistaken the road already.—I wonder your friends send out such an inconsiderate youth, without some one wiser than himself to take care of him."

"Perhaps they might not have done so," said I, "if I had any friends who cared about the matter."

"Well, sir," he said, "it is not my custom to open my house to strangers, but your pinch is like to be a smart one; for, besides the risk from bad roads, fords and broken ground, and the night, which looks both black and gloomy, there is bad company on the road sometimes—at least it has a bad name, and some have come to harm; so that I think I must for once make my rule give way to your necessity, and give you a night's lodging in my cottage."

Why was it, Alan, that I could not help giving an involuntary shudder at receiving an invitation so reasonable in itself, and so suitable to my naturally inquisitive disposition? I easily suppressed this untimely sensation; and, as I returned thanks, and expressed my hope that I should not disarrange his family, I once more dropped a hint of my desire to make compensation for any trouble I might occasion. The man answered very coldly, "Your presence will no doubt give me trouble, sir, but it is of a kind which your purse cannot compensate; in a word, although I am content to receive you as my guest, I am no public to call a reckoning."

I begued his pardon, and at his instance, once more seated myself behind him upon the good horse, which went forth steady as before—the moon, whenever she could penetrate the clouds, throwing the huge shadow of the animal, with its double burden, on the wild and bare ground over which we passed.

Thou mayst laugh till thou lettest the letter fall if thou wilt, but it reminded me of the Magician Atlantes on his hippogriff, with a knight trussed up behind him, in the manner Ariosto has depicted that matter. Thou art, I know, matter-of-fact enough to affect contempt of that fascinating and delicious poem; but think not that, to conform with thy bad taste, I shall forbear any suitable illustration which now or hereafter may occur to me.

On we went, the sky blackening around us, and the wind beginning to pipe such a wild and melancholy tone as best suited the hollow sounds of the advancing tide, which I could hear at a distance like the roar of some immense monster defrauded of its prey.

At length, our course was crossed by a deep dell

dingle, such as they call in some parts of Scotland a den, and in others a cleuch, or narrow glen. It seemed, by the broken glances which the moon continued to throw upon it, to be steep, precipitous, and full of trees, which are, generally speaking, rather scarce upon these shores. The descent by which we plunged into this dell was both steep and rugged, with two or three abrupt turnings; but neither danger nor darkness impeded the motion of the black horse, who seemed rather to slide upon his haunches, than to gallop down the pass, throwing me again on the shoulders of the athletic rider, who, sustaining no inconvenience by the circumstance, continued to press the horse forward with his heel, steadily supporting him at the same time by raising his bridle-hand, until we stood in safety at the bottom of the steep—not a little to my consolation, as, friend Alan, thou mayst easily conceive.

A very short advance up the glen, the bottom of which we had attained by this ugly descent, brought us in front of two or three cottages, one of which another blink of moonshine enabled me to rate as rather better than those of the Scottish peasantry in this part of the world; for the sashes seemed glazed, and there were what are called storm-windows in the roof, giving symptoms of the magnificence of a second story. The scene around was very interesting; for the cottages, and the yards or crofts annexed to them, occupied a *haugh*, or holm, of two acres, which a brook of some consequence (to judge from its roar) had left upon one side of the little glen while finding its course close to the further bank, and which appeared to be covered and darkened with trees, while the level space beneath enjoyed such stormy smiles as the moon had that night to bestow.

I had little time for observation, for my companion's loud whistle, seconded by an equally loud halloo, speedily brought to the door of the principal cottage a man and a woman, together with two large Newfoundland dogs, the deep baying of which I had for some time heard. A yelping terrier or two, which had joined the concert, were silent at the presence of my conductor, and began to whine, jump up, and fawn upon him. The female drew back when she beheld a stranger; the man, who had a lighted lantern, advanced, and, without any observation, received the horse from my host, and led him, doubtless, to stable, while I followed my conductor into the house. When we had passed the *hallan*,* we entered a well-sized apartment, with a clean brick floor, where a fire blazed (much to my contentment) in the ordinary projecting sort of chimney, common in Scottish houses. There were stone seats within the chimney; and ordinary utensils, mixed with fishing-spears, nets, and similar implements of sport, were hung around the walls of the place. The female who had first appeared at the door, had now retreated into a side apartment. She was presently followed by my guide, after he had silently motioned me to a seat; and their place was supplied by an elderly woman, in a gray stuff gown, with a check apron and *toy*, obviously a menial, though neater in her dress than is usual in her apparent rank—an advantage which was counterbalanced by a very forbidding aspect. But the most singular part of her attire, in this very Protestant country, was a rosary, in which the smaller beads were black oak, and those indicating the *paternoster* of silver, with a crucifix of the same metal.

This person made preparations for supper, by spreading a clean though coarse cloth over a large oaken table, placing trenchers and salt upon it, and arranging the fire to receive a gridiron. I observed her motions in silence; for she took no sort of notice of me, and as her looks were singularly forbidding, I felt no disposition to commence conversation.

When this duenna had made all preliminary arrangements, she took from the well-filled pouch of my conductor, which he had hung up by the door, one or two salmon, or *grilses*, as the smaller sort are termed, and selecting that which seemed best, and in highest season, began to cut it into slices, and to prepare a *grillade; the savoury smell of which affected me so powerfully, that I began sincerely to hope that no delay would intervene between the platter and the lip.*

As this thought came across me, the man who had conducted the horse to the stable entered the apartment, and discovered to me a countenance yet more uninviting than that of the old crone who was performing with such dexterity the office of cook to the party. He was perhaps sixty years old; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired perhaps by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance—eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair—a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth, of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait. He was clad like a fisherman, in jacket and trowsers of the blue cloth commonly used by seamen, and had a Dutch case-knife, like that of a Hamburgh skipper, stuck into a broad buff belt, which seemed as if it might occasionally sustain weapons of a description still less equivocally calculated for violence.

This man gave me an inquisitive, and, as I thought, a sinister look, upon entering the apartment; but without any farther notice of me, took up the office of arranging the table, which the old lady had abandoned for that of cooking the fish, and, with more address than I expected from a person of his coarse appearance, placed two chairs at the head of the table, and two stools below; accommodating each seat to a cover, beside which he placed an allowance of barley-bread, and a small jug, which he replenished with ale from a large black jack. Three of these jugs were of ordinary earthenware, but the fourth, which he placed by the right-hand cover at the upper end of the table, was a flagon of silver, and displayed armorial bearings. Beside this flagon he placed a salt-cellar of silver, handsomely wrought, containing salt of exquisite whiteness, with pepper and other spices. A sliced lemon was also presented on a small silver salver. The two large water-dogs, who seemed perfectly to understand the nature of the preparations, seated themselves one on each side of the table, to be ready to receive their portion of the entertainment. I never saw finer animals, or which seemed to be more influenced by a sense of decorum, excepting that they slobbered a little as the rich scent from the chimney was wafted past their noses. The small dogs ensconced themselves beneath the table.

I am aware that I am dwelling upon trivial and ordinary circumstances, and that perhaps I may weary out your patience in doing so. But conceive me alone in this strange place, which seemed, from the universal silence, to be the very temple of Harpocrates—remember that this is my first excursion from home—forget not that the manner in which I had been brought hither had the dignity of danger and something the air of an adventure, and that there was a mysterious incongruity in all I had hitherto witnessed; and you will not, I think, be surprised that these circumstances, though trifling, should force themselves on my notice at the time, and dwell in my memory afterwards.

That a fisher, who pursued the sport perhaps for his amusement as well as profit, should be well mounted and better lodged than the lower class of peasantry, had in it nothing surprising; but there was something about all that I saw which seemed to intimate, that I was rather in the abode of a decayed gentleman, who clung to a few of the forms and observances of former rank, than in that of a common peasant, raised above his fellows by comparative opulence.

Besides the articles of plate which I have already noticed, the old man now lighted and placed on the table a silver lamp, or cruisie, as the Scottish term it, filled with very pure oil, which in burning diffused an aromatic fragrance, and gave me a more perfect

* *The partition which divides a Scottish cottage.*

view of the cottage walls, which I had hitherto only seen dimly by the light of the fire. The *bink*,* with its usual arrangement of pewter and earthen-ware, which was most strictly and critically clean, glanced back the flame of the lamp merrily from one side of the apartment. In a recess, formed by the small bow of a latticed window, was a large writing-desk of walnut-tree wood, curiously carved, above which arose shelves of the same, which supported a few books and papers. The opposite side of the recess contained (as far as I could discern, for it lay in shadow, and I could at any rate have seen it but imperfectly from the place where I was seated) one or two guns, together with swords, pistols, and other arms —a collection which, in a poor cottage, and in a country so peaceful, appeared singular at least, if not even somewhat suspicious.

All these observations, you may suppose, were made much sooner than I have recorded, or you (if you have not skipped) have been able to read them. They were already finished, and I was considering how I should open some communication with the mute inhabitants of the mansion, when my conductor re-entered from the side-door by which he had made his exit.

He had now thrown off his rough riding-cap, and his coarse jockey-coat, and stood before me in a gray jerkin trimmed with black, which sat close to, and set off, his large and sinewy frame, and a pair of trowsers, of a lighter colour, cut as close to the body as they are used by Highlandmen. His whole dress was of finer cloth than that of the old man; and his linen, so minute was my observation, clean and unsullied. His shirt was without ruffles, and tied at the collar with a black riband, which showed his strong and muscular neck rising from it, like that of an ancient Hercules. His head was small, with a large forehead, and well-formed ears. He wore neither peruke nor hair-powder; and his chestnut locks curling close to his head, like those of an antique statue, showed not the least touch of time, though he owner must have been at least fifty. His features were high and prominent in such a degree, that one knew not whether to term them harsh or handsome. In either case, the sparkling gray eye, aquiline nose, and well-formed mouth, combined to render his physiognomy noble and expressive. An air of sadness, or severity, or of both, seemed to indicate a melancholy, and, at the same time, a haughty temper. I could not help running mentally over the ancient heroes, to whom I might assimilate the noble form and countenance before me. He was too young, and evinced too little resignation to his fate, to resemble Belisarius. Coriolanus, standing by the hearth of Tullus Aufidius, came nearer the mark; yet the gloomy and haughty look of the stranger had, perhaps, still more of Marius, seated among the ruins of Carthage.

While I was lost in these imaginations, my host stood by the fire, gazing on me with the same attention which I paid to him, until, embarrassed by his look, I was about to break silence at all hazards. But the supper, now placed upon the table, reminded me, by its appearance, of those wants which I had almost forgotten while I was gazing on the fine form of my conductor. He spoke at length, and I almost started at the deep rich tone of his voice, though what he said was but to invite me to sit down to the table. He himself assumed the seat of honour, beside which the silver flagon was placed, and beckoned to me to sit beside him.

Thou knowest thy father's strict and excellent domestic discipline has trained me to hear the invocation of a blessing before we break the daily bread, for which we are taught to pray—I paused a moment, and, without designing to do so, I suppose my manner made him sensible of what I expected. The two domestics, or inferiors, as I should have before observed, were already seated at the bottom of the table, when my host shot a glance of a very peculiar expression towards the old man, observing, with *something approaching to a sneer*, "Cristal Nixon, *say grace—the gentleman expects one.*"

"The foul fiend shall be clerk, and say amen, when I turn chaplain," growled out the party addressed, in tones which might have become the condition of a dying bear; "if the gentleman is a whig, he may please himself with his own mummery. My faith is neither in word nor writ, but in barley bread and brown ale."

"Mabel Moffat," said my guide, looking at the old woman, and raising his sonorous voice, probably because she was hard of hearing, "canst thou ask a blessing upon our victuals?"

The old woman shook her head, kissed the cross which hung from her rosary, and was silent.

"Mabel will say grace for no heretic," said the master of the house, with the same latent sneer on his brow and in his accent.

At the same moment, the side-door already mentioned opened, and the young woman (so she proved) whom I had first seen at the door of the cottage, advanced a little way into the room, then stopped bashfully, as if she had observed that I was looking at her, and asked the master of the house, "if he had called?"

"Not louder than to make old Mabel hear me," he replied; "and yet," he added, as she turned to retire, "it is a shame a stranger should see a house where not one of the family can or will say a grace,—do thou be our chaplain."

The girl, who was really pretty, came forward with timid modesty, and apparently unconscious that she was doing any thing uncommon, pronounced the benediction in a silver-toned voice, and with affecting simplicity—her cheek colouring just so much as to show, that, on a less solemn occasion, she would have felt more embarrassed.

Now, if thou expectest a fine description of this young woman, Alan Fairford, in order to entitle thee to taunt me with having found a Dulcinea in the inhabitant of a fisherman's cottage on the Solway Firth, thou shalt be disappointed; for, having said she seemed very pretty, and that she was a sweet and gentle-speaking creature, I have said all concerning her that I can tell thee. She vanished when the benediction was spoken.

My host, with a muttered remark on the cold of our ride, and the keen air of the Solway Sands, to which he did not seem to wish an answer, loaded my plate from Mabel's grillade, which, with a large wooden bowl of potatoes, formed our whole meal. A sprinkling from the lemon gave a much higher zest than the usual condiment of vinegar; and I promise you that whatever I might hitherto have felt, either of curiosity or suspicion, did not prevent me from making a most excellent supper, during which little passed betwixt me and my entertainer, unless that he did the usual honours of the table with courtesy, indeed, but without even the affectation of hearty hospitality, which those in his (apparent) condition generally affect on such occasions, even when they do not actually feel it. On the contrary, his manner seemed that of a polished landlord towards an unexpected and unwelcome guest, whom for the sake of his own credit, he receives with civility, but without either good-will or cheerfulness.

If you ask how I learned all this, I cannot tell you; nor, were I to write down at length the insignificant intercourse which took place between us, would it perhaps serve to justify these observations. It is sufficient to say, that in helping his dogs, which he did from time to time with great liberality, he seemed to discharge a duty much more pleasing to himself, than when he paid the same attention to his guest. Upon the whole, the result on my mind was as I tell it you.

When supper was over, a small case-bottle of brandy, in a curious frame of silver filigree, circulated to the guests. I had already taken a small glass of the liquor, and, when it had passed to Mabel and to Cristal, and was again returned to the upper end of the table, I could not help taking the bottle in my hand, to look more at the armorial bearings, which were chased with considerable taste on the silver framework. Encountering the eye of my entertainer, I instantly saw that my curiosity was highly distasteful; he frowned, bit his lip, and showed such uncon

* *The frame of wooden shelves placed in a Scottish kitchen for holding plates.*

signs of impatience, that, setting the bottle ely down, I attempted some apology. To I not deign either to reply, or even to listen; al, at a signal from his master, removed the my curiosity, as well as the cup, upon which arms were engraved.

nsued an awkward pause, which I endea- break by observing, that "I feared my in- pon his hospitality had put his family to nvenience."

e you see no appearance of it, sir," he re- h cold civility. "What inconvenience a retired as ours may suffer from receiving an d guest, is like to be trifling, in comparison he visiter himself sustains from want of tomed comforts. So far, therefore, as our stands, our accounts stand clear."

nstanding this discouraging reply, I blun- as is usual in such cases, wishing to appear being, perhaps, in reality the very reverse. afraid," I said, "that my presence had one of the family" (looking at the side-door) table."

coldly replied, "I meant the young woman ad seen in the apartment, he bid me observe was room enough at the table for her to ed herself, and meat enough, such as it was, pper. I might, therefore, be assured, if she n it, she would have supped with us."

vas no dwelling on this or any other topic r my entertainer, taking up the lamp, ob- at, "my wet clothes might reconcile me for to their custom of keeping early hours; as under the necessity of going abroad by ly to-morrow morning, and would call me same time, to point out the way by which I urn to the Shepherd's Bush."

ft no opening for farther explanation; nor room for it on the usual terms of civility; neither asked my name, nor expressed the est concerning my condition, I—the obliged ad no pretence to trouble him with such n my part.

t up the lamp, and led me through the side- a very small room, where a bed had been ranged for my accommodation, and, putting lamp, directed me to leave my wet clothes tside of the door, that they might be ex- he fire during the night. He then left me, ttered something which was meant to pass night.

d his directions with respect to my clothes, that, in despite of the spirits which I had elt my teeth begin to chatter, and received nts from an anguish feeling, that a town- h, like myself, could not at once rush into rdihood of country sports with impunity. ed, though coarse and hard, was dry and id I soon was so little occupied with my l tremors, as to listen with interest to a t which seemed to be that of my landlord, the boards (there was no ceiling, as you ve) which roofed my apartment. Light through these rude planks became visible as y lamp was extinguished; and as the noise w, solemn, and regular step continued, and istinguish that the person turned and re- he reached the end of the apartment, it lear to me that the walker was engaged in tic occupation, but merely pacing to and fro rn pleasure. "An odd amusement this," I "for one who had been engaged at least a e preceding day in violent exercise, and who rising by the peep of dawn on the ensuing "

time I heard the storm, which had been during the evening, begin to descend with a e; sounds, as of distant thunder, (the noise re distant waves, doubtless, on the shore,) with the roaring of the neighbouring torrent, the crashing, groaning, and even screaming es in the *glen, whose boughs were tormented le. Within the house, windows clattered, clapped, and the walls, though sufficiently* substantial for a building of the kind, seemed to me to totter in the tempest.

But still the heavy steps perambulating the apartment over my head, were distinctly heard amid the roar and fury of the elements. I thought more than once I even heard a groan; but I frankly own, that placed in this unusual situation, my fancy may have misled me. I was tempted several times to call aloud, and ask whether the turmoil around us did not threaten danger to the building which we inhabited; but when I thought of the secluded and unsocial master of the dwelling, who seemed to avoid human society, and to remain unperturbed amid the elemental war, it seemed that to speak to him at that moment, would have been to address the spirit of the tempest himself, since no other being, I thought, could have remained calm and tranquil while winds and waters were thus raging around.

In process of time, fatigue prevailed over anxiety and curiosity. The storm abated, or my senses became deadened to its terrors, and I fell asleep ere yet the mysterious paces of my host had ceased to shake the flooring over my head.

It might have been expected that the novelty of my situation, although it did not prevent my slumbers, would have at least diminished their profoundness, and shortened their duration. It proved otherwise, however; for I never slept more soundly in my life, and only awoke when, at morning dawn, my landlord shook me by the shoulder, and dispelled some dream, of which, fortunately for you, I have no recollection, otherwise you would have been favoured with it, in hopes you might have proved a second Daniel upon the occasion.

"You sleep sound"—said his full deep voice; "ere five years have rolled over your head, your slumbers will be lighter—unless ere then you are wrapped in the sleep which is never broken."

"How!" said I, starting up in the bed; "do you know any thing of me—of my prospects—of my views in life?"

"Nothing," he answered, with a grim smile; "but it is evident you are entering upon the world young, inexperienced, and full of hopes, and I do but prophesy to you what I would to any one in your condition.—But come; there lie your clothes—a brown crust and a draught of milk wait you, if you choose to break your fast; but you must make haste."

"I must first," I said, "take the freedom to spend a few minutes alone, before beginning the ordinary works of the day."

"Oh!—humph!—I cry your devotions pardon," he replied, and left the apartment.

Alan, there is something terrible about this man.

I joined him, as I had promised, in the kitchen where we had supped over night. where I found the articles which he had offered me for breakfast, with out butter or any other addition.

He walked up and down while I partook of the bread and milk; and the slow measured weighty step seemed identified with those which I had heard last night. His pace, from its funereal slowness, seemed to keep time with some current of internal passion, dark, slow, and unchanged.—"We run and leap by the side of a lively and bubbling brook," thought I, internally, "as if we would run a race with it; but beside waters deep, slow, and lonely, our pace is sullen and silent as their course. What thoughts may be now corresponding with that furrowed brow, and bearing time with that heavy step!"

"If you have finished," said he, looking up to me with a glance of impatience, as he observed that I ate no longer, but remained with my eyes fixed upon him, "I wait to show you the way."

We went out together, no individual of the family having been visible excepting my landlord. I was disappointed of the opportunity which I watched for of giving some gratuity to the domestics, as they seemed to be. As for offering any recompense to the Master of the Household, it seemed to me impossible to have attempted it.

What would I have given for a share in thy composure, who wouldst have thrust half-a-crown into a man's hand whose necessities seemed to crave it,

conscious that you did right in making the proffer, and not caring sixpence whether you hurt the feelings of him whom you meant to serve! I saw thee once give a penny to a man with a long beard, who, from the dignity of his exterior, might have represented Solon. I had not thy courage, and therefore I made no tender to my mysterious host, although, notwithstanding his display of silver utensils, all around the house bespoke narrow circumstances, if not actual poverty.

We left the place together. But I hear thee murmur thy very new and appropriate ejaculation, *Oho, tam satis!*—The rest for another time. Perhaps I may delay farther communication till I learn how my favours are valued.

LETTER V.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

I HAVE thy two last epistles, my dear Darsie, and, expecting the third, have been in no hurry to answer them. Do not think my silence ought to be ascribed to my failing to take interest in them, for, truly, they excel (though the task was difficult) thy usual excellings. Since the moon-calf who earliest discovered the Pandemonium of Milton in an expiring wood-fire —since the first ingenious urchin who blew bubbles out of soap and water, thou, my best of friends, hast the highest knack at making histories out of nothing. Wert thou to plant the bean in the nursery-tale, thou wouldst make out, so soon as it began to germinate, that the castle of the giant was about to elevate its battlements on the top of it. All that happens to thee gets a touch of the wonderful and the sublime from thy own rich imagination. Didst ever see what artists call a Claude Lorraine glass, which spreads its own particular hue over the whole landscape which you see through it?—thou beholdest ordinary events just through such a medium.

I have looked carefully at the facts of thy last long letter, and they are just such as might have befallen any little truant of the High School, who had got down to Leith Sands, gone beyond the *prawn-dub*, wet his hose and shoon, and, finally, had been carried home, in compassion, by some highkilted fishwife, cursing all the while the trouble which the brat occasioned her.

I admire the figure which thou must have made, clinging for dear life behind the old fellow's back—thy jaws chattering with fear, thy muscles cramped with anxiety. Thy execrable supper of broiled salmon, which was enough to insure the nightmare's regular visits for a twelvemonth, may be termed a real affliction; but as for the storm of Thursday last, (such, I observe, was the date,) it roared, whistled, howled, and bellowed, as fearfully amongst the old chimney-heads in the Candlemaker-row, as it could on the Solway shore, for the very wind of it—*teste me per totam noctem vigilante*. And then in the morning again, when—Lord help you—in your sentimental delicacy you bid the poor man adieu, without even tendering him a half-a-crown for supper and lodging!

You laugh at me for giving a penny (to be accurate, though, thou shouldst have said sixpence) to an old fellow, whom thou, in thy high flight, wouldst have sent home supperless, because he was like Solon or Helisarius. But you forget that the affront descended like a benediction into the pouch of the old gaberlunzie, who overflowed in blessings upon the generous donor —Long ere he would have thanked thee, Darsie, for thy barren veneration of his beard and his bearing. Then you laugh at my good father's retreat from Falkirk, just as if it were not time for a man to trudge when three or four mountain knaves, with naked claymores, and heels as light as their fingers, were scampering after him, crying *furinish*. You remember what he said himself when the Laird of Bucklivat told him that *furinish* signified "stay a while." "What the devil," he said, surprised out of his Presbyterian correctness by the unreasonableness of such a request *under the circumstances*, "*would the scoundrels have said me stop to have my head cut off?*"

Imagine such a train at your own heels, Darsie, and ask yourself whether you would not exert your legs as fast as you did in flying from the Solway tide. And yet you impeach my father's courage! I tell you he has courage enough to do what is right, and to spurn what is wrong—courage enough to defend a righteous cause with hand and purse, and to take the part of the poor man against his oppressor, without fear of the consequences to himself. This is civil courage, Darsie; and it is of little consequence to most men in this age and country, whether they ever possess military courage or no.

Do not think I am angry with you, though I thus attempt to rectify your opinions on my father's account. I am well aware that, upon the whole, he is scarce regarded with more respect by me than by thee. And while I am in a serious humour, which it is difficult to preserve with one who is perpetually tempting me to laugh at him, pray dearest Darsie, let not thy ardour for adventure carry thee into more such scrapes as that of the Solway Sands. The rest of the story is a mere imagination; but that stormy evening might have proved, as the clown says to Lear, a "naughty night to swim in."

As for the rest, if you can work mysterious and romantic heroes out of old crossgrained fishermen, why, I for one will reap some amusement by the metamorphosis. Yet hold! even there, there is some need of caution. This same female chaplain—thou sayest so little of her, and so much of every one else, that it excites some doubt in my mind. *Very pretty* she is, it seems—and that is all thy discretion informs me of. There are cases in which silence implies other things than consent. Wert thou ashamed or afraid, Darsie, to trust thyself with the praises of the very pretty grace-sayer?—As I live, thou blushest! Why, do I not know thee an inveterate Squire of Dames? and have I not been in thy confidence? An elegant elbow, displayed when the rest of the figure was muffled in a cardinal, or a neat well-turned ankle and instep, seen by chance as its owner tripped up the Old Assembly Close,* turned thy brain for eight days. Thou wert once caught, if I remember rightly, with a single glance of a single matchless eye, which, when the fair owner withdrew her veil, proved to be single in the literal sense of the word. And, besides, were you not another time enamoured of a voice—a mere voice, that mingled in the psalmody at the Old Greyfriars' Church—until you discovered the proprietor of that dulcet organ to be Miss Dolly MacIzzard, who is both "back and breast," as our saying goes?

All these things considered, and contrasted with thy artful silence on the subject of this grace-saying Nereid of thine, I must beg thee to be more explicit upon that subject in thy next, unless thou wouldst have me form the conclusion that thou thinkest more of her than thou carest to talk of.

You will not expect much news from this quarter, as you know the monotony of my life, and are aware it must at present be devoted to uninterrupted study. You have said a thousand times, that I am only qualified to make my way by dint of plodding, and therefore plod I must.

My father seems to be more impatient of your absence than he was after your first departure. He is sensible, I believe, that our solitary meals want the light which your gay humour was wont to throw over them, and feels melancholy, as men do when the light of the sun is no longer upon the landscape. If it is thus with him, thou mayst imagine it is much more so with me, and canst conceive how heartily I wish that thy frolic were ended, and thou once more our inmate.

I resume my pen, after a few hours' interval, to say that an incident has occurred, on which you will yourself be building a hundred castles in the air, and which even I, jealous as I am of such baseless fabrics, cannot but own, affords ground for singular conjecture.

My father has of late taken me frequently along with him when he attends the Courts, in his anxiety to see me properly initiated into the practical forms of business. I own I feel something on his account

* Of old this almost deserted alley formed the most common access betwixt the High Street and the southern suburbs.

wn from this over anxiety, which, I dare
rs us both ridiculous. But what signifies
ance! my father drags me up to his counsel
the law,—"Are you quite ready to come on
. Crossbite?—This is my son, designed for
take the liberty to bring him with me to-
consultation, merely that he may see how
gs are managed."
sbite smiles and bows, as a lawyer smiles
licitor who employs him, and I dare say,
s tongue into his cheek, and whispers into
reat wig that passes him, "What the d—l
Fairford mean by letting loose his whelp

d beside them, too much vexed at the child-
was made to play to derive much informa-
the valuable arguments of Mr. Crossbite, I
rather elderly man, who stood with his
bent on my father, as if he only waited an
business in which he was engaged, to ad-
. There was something, I thought, in the
's appearance which commanded attention.
ess was not in the present taste, and though
ce been magnificent, was now antiquated
ionable. His coat was of branched velvet,
n lining, a waistcoat of violet-coloured silk,
roidered; his breeches the same stuff as
He wore square-toed shoes, with foretops,
called; and his silk stockings were rolled
s knee, as you may have seen in pictures,
and there on some of those originals who
que themselves on dressing after the mode
elah. A *chapeau bras* and sword necessa-
eted his equipment, which, though out of
ed that it belonged to a man of distinction.
ant Mr. Crossbite had ended what he had
s gentleman walked up to my father, with,
vant, Mr. Fairford—it is long since you and

r, whose politeness, you know, is exact and
wed, and hemmed, and was confused, and
professed that the distance since they had
o great, that though he remembered the
tly, the name, he was sorry to say, had—
nehow—escaped his memory.
you forgot Herries of Birrenswork?" said
man, and my father bowed even more pro-
an before; though I think his reception of
end seemed to lose some of the respectful
ich he bestowed on him while his name
nknown. It now seemed to be something
-courtesy which the heart would have de-
ceremony permitted.
er, however, again bowed low, and hoped
m well.
ll, my good Mr. Fairford, that I come hither
d to renew my acquaintance with one or
riends, and with you in the first place.—I
r old resting-place—you must dine with me
Paterson's, at the head of the Horse Wynd—
your new fashionable dwelling, and I have
vith you."
ier excused himself respectfully, and not
mbarrassment—"he was particularly en-
iome."
I will dine with you, man," said Mr. Herries
work; "the few minutes you can spare me
er, will suffice for my business; and I will
it you a moment from minding your own—
ottle-man."
ve often remarked that my father, though a
s observer of the rites of hospitality, seems
them rather as a duty than as a pleasure;
t for a conscientious wish to feed the hungry
ve the stranger, his doors would open to
ich seldomer than is the case. I never saw
an example of this peculiarity, (which I
herwise have said is caricatured in your
,) as in his mode of homologating the self-
itation of Mr. Herries. The embarrassed
the attempt at a smile which accompanied
will expect *the honour of seeing you in
ware at three o'clock," could not* deceive
d did not impose upon the old Laird. It
was with a look of scorn that he replied, "I will relieve you then till that hour, Mr. Fairford;" and his whole manner seemed to say, "It is my pleasure to dine with you, and I care not whether I am welcome or no."

When he turned away, I asked my father who he was.

"An unfortunate gentleman," was the reply.

"He looks pretty well on his misfortunes," replied I. "I should not have suspected that so gay an outside was lacking a dinner."

"Who told you that he does?" replied my father; "he is *omni suspicione major*, so far as worldly circumstances are concerned—It is to be hoped he makes a good use of them; though, if he does, it will be for the first time in his life."

"He has then been an irregular liver?" insinuated I.

My father replied by that famous brocard with which he silences all unacceptable queries, turning in the slightest degree upon the failings of our neighbours,—"If we mend our own faults, Alan, we shall all of us have enough to do, without sitting in judgment upon other folks."

Here I was again at fault; but rallying once more, I observed, he had the air of a man of high rank and family.

"He is well entitled," said my father, "representing Herries of Birrenswork; a branch of that great and once powerful family of Herries, the elder branch whereof merged in the house of Nithesdale at the death of Lord Robin the Philosopher, Anno Domini sixteen hundred and sixty-seven."

"Has he still," said I, "his patrimonial estate of Birrenswork?"

"No," replied my father; "so far back as his father's time, it was a mere designation—the property being forfeited by Herbert Herries following his kinsman the Earl of Derwentwater, to the Preston affair in 1715. But they keep up the designation, thinking, doubtless, that their claims may be revived in more favourable times for Jacobites and for Popery; and folks who in no way partake of their fantastic capricios, do yet allow it to pass unchallenged, *ex comitate*, if not *ex misericordia*.—But were he the Pope and the Pretender both, we must get some dinner ready for him, since he has thought fit to offer himself. So hasten home, my lad, and tell Hannah, Cook Epps, and James Wilkinson to do their best; and do thou look out a pint or two of Maxwell's best—it is in the fifth bin—there are the keys of the wine-cellar.—Do not leave them in the lock—you know poor James's failing, though he is an honest creature under all other temptations—and I have but two bottles of the old brandy left—we must keep it for medicine, Alan."

Away went I—made my preparations—the hour of dinner came, and so did Mr. Herries of Birrenswork.

If I had thy power of imagination and description, Darsie, I could make out a fine, dark, mysterious, Rembrandt-looking portrait of this same stranger, which should be as far superior to thy fisherman, as a shirt of chain-mail is to a herring-net. I can assure you there is some matter for description about him; but knowing my own imperfections, I can only say, I thought him eminently disagreeable and ill-bred.—No, *ill-bred* is not the proper word; on the contrary, he appeared to know the rules of good-breeding perfectly, and only to think that the rank of the company did not require that he should attend to them—a view of the matter infinitely more offensive than if his behaviour had been that of uneducated and proper rudeness. While my father said grace, the Laird did all but whistle aloud; and when I, at my father's desire, returned thanks, he used his toothpick, as if he had waited that moment for its exercise.

So much for Kirk—with King, matters went even worse. My father, thou knowest, is particularly full of deference to his guests; and in the present case, he seemed more than usually desirous to escape every cause of dispute. He so far compromised his loyalty, as to announce merely "The King," as his first toast after dinner, instead of the emphatic "King George," which is his usual formula. Our guest made a motion with his glass, so as to pass it over the waxdecanter which stood beside him, and added, "Over the water."

My father coloured, but would not seem to hear this. Much more there was of careless and disrespectful in the stranger's manner and tone of conversation; so that though I know my father's prejudices in favour of rank and birth, and though I am aware his otherwise masculine understanding has never entirely shaken off the slavish awe of the great, which in his earlier days they had so many modes of commanding, still I could hardly excuse him for enduring so much insolence—such it seemed to be—as this self-invited guest was disposed to offer to him at his own table.

One can endure a traveller in the same carriage, if he treads upon your toes by accident, or even through negligence; but it is very different when, knowing that they are rather of a tender description, he continues to pound away at them with his hoofs. In my poor opinion—and I am a man of peace—you can, in that case, hardly avoid a declaration of war.

I believe my father read my thoughts in my eye; for, pulling out his watch, he said, "Half past four, Alan—you should be in your own room by this time—Birrenswork will excuse you."

Our visiter nodded carelessly, and I had no longer any pretence to remain. But as I left the room I heard this Magnate of Nithesdale distinctly mention the name of Latimer. I lingered; but at length a direct hint from my father obliged me to withdraw; and when, an hour afterwards, I was summoned to partake of a cup of tea, our guest had departed. He had business that evening in the High Street, and could not spare time even to drink tea. I could not help saying, I considered his departure as a relief from incivility. "What business has he to upbraid us," I said, "with the change of our dwelling from a more inconvenient to a better quarter of the town? What was it to him if we chose to imitate some of the conveniences or luxuries of an English dwelling-house, instead of living piled up above each other in flats? Have his patrician birth and aristocratic fortunes given him any right to censure those who dispose of the fruits of their own industry, according to their own pleasure?"

My father took a long pinch of snuff, and replied, "Very well, Alan; very well indeed. I wish Mr. Crossbite or Counsellor Pest had heard you; they must have acknowledged that you have a talent for forensic elocution; and it may not be amiss to try a little declamation at home now and then, to gather audacity and keep yourself in breath. But touching the subject of this paraffle of words, it's not worth a pinch of tobacco. D'ye think that I care for Mr. Herries of Birrenswork more than any other gentleman who comes here about business, although I do not care to go tilting at his throat, because he speaks like a gray goose as he is? But to say no more about him, I want to have Darsie Latimer's present direction; for it is possible I may have to write the lad a line with my own hand—and yet I do not well know—but give me the direction at all events."

I did so, and if you have heard from my father accordingly, you know more, probably, about the subject of this letter than I who write it. But if you have not, then shall I have discharged a friend's duty, in letting you know that there certainly is something afloat between this disagreeable Laird and my father, in which you are considerably interested.

Adieu! and although I have given thee a subject for waking dreams, beware of building a castle too heavy for the foundation; which, in the present instance, is barely the word Latimer occurring in a conversation betwixt a gentleman of Dumfriesshire and a W. S. of Edinburgh—*Cætera prorsus ignoro.*

LETTER VI

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

[In continuation of Letters III. and IV.]

I TOLD thee I walked out into the open air with my grave and stern landlord. I could now see more perfectly than on the preceding night the secluded glen, *in which* stood the two or three cottages which appeared *to be the abode of him and his family.* *It was so narrow, in proportion to its depth,* that no ray of the morning sun was likely to reach it till it should rise high in the horizon. Looking up the dell you saw a brawling brook issuing in foamy haste from a covert of underwood, like a racehorse impatient to arrive at the goal; and, if you gazed yet more earnestly, you might observe part of a high waterfall glimmering through the foliage, and giving occasion, doubtless, to the precipitate speed of the brook. Lower down, the stream became more placid, and opened into a quiet piece of water, which afforded a rude haven to two or three fishermen's boats, then lying high and dry on the sand, the tide being out. Two or three miserable huts could be seen beside this little haven, inhabited probably by the owners of the boats, but inferior in every respect to the establishment of mine host, though that was miserable enough.

I had but a minute or two to make these observations, yet during that space my companion showed symptoms of impatience, and more than once shouted "Cristal——Cristal Nixon," until the old man of the preceding evening appeared at the door of one of the neighbouring cottages or outhouses, leading the strong black horse which I before commemorated, ready bridled and saddled. My conductor made Cristal a sign with his finger, and, turning from the cottage door, led the way up the steep path or ravine which connected the sequestered dell with the open country.

Had I been perfectly aware of the character of the road down which I had been hurried with so much impetuosity on the preceding evening, I greatly question if I should have ventured the descent; for it deserved no better name than the channel of a torrent, now in a good measure filled with water that dashed in foam and fury into the dell, being swelled with the rains of the preceding night. I ascended this ugly path with some difficulty, although on foot, and felt dizzy when I observed, from such traces as the rain had not obliterated, that the horse seemed almost to have slid down it upon his haunches the evening before.

My host threw himself on his horse's back, without placing a foot in the stirrup—passed me in the perilous ascent, against which he pressed his steed as if the animal had had the footing of a wildcat. The water and mud splashed from his heels in his reckless course, and a few bounds placed him on the top of the bank, where I presently joined him, and found the horse and rider standing still as a statue; the former panting and expanding his broad nostrils to the morning wind, the latter motionless, with his eye fixed on the first beams of the rising sun, which already began to peer above the eastern horizon, and gild the distant mountains of Cumberland and Liddesdale.

He seemed in a reverie, from which he started at my approach, and putting his horse in motion, led the way at a leisurely pace, through a broken and sandy road, which traversed a waste, level, and uncultivated tract of downs, intermixed with morass, much like that in the neighbourhood of my quarters at Shepherd's Bush. Indeed the whole open ground of this district, where it approaches the sea, has, except in a few favoured spots, the same uniform and dreary character.

Advancing about a hundred yards from the brink of the glen, we gained a still more extensive command of this desolate prospect, which seemed even more dreary, as contrasted with the opposite shores of Cumberland, crossed and intersected by ten thousand lines of trees growing in hedge-rows, shaded with groves and woods of considerable extent, and animated by hamlets and villas, from which thin clouds of smoke already gave sign of human life and human industry.

My conductor had extended his arm, and was pointing the road to Shepherd's Bush, when the step of a horse was heard approaching us. He looked sharply around, and having observed who was approaching, proceeded in his instructions to me, planting himself at the same time in the very middle of the path, which, at the place where we halted, had a slough on the one side, and a sand-bank on the other.

I observed that the rider who approached us slackened his horse's pace from a slow trot to a walk, as if desirous to suffer us to proceed, or at least to avoid passing us at a spot where the difficulty of doing so must have brought us very close to each other. You know my old failing, Alan, and that I am always willing to attend to any thing in preference to the individual who has for the time possession of the conversation.

Agreeably to this amiable propensity, I was internally speculating concerning the cause of the rider keeping aloof from us, when my companion, elevating his deep voice so suddenly and so sternly, as at once to recall my wandering thoughts, exclaimed, "In the name of the devil, young man, do you think that others have no better use for their time than you have, that you oblige me to repeat the same thing to you three times over?—Do you see, I say, yonder thing at a mile's distance, that looks like a finger-post, or rather like a gallows?—I would it had a dreaming fool hanging upon it, as an example to all meditative moon-calves!—Yon gibbet-looking pole will guide you to the bridge, where you must pass the large brook; then proceed straight forwards, till several roads divide at a cairn.—Plague on thee, thou art wandering again!"

It is indeed quite true, that at this moment the horseman approached us, and my attention was again called to him as I made way to let him pass. His whole exterior showed at once that he belonged to the Society of Friends, or, as the world and the world's law call them, Quakers. A strong and useful iron-gray galloway showed, by its sleek and good condition, that the merciful man was merciful to his beast. His accoutrements were in the usual unostentatious, but clean and serviceable order, which characterizes these sectaries. His long surtout of dark-gray superfine cloth descended down to the middle of his leg, and was buttoned up to his chin, to defend him against the morning air. As usual his ample beaver hung down without button or loop, and shaded a comely and placid countenance, the gravity of which appeared to contain some seasoning of humour, and had nothing in common with the pinched puritanical air affected by devotees in general. The brow was open and free from wrinkles, whether of age or hypocrisy. The eye was clear, calm, and considerate, yet appeared to be disturbed by apprehension, not to say fear, as pronouncing the usual salutation of "I wish thee a good morrow, friend," he indicated, by turning his palfrey close to one side of the path, a wish to glide past us with as little trouble as possible—just as a traveller would choose to pass a mastiff of whose peaceable intentions he is by no means confident.

But my friend, not meaning, perhaps, that he should get off so easily, put his horse quite across the path, so that, without plunging into the slough, or scrambling up the bank, the Quaker could not have passed him. Neither of these was an experiment without hazard greater than the passenger seemed willing to incur. He halted, therefore, as if waiting till my companion should make way for him; and, as they sat fronting each other, I could not help thinking that they might have formed no bad emblem of Peace and War; for although my conductor was unarmed, yet the whole of his manner, his stern look, and his upright seat on horseback, were entirely those of a soldier in undress. He accosted the Quaker in these words,—"So ho! friend Joshua—thou art early to the road this morning. Has the spirit moved thee and thy righteous brethren to act with some honesty, and pull down yonder tide-nets that keep the fish from coming up the river?"

"Surely, friend, not so," answered Joshua, firmly, but good-humouredly at the same time; "thou canst not expect that our own hands should pull down what our own purses established. Thou killest the fish with spear, line, and coble-net; and we, with snares and with nets, which work by the ebb and the flow of the tide. Each doth what seems best in his eyes to secure a share of the blessing which Providence hath bestowed *on the river, and that within his own bounds. I prithee seek no quarrel against us*, for thou *shalt have no wrong at our hand.*"

"Be assured I will take none at the hand of any man, whether his hat be cocked or broad-brimmed," answered the fisherman. "I tell you in fair terms, Joshua Geddes, that you and your partners are using unlawful craft to destroy the fish in the Solway by stake-nets and wears; and that we, who fish fairly, and like men, as our fathers did, have daily and yearly less sport and less profit. Do not think gravity or hypocrisy can carry it off as you have done. The world knows you, and we know you. You will destroy the salmon which make the livelihood of fifty poor families, and then wipe your mouth, and go to make a speech at Meeting. But do not hope it will last thus. I give you fair warning, we will be upon you one morning soon, when we will not leave a stake standing in the pools of the Solway; and down the tide they shall every one go, and well if we do not send a lessee along with them."

"Friend," replied Joshua, with a constrained smile, "but that I know thou dost not mean as thou say'st, I would tell thee we are under the protection of this country's laws; nor do we the less trust to obtain their protection, that our principles permit us not, by any act of violent resistance, to protect ourselves."

"All villanous cant and cowardice," exclaimed the fisherman, "and assumed merely as a cloak to your hypocritical avarice."

"Nay, say not cowardice, my friend," answered the Quaker, "since thou knowest there may be as much courage in enduring as in acting; and I will be judged by this youth, or by any one else, whether there is not more cowardice—even in the opinion of that world whose thoughts are the breath in thy nostrils—in the armed oppressor, who doth injury, than in the defenceless and patient sufferer, who endureth it with constancy."

"I will exchange no more words with you on the subject," said the fisherman, who, as if something moved at the last argument which Mr. Geddes had used, now made room for him to pass forward on his journey. "Do not forget, however," he added, "that you have had fair warning, nor suppose that we will accept of fair words in apology for foul play. Those nets of yours are unlawful—they spoil our fishings—and we will have them down at all risks and hazards. I am a man of my word, friend Joshua."

"I trust thou art," said the Quaker; "but thou art the rather bound to be cautious in rashly affirming what thou wilt never execute. For I tell thee, friend, that though there is as great a difference between thee and one of our people, as there is between a lion and a sheep, yet I know and believe thou hast so much of the lion in thee, that thou wouldst scarce employ thy strength and thy rage upon that which professeth no means of resistance. Report says so much good of thee, at least, if it says little more."

"Time will try," answered the fisherman; "and hark thee, Joshua, before we part, I will put thee in the way of doing one good deed, which, credit me, is better than twenty moral speeches. Here is a stranger youth, whom heaven has so scantily gifted with brains, that he will bewilder himself in the Sands, as he did last night, unless thou wilt kindly show him the way to Shepherd's Bush; for I have been in vain endeavouring to make him comprehend the road thither—Hast thou so much charity under thy simplicity, Quaker, as to do this good turn?"

"Nay, it is thou, friend," answered Joshua, "that dost lack charity, to suppose any one unwilling to do so simple a kindness."

"Thou art right—I should have remembered it can cost thee nothing. Young gentleman, this pious pattern of primitive simplicity will teach thee the right way to the Shepherd's Bush—ay, and will himself shear thee like a sheep, if you come to buying and selling with him."

He then abruptly asked me how long I intended to remain at Shepherd's Bush.

I replied I was at present uncertain—as long, probably, as I could amuse myself in the neighbourhood.

"You are fond of sport?" he added, in the same tone of brief inquiry.

I answered in the affirmative, but added, I was totally inexperienced.

"Perhaps if you reside here for some days," he said, "we may meet again, and I may have the chance of giving you a lesson."

Ere I could express either thanks or assent, he turned short round with a wave of his hand, by way of adieu, and rode back to the verge of the dell from which we had emerged together; and as he remained standing upon the banks, I could long hear his voice while he shouted down to those within its recesses.

Mean while the Quaker and I proceeded on our journey for some time in silence; he restraining his sober-minded steed to a pace which might have suited a much less active walker than myself, and looking on me from time to time with an expression of curiosity, mingled with benignity. For my part, I cared not to speak first. It happened I had never before been in company with one of this particular sect, and, afraid that in addressing him I might unwittingly infringe upon some of their prejudices or peculiarities, I patiently remained silent. At length he asked me, whether I had been long in the service of the Laird, as men called him.

I repeated the words "in his service?" with such an accent of surprise, as induced him to say, "Nay, but, friend, I mean no offence; perhaps I should have said in his society—an inmate, I mean, in his house?"

"I am totally unknown to the person from whom we have just parted," said I, "and our connexion is only temporary—He had the charity to give me his guidance from the Sands, and a night's harbourage from the tempest. So our acquaintance began, and there it is likely to end; for you may observe that our friend is by no means apt to encourage familiarity."

"So little so," answered my companion, "that thy case is, I think, the first in which I ever heard of his receiving any one into his house; that is, if thou hast really spent the night there."

"Why should you doubt it?" replied I; "there is no motive I can have to deceive you, nor is the object worth it."

"Be not angry with me," said the Quaker; "but thou knowest that thine own people do not, as we humbly endeavour to do, confine themselves within the simplicity of truth, but employ the language of falsehood, not only for profit, but for compliment, and sometimes for mere diversion. I have heard various stories of my neighbour; of most of which I only believe a small part, and even then they are difficult to reconcile with each other. But this being the first time I ever heard of his receiving a stranger within his dwelling, made me express some doubts. I pray thee let them not offend thee."

"He does not," said I, "appear to possess in much abundance the means of exercising hospitality, and so may be excused from offering it in ordinary cases."

"That is to say, friend," replied Joshua, "thou hast supped ill, and perhaps breakfasted worse. Now my small tenement, called Mount Sharon, is nearer to us by two miles than thine inn; and although going thither may prolong thy walk, as taking thee off the straighter road to Shepherd's Bush, yet methinks exercise will suit thy youthful limbs, as well as a good plain meal thy youthful appetite. What say'st thou, my young acquaintance?"

"If it puts you not to inconvenience," I replied; for the invitation was cordially given, and my bread and milk had been hastily swallowed, and in small quantity.

"Nay," said Joshua, "use not the language of compliment with those who renounce it. Had this poor courtesy been very inconvenient, perhaps I had not offered it."

"I accept the invitation then," said I, "in the same good spirit in which you give it."

The Quaker smiled, reached me his hand, I shook it, and we travelled on in great cordiality with each other. The fact is, I was much entertained by contrasting in my own mind, the open manner of the kind-hearted Joshua Geddes, with the abrupt, dark, and lofty demeanour of my entertainer on the preceding evening. Both were blunt and unceremonious; but the plainness of the Quaker had the character of devotional simplicity, and was mingled with the more real kindness, as if honest Joshua was desirous of atoning, by his sincerity, for the lack of external courtesy. On the contrary, the manners of the fisherman were those of one to whom the rule of good behaviour might be familiar, but who, either from pride or misanthropy, scorned to observe them. Still I thought of him with interest and curiosity, notwithstanding so much about him that was repulsive; and I promised myself, in the course of my conversation with the Quaker, to learn all that he knew on the subject. He turned the conversation, however, into a different channel, and inquired into my own condition in life, and views in visiting this remote frontier.

I only thought it necessary to mention my name and add, that I had been educated to the law, but finding myself possessed of some independence, I had of late permitted myself some relaxation, and was residing at Shepherd's Bush to enjoy the pleasures of angling.

"I do thee no harm, young man," said my new friend, "in wishing thee a better employment for the grave hours, and a more humane amusement (for amusement thou must have) for those of a lighter character."

"You are severe, sir," I replied. "I heard you but a moment since refer yourself to the protection of the laws of the country—if there be laws, there must be lawyers to explain, and judges to administer them."

Joshua smiled, and pointed to the sheep which were grazing on the downs over which we were travelling.

"Were a wolf," he said, "to come even now upon yonder flocks, they would crowd for protection, doubtless, around the shepherd and his dog; yet they are bitten and harassed daily by the one, shorn, and finally killed and eaten by the other. But I say not this to shock you; for, though laws and lawyers are evils, yet they are necessary evils in this probationary state of society, till man shall learn to render unto his fellows that which is their due, according to the light of his own conscience, and through no other compulsion. Mean while, I have known many righteous men who have followed thy intended profession in honesty and uprightness of walk. The greater their merit, who walk erect in a path which so many find slippery."

"And angling,"—said I, "you object to that also as an amusement, you who, if I understand rightly what passed between you and my late landlord, are yourself a proprietor of fisheries?"

"Not a proprietor," he replied, "I am only, in copartnery with others, a tacksman or lessee of some valuable salmon-fisheries a little down the coast. But mistake me not. The evil of angling, with which I class all sports, as they are called, which have the sufferings of animals for their end and object, does not consist in the mere catching and killing those animals with which the bounty of Providence hath stocked the earth for the good of man, but in making their protracted agony a principle of delight and enjoyment. I do indeed cause these fisheries to be conducted for the necessary taking, killing, and selling the fish; and in the same way, were I a farmer, I should send my lambs to market. But I should as soon think of contriving myself a sport and amusement out of the trade of the butcher as out of that of the fisher."

We argued this point no further; for though I thought his arguments a little too high-strained, yet as my mind acquitted me of having taken delight in aught but the theory of field-sports, I did not think myself called upon stubbornly to advocate a practice which had afforded me so little pleasure.

We had by this time arrived at the remains of an old finger-post, which my host had formerly pointed out as a landmark. Here, a ruinous wooden bridge, supported by long posts resembling crutches, served me to get across the water, while my new friend sought a ford a good way higher up, for the stream was considerably swelled.

As I paused for his rejoining me, I observed an angler at a little distance pouching trout after trout, as fast almost as he could cast his line; and I own, in spite of Joshua's lecture on humanity, I could not but envy his adroitness and success,—so natural is the love of sport to our minds, or so easily are we taught to assimilate success in field-sports with ideas of pleasure, and with the praise due to address and agility. I soon recognised in the successful angler little Benjie, who had been my guide and tutor in that gentle art, as you have learned from my former letters. I called—I whistled—the rascal recognised me, and, starting like a guilty thing, seemed hesitating whether to approach or to run away; and when he determined on the former, it was to assail me with a loud clamorous, and exaggerated report of the anxiety of all at the Shepherd's Bush for my personal safety; how my landlady had wept, how Sam and the ostler had not the heart to go to bed, but sat up all night drinking—and how he himself had been up long before daybreak to go in quest of me.

"And you were switching the water, I suppose," said I, "to discover my dead body?"

This observation produced a long "Na—a—a" of acknowledged detection; but, with his natural impudence, and confidence in my good-nature, he immediately added, "that he thought I would like a fresh trout or twa for breakfast, and the water being in such rare trim for the saumon raun,* he couldna help taking a cast."

While we were engaged in this discussion, the honest Quaker returned to the farther end of the wooden bridge to tell me he could not venture to cross the brook in its present state, but would be under the necessity to ride round by the stone bridge, which was a mile and a half higher up than his own house. He was about to give me directions how to proceed without him, and inquire for his sister, when I suggested to him, that if he pleased to trust his horse to little Benjie, the boy might carry him round by the bridge, while we walked the shorter and more pleasant road.

Joshua shook his head, for he was well acquainted with Benjie, who, he said, was the naughtiest varlet in the whole neighbourhood. Nevertheless, rather than part company, he agreed to put the pony under his charge for a short season, with many injunctions that he should not attempt to mount, but lead the pony (even Solomon) by the bridle, under the assurances of sixpence in case of proper demeanour, and penalty that if he tranagressed the orders given him, "verily he should be scourged."

Promises cost Benjie nothing, and he showered them out wholesale; till the Quaker at length yielded up the bridle to him, repeating his charges, and enforcing them by holding up his forefinger. On my part, I called to Benjie to leave the fish he had taken at Mount Sharon, making, at the same time, an apologetic countenance to my new friend, not being quite aware whether the compliment would be agreeable to such a condemner of field-sports.

He understood me at once, and reminded me of the practical distinction betwixt catching the animals as an object of cruel and wanton sport, and eating them as lawful and gratifying articles of food after they were killed. On the latter point he had no scruples; but, on the contrary, assured me, that this brook contained the real red trout, so highly esteemed by all connoisseurs, and that, when eaten within an hour of their being caught, they had a peculiar firmness of substance and delicacy of flavour, which rendered them an agreeable addition to a morning meal, especially when earned, like ours, by early rising, and an hour or two's wholesome exercise.

But to thy alarm be it spoken, Alan, we did not come so far as the frying of our fish without farther adventure. So it is only to spare thy patience, and mine own eyes, that I pull up for the present, and send thee the rest of my story in a subsequent letter.

* The bait made of salmon-row salted and preserved. In a swollen river, and about the month of October, it is a most deadly bait.

LETTER VII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

[In continuation.]

Little Benjie, with the pony, having been sent off on the left side of the brook, the Quaker and I sauntered on, like the cavalry and infantry of the same army occupying the opposite banks of a river, and observing the same line of march. But, while my worthy companion was assuring me of a pleasant greensward walk to his mansion, little Benjie, who had been charged to keep in sight, chose to deviate from the path assigned him, and, turning to the right, led his charge, Solomon, out of our vision.

"The villain means to mount him!" cried Joshua, with more vivacity than was consistent with his profession of passive endurance.

I endeavoured to appease his apprehensions, as he pushed on, wiping his brow with vexation, assuring him, that if the boy did mount, he would, for his own sake, ride gently.

"You do not know him," said Joshua rejecting all consolation; "*he* do any thing gently!—no, he will gallop Solomon—he will misuse the sober patience of the poor animal who has borne me so long! Yes, I was given over to my own devices when I ever let him touch the bridle, for such a little miscreant there never was before him in this country!"

He then proceeded to expatiate on every sort of rustic enormity of which he accused Benjie. He had been suspected of snaring partridges—was detected by Joshua himself in liming singing birds—stood fully charged with having worried several cats, by aid of a lurcher which attended him, and which was as lean, and ragged, and mischievous, as his master. Finally, Benjie stood accused of having stolen a duck, to hunt it with the said lurcher, which was as dexterous on water as on land. I chimed in with my friend, in order to avoid giving him farther irritation, and declared, I should be disposed, from my own experience, to give up Benjie as one of Satan's imps. Joshua Geddes began to censure the phrase as too much exaggerated, and otherwise unbecoming the mouth of a reflecting person; and, just as I was apologizing for it, as being a term of common parlance, we heard certain sounds on the opposite side of the brook, which seemed to indicate that Solomon and Benjie were at issue together. The sand-hills behind which Benjie seemed to take his course, had concealed from us, as doubtless he meant they should, his ascent into the forbidden saddle, and putting Solomon to his mettle, which he was seldom called upon to exert, they had cantered away together in great amity, till they came near to the ford from which the palfrey's legitimate owner had already turned back.

Here a contest of opinions took place between the horse and his rider. The latter, according to his instructions, attempted to direct Solomon towards the distant bridge of stone; but Solomon opined that the ford was the shortest way to his own stable. The point was sharply contested, and we heard Benjie gee-hupping, tchek-tcheking, and, above all, flogging in great style; while Solomon, who, docile in his general habits, was now stirred beyond his patience, made a great trampling and recalcitration; and it was their joint noise which we heard, without being able to see, though Joshua might too well guess, the cause of it.

Alarmed at these indications, the Quaker began to shout out, "Benjie—thou varlet!—Solomon—thou fool!" when the couple presented themselves in full drive, Solomon having now decidedly obtained the better of the conflict, and bringing his unwilling rider in high career down to the ford. Never was there anger changed so fast into humane fear, as that of my good companion. "The varlet will be drowned!" he exclaimed—"a widow's son!—her only son!—and drowned!—let me go"——And he struggled with me stoutly as I hung upon him, to prevent him from plunging into the ford.

I had no fear whatever for Benjie; for the black-guard[1] urchin, though he could not manage the refractory horse, stuck on his seat like a monkey. Be-

lomon and Benjie scrambled through the ford with little inconvenience, and resumed their gallop on the other side.

It was impossible to guess whether on this last occasion Benjie was running off with Solomon, or Solomon with Benjie; but, judging from character and motives, I rather suspected the former. I could not help laughing as the rascal passed me, grinning betwixt terror and delight, perched on the very pommel of the saddle, and holding with extended arms by bridle and mane; while Solomon, the bit secured between his teeth, and his head bored down betwixt his fore-legs, passed his master in this unwonted guise as hard as he could pelt.

"The mischievous bastard!" exclaimed the Quaker, terrified out of his usual moderation of speech—"the doomed gallows-bird!—he will break Solomon's wind to a certainty."

I prayed him to be comforted—assured him a brushing gallop would do his favourite no harm—and reminded him of the censure he had bestowed on me a minute before, for applying a harsh epithet to the boy.

But Joshua was not without his answer;—"Friend youth," he said, "thou didst speak of the lad's soul, which thou didst affirm belonged to the enemy, and of that thou couldst say nothing of thine own knowledge; on the contrary, I did but speak of his outward man which will assuredly be suspended by a cord, if he mendeth not his manners. Men say that, young as he is, he is one of the Laird's gang."

"Of the Laird's gang!" said I, repeating the words in surprise—"Do you mean the person with whom I slept last night?—I heard you call him the Laird—Is he at the head of a gang?"

"Nay, I meant not precisely a gang," said the Quaker, who appeared in his haste to have spoken more than he intended—"a company, or party, I should have said; but thus it is, friend Latimer, with the wisest men, when they permit themselves to be perturbed with passion, and speak as in a fever, or as with the tongue of the foolish and the forward. And although thou hast been hasty to mark my infirmity, yet I grieve not that thou hast been a witness to it, seeing that the stumbles of the wise may be no less a caution to youth and inexperience than is the fall of the foolish."

This was a sort of acknowledgment of what I had already begun to suspect—that my new friend's real goodness of disposition, joined to the acquired quietism of his religious sect, had been unable entirely to check the effervescence of a temper naturally warm and hasty.

Upon the present occasion, as if sensible he had displayed a greater degree of emotion than became his character, Joshua avoided farther allusion to Benjie and Solomon, and proceeded to solicit my attention to the natural objects around us, which increased in beauty and interest, as, still conducted by the meanders of the brook, we left the common behind us, and entered a more cultivated and enclosed country, where arable and pasture ground was agreeably varied with groves and hedges. Descending now almost close to the stream, our course lay through a little gate, into a pathway, kept with great neatness, the sides of which were decorated with trees and flowering shrubs of the hardier species; until, ascending by a gentle slope, we issued from the grove, and stood almost at once in front of a low but very neat building, of an irregular form; and my guide, shaking me cordially by the hand, made me welcome to Mount Sharon.

The wood through which we had approached this little mansion was thrown around it both on the north and north-west, but, breaking off into different directions, was intersected by a few fields, well watered and sheltered. The house fronted to the south-east, and from thence the pleasure-ground, or, I should rather say, the gardens sloped down to the water. I afterwards understood that the father of the present proprietor had a considerable taste for horticulture, which had been inherited by his son, and had formed these gardens, which, with their shaven turf, bleached alleys, wildernesses, and exotic trees and shrubs, greatly excelled any thing of the kind which had been attempted in the neighbourhood.

If there was a little vanity in the complacent smile with which Joshua Geddes saw me gaze with delight on a scene so different from the naked waste we had that day traversed in company, it might surely be permitted to one, who, cultivating and improving the beauties of nature, had found therein, as he said, bodily health and a pleasing relaxation for the mind. At the bottom of the extended gardens the brook wheeled round in a wide semicircle, and was itself their boundary. The opposite side was no part of Joshua's domain, but the brook was there skirted by a precipitous rock of limestone, which seemed a barrier of Nature's own erecting around his little Eden of beauty, comfort, and peace.

"But I must not let thee forget," said the kind Quaker, "amidst thy admiration of these beauties of our little inheritance, that thy breakfast has been a light one."

So saying, Joshua conducted me to a small sashed door, opening under a porch amply mantled by honeysuckle and clematis, into a parlour of moderate size the furniture of which, in plainness and excessive cleanliness, bore the characteristic marks of the sect to which the owner belonged.

Thy father's Hannah is generally allowed to be an exception to all Scottish housekeepers, and stands unparalleled for cleanliness among the women of Auld Reekie; but the cleanliness of Hannah is sluttishness, compared to the scrupulous purifications of these people, who seem to carry into the minor decencies of life that conscientious rigour which they affect in their morals.

The parlour would have been gloomy, for the windows were small and ceiling low; but the present proprietor had rendered it more cheerful by opening one end into a small conservatory, roofed with glass and divided from the parlour by a partition of the same. I have never before seen this very pleasing manner of uniting the comforts of an apartment with the beauties of a garden, and I wonder it is not more practised by the great. Something of the kind is hinted at in a paper of the Spectator.

As I walked towards the conservatory to view more closely, the parlour chimney engaged my attention. It was a pile of massive stone, entirely out of proportion to the size of the apartment. On the front had once been an armorial scutcheon; for the hammer, or chisel, which had been employed to deface the shield and crest, had left uninjured the scroll beneath, which bore the pious motto, "*Trust in God.*" Black-letter, you know, was my early passion, and the tombstones in the Grayfriars' Churchyard early yielded up to my knowledge as a decipherer what little they could tell of the forgotten dead.

Joshua Geddes paused when he saw my eye fixed on this relic of antiquity. "Thou canst read it?" he said.

I repeated the motto, and added, there seemed vestiges of a date.

"It should be 1537," said he; "for so long ago, at the least computation, did my ancestors, in the blinded times of Papistry, possess these lands, and in that year did they build their house."

"It is an ancient descent," said I, looking with respect upon the monument. "I am sorry the arms have been defaced."

It was perhaps impossible for my friend, Quaker as he was, to seem altogether void of respect for the pedigree which he began to recount to me, disclaiming all the while the vanity usually connected with this subject; in short, with the air of mingled melancholy, regret, and conscious dignity, with which Jacobite Fawkes used to tell us, at College, of his ancestor's unfortunate connexion with the Gunpowder-Plot.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher,"—thus harangued Joshua Geddes of Mount Sharon;—"if we ourselves are nothing in the sight of Heaven, how much less than nothing must be our derivation from rotten bones and mouldering dust, whose immortal spirit have long since gone to their private account! Yea friend Latimer, my ancestors were renowned among the ravenous and bloodthirsty men who then dwelt

this vexed country; and so much were they famed for successful freebooting, robbery, and bloodshed, that they are said to have been called Geddes, as likening them to the fish called a Jack, Pike, or Luce, and in our country tongue, a *Ged*—a goodly distinction truly for Christian men! Yet did they paint this shark of the fresh waters upon their shields, and these profane priests of a wicked idolatry, the empty boasters called heralds, who make engraven images of fishes, fowls, and fourfooted beasts, that men may fall down and worship them, assigned the Ged for the device and escutcheon of my fathers, and hewn it over their chimneys, and placed it above their tombs; and the men were elated in mind, and became yet more Gedlike, slaying, leading into captivity, and dividing the spoil, until the place where they dwelt obtained the name of Sharing-Knowe, from the booty which was there divided amongst them and their accomplices. But a better judgment was given to my father's father, Philip Geddes, who, after trying to light his candle at some of the vain wildfires then held aloft at different meetings and steeple-houses, at length obtained a spark from the lamp of the blessed George Fox, who came into Scotland spreading light among darkness, as he himself hath written, as plentifully as fly the sparkles from the hoof of the horse which gallops swiftly along the stony road."—Here the good Quaker interrupted himself with, "And that is very true, I must go speedily to see after the condition of Solomon."

A Quaker servant here entered the room with a tray, and inclining his head towards his master, but not after the manner of one who bows, said composedly, "Thou art welcome home, friend Joshua, we expected thee not so early; but what hath befallen Solomon thy horse?"

"What hath befallen him, indeed?" said my friend; "hath he not been returned hither by the child whom they call Benjie?"

"He hath," said his domestic, "but it was after a strange fashion; for he came hither at a swift and furious pace, and flung the child Benjie from his back, upon the heap of dung which is in the stable-yard."

"I am glad of it," said Joshua, hastily,—"glad of it, with all my heart and spirit!—But stay, he is the child of the widow—hath the boy any hurt?"

"Not so," answered the servant, "for he rose and fled swiftly."

Joshua muttered something about a scourge, and then inquired after Solomon's present condition.

"He seetheth like a steaming caldron," answered the servant; "and Bauldie, the lad, walketh him about the yard with a halter, lest he take cold."

Mr. Geddes hastened to the stable-yard to view personally the condition of his favourite, and I followed, to offer my counsel as a jockey—Don't laugh, Alan; sure I have jockeyship enough to assist a Quaker—in this unpleasing predicament.

The lad who was leading the horse seemed to be no Quaker, though his intercourse with the family had given him a touch of their prim sobriety of look and manner. He assured Joshua that his horse had received no injury, and I even hinted that the exercise would be of service to him. Solomon himself neighed towards his master, and rubbed his head against the good Quaker's shoulder, as if to assure him of his being quite well, so that Joshua returned in comfort to his parlour, where breakfast was now about to be displayed.

I have since learned that the affection of Joshua for his pony is considered as inordinate by some of his own sect; and that he has been much blamed for permitting it to be called by the name of Solomon, or any other name whatever; but he has gained so much respect and influence among them that they overlook these foibles.

I learned from him (whilst the old servant, Jehoiachim, entering and re-entering, seemed to make no end of the materials which he brought in for breakfast) that his grandfather Philip, the convert of George Fox, had suffered much from the persecution to which these harmless devotees were subjected on all sides during *that intolerant period, and much of their family estate had been dilapidated. But better days dawned on Joshua's father, who, connecting himself* by marriage with a wealthy family of Quakers in Lancashire, engaged successfully in various branches of commerce, and redeemed the remnants of the property, changing its name in sense, without much alteration of sound, from the Border appellation of Sharing-Knowe, to the evangelical appellation of Mount Sharon.

This Philip Geddes, as I before hinted, had imbibed the taste for horticulture and the pursuits of the florist, which are not uncommon among the peaceful sect he belongs to. He had destroyed the remnants of the old peel-house, substituting the modern mansion in its place; and while he reserved the hearth of his ancestors, in memory of their hospitality, as also the pious motto which they had chanced to assume, he failed not to obliterate the worldly and military emblems displayed upon the shield and helmet, together with all their blazonry.

In a few minutes after Mr. Geddes had concluded the account of himself and his family, his sister Rachel, the only surviving member of it, entered the room. Her appearance is remarkably pleasing, and although her age is certainly thirty at least, she still retains the shape and motion of an earlier period. The absence of every thing like fashion or ornament was, as usual, atoned for by the most perfect neatness and cleanliness of her dress; and her simple close cap was particularly suited to eyes which had the softness and simplicity of the dove's. Her features were also extremely agreeable, but had suffered a little through the ravages of that professed enemy to beauty, the small-pox; a disadvantage which was in part counterbalanced by a well-formed mouth, teeth like pearls, and a pleasing sobriety of smile, that seemed to wish good here and hereafter to every one she spoke to. You cannot make any of your vile inferences here, Alan, for I have given a full-length picture of Rachael Geddes; so that you cannot say in this case, as in the letter I have just received, that she was passed over as a subject on which I feared to dilate. More of this anon.

Well, we settled to our breakfast after a blessing, or rather an extempore prayer, which Joshua made upon the occasion, and which the spirit moved him to prolong rather more than I felt altogether agreeable. Then, Alan, there was such a despatching of the good things of the morning, as you have not witnessed since you have seen Darsie Latimer at breakfast. Tea and chocolate, eggs, ham, and pastry, not forgetting the broiled fish, disappeared with a celerity which seemed to astonish the good-humoured Quakers, who kept loading my plate with supplies, as if desirous of seeing whether they could by any possibility tire me out. One hint, however, I received, which put me in mind where I was. Miss Geddes had offered me some sweet-cake, which at the moment, I declined; but presently afterwards, seeing it within my reach, I naturally enough helped myself to a slice, and had just deposited it beside my plate, when Joshua, mine host, not with the authoritative air of Sancho's doctor, Tirtea Fuera, but in a very calm and quiet manner, lifted it away and replaced it on the dish, observing only, "Thou didst refuse it before, friend Latimer."

These good folks, Alan, make no allowance for what your father calls the Aberdeen-man's privilege of "taking his word again;" or what the wise call second thoughts.

Bating this slight hint, that I was among a precise generation, there was nothing in my reception that was peculiar—unless, indeed, I were to notice the solicitous and uniform kindness with which all the attentions of my new friends were seasoned, as if they were anxious to assure me that the neglect of worldly compliments interdicted by their sect, only served to render their hospitality more sincere. At length my hunger was satisfied, and the worthy Quaker, who, with looks of great good-nature, had watched my progress, thus addressed his sister:—

"This young man, Rachel, hath last night sojourned in the tents of our neighbour, whom men call the Laird. I am sorry I had not met him the evening before, for our neighbour's hospitality is too unfrequently exercised to be well prepared with the means of welcome-

"Nay, but, Joshua," said Rachel, "if our neighbour hath done a kindness, thou shouldst not grudge him the opportunity; and if our young friend hath fared ill for a night, he will the better relish what Providence may send him of better provisions."

"And that he may do so at leisure," said Joshua, "we will pray him, Rachel, to tarry a day or twain with us: he is young, and is now but entering upon the world, and our habitation may, if he will, be like a resting-place, from which he may look abroad upon the pilgrimage which he must make, and the path which he has to travel.—What sayst thou, friend Latimer? We constrain not our friends to our ways, and thou art, I think, too wise to quarrel with us for following our own fashions; and if we should even give thee a word of advice, thou wilt not, I think be angry, so that it is spoken in season."

You know, Alan, how easily I am determined by any thing resembling cordiality—and so, though a little afraid of the formality of my host and hostess, I accepted their invitation, provided I could get some messenger to send to Shepherd's Bush for my servant and portmanteau.

"Why, truly, friend," said Joshua, "thine outward frame would be improved by cleaner garments; but I will do thine errand myself to the Widow Gregson's house of reception, and send thy lad hither with thy clothes. Mean while Rachel will show thee these little gardens, and then will put thee in some way of spending thy time usefully, till our meal calls us together at the second hour afternoon. I bid thee farewell for the present, having some space to walk, seeing I must leave the animal Solomon to his refreshing rest."

With these words, Mr. Joshua Geddes withdrew. Some ladies we have known would have felt, or at least affected, reserve or embarrassment, at being left to do the honours of the grounds to—(it will be out, Alan)—a smart young fellow—an entire stranger. She went out for a few minutes, and returned in her plain cloak and bonnet, with her beaver-gloves, prepared to act as my guide, with as much simplicity as if she had been to wait upon thy father. So forth I sallied with my fair Quaker.

If the house at Mount Sharon be merely a plain and convenient dwelling, of moderate size, and small pretensions, the gardens and offices, though not extensive, might rival an earl's in point of care and expense. Rachel carried me first to her own favourite resort, a poultry-yard, stocked with a variety of domestic fowls, of the more rare as well as the more ordinary kinds furnished with every accommodation which may suit their various habits. A rivulet which spread into a pond for the convenience of the aquatic birds, trickled over gravel as it passed through the yards dedicated to the land poultry, which were thus amply supplied with the means they use for digestion.

All these creatures seemed to recognise the presence of their mistress, and some especial favourites hastened to her feet, and continued to follow her as far as their limits permitted. She pointed out their peculiarities and qualities, with the discrimination of one who had made natural history her study; and I own I never looked on barn-door fowls with so much interest before—at least until they were boiled or roasted. I could not help asking the trying question, how she could order the execution of any of the creatures of which she seemed so careful.

"It was painful," she said, "but it was according to the law of their being. They must die; but they knew not when death was approaching; and in making them comfortable while they lived, we contributed to their happiness as much as the conditions of their existence permitted to us."

I am not quite of her mind, Alan. I do not believe either pigs or poultry would admit that the chief end of their being was to be killed and eaten. However, I did not press the argument, from which my Quaker seemed rather desirous to escape; for, conducting me to the greenhouse, which was extensive, and filled *with the choicest plants, she pointed out an aviary which occupied the further end, where, she said, she employed herself with attending the inhabitants,* without being disturbed with any painful recollections concerning their future destination.

I will not trouble you with any account of the various hothouses and gardens, and their contents. No small sum of money must have been expended in erecting and maintaining them in the exquisite degree of good order which they exhibited. The family, I understood, were connected with that of the celebrated Millar, and had imbibed his taste for flowers and for horticulture. But instead of murdering botanical names, I will rather conduct you to the *policy*, or pleasure-garden, which the taste of Joshua or his father had extended on the banks betwixt the house and river. This also, in contradistinction to the prevailing simplicity, was ornamented in an unusual degree. There were various compartments, the connexion of which was well managed, and although the whole ground did not exceed five or six acres, it was so much varied as to seem four times larger. The space contained close alleys and open walks; a very pretty artificial waterfall; a fountain also, consisting of a considerable jet-d'eau, whose streams glittered in the sunbeams, and exhibited a continual rainbow. There was a cabinet of verdure, as the French call it, to cool the summer heat, and there was a terrace sheltered from the north-east by a noble holly hedge, with all its glittering spears, where you might have the full advantage of the sun in the clear frosty days of winter.

I know that you, Alan, will condemn all this as bad and antiquated; for, ever since Dodsley has described the Leasowes, and talked of Brown's imitations of nature, and Horace Walpole's late Essay on Gardening, you are all for simple nature—condemn walking up and down stairs in the open air, and declare for wood and wilderness. But *ne quid nimis*. I would not deface a scene of natural grandeur or beauty, by the introduction of crowded artificial decorations; yet such may, I think, be very interesting, where the situation, in its natural state, otherwise has no particular charms.

So that when I have a country-house, (who can say how soon?) you may look for grottoes, and cascades, and fountains; nay, if you vex me by contradiction, perhaps I may go the length of a temple—so provoke me not, for you see of what enormities I am capable.

At any rate, Alan, had you condemned as artificial the rest of Friend Geddes's grounds, there is a willow walk by the very verge of the stream, so sad, so solemn, and so silent, that it must have commanded your admiration. The brook, restrained at the ultimate boundary of the grounds by a natural dam-dyke or ledge of rocks, seemed, even in its present swoln state, scarcely to glide along; and the pale willow-trees, dropping their long branches into the stream, gathered around them little coronals of the foam that floated down from the more rapid stream above. The high rock, which formed the opposite bank of the brook, was seen dimly through the branches, and its pale and splintered front, garlanded with long streamers of briers and other creeping plants, seemed a barrier between the quiet path which we trode, and the toiling and bustling world beyond. The path itself, following the sweep of the stream, made a very gentle curve; enough, however, served by its inflection completely to hide the end of the walk, until you arrived at it. A deep and sullen sound, which increased as you proceeded, prepared you for this termination, which was indeed only a plain root-seat, from which you looked on a fall of about six or seven feet, where the brook flung itself over the ledge of natural rock I have already mentioned, which there crossed its course.

The quiet and twilight seclusion of this walk rendered it a fit scene for confidential communing; and having nothing more interesting to say to my fair Quaker, I took the liberty of questioning her about the Laird; for you are, or ought to be, aware, that next to discussing the affairs of the heart, the fair sex are most interested in those of their neighbours.

I did not conceal either my curiosity, or the check which it had received from Joshua, and I saw that my companion answered with embarrassment. "I must not speak otherwise than truly," she said, "and

re I tell thee, that my brother dislikes, and that
he man of whom thou hast asked me. Per-
s are both wrong—but he is a man of violence,
th great influence over many, who, following
le of sailors and fishermen, become as rude as
nents with which they contend. He hath no
name among them, which is not unusual,
de fashion being to distinguish each other by
mes; and they have called him the Laird of
tes, (not remembering there should be no one
ord, save one only,) in idle derision; the pools
water left by the tide among the sands being
he Lakes of Solway."
s he no other revenue than he derives from
nds?" I asked.
it I cannot answer," replied Rachel; "men
t he wants not money, though he lives like an
r fisherman, and that he imparts freely of his
to the poor around him. They intimate that
man of consequence, once deeply engaged in
appy affair of the rebellion, and even still too
a danger from the government to assume his
me. He is often absent from his cottage at
-burn-cliffs, for weeks and months."
ould have thought," said I, "that the govern-
ould scarce, at this time of day, be likely to
against any one even of the most obnoxious
Many years have passed away"——
s true," she replied; "yet such persons may
and that their being connived at depends on
ng in obscurity. But indeed there can nothing
be known among these rude people. The truth
n them—most of them participate in the un-
rade betwixt these parts and the neighbouring
England; and they are familiar with every
of falsehood and deceit."
a pity," I remarked, "that your brother should
ighbours of such a description, especially as I
ind he is at some variance with them."
re, when, and about what matter?" answered
ddes, with an eager and timorous anxiety,
nade me regret having touched on the subject.
her, in a way as little alarming as I could
he purport of what had passed betwixt this
the Lakes and her brother, at their morning's
w.
affright me much," answered she; "it is this
umstance which has scared me in the watches
night. When my brother Joshua withdrew
active share in the commercial concerns of
er, being satisfied with the portion of worldly
e which he already possessed, there were one
ndertakings in which he retained an interest,
ecause his withdrawing might have been pre-
o friends, or because he wished to retain some
occupying his time. Amongst the more im-
of these, is a fishing station on the coast,
y certain improved modes of erecting snares,
at the advance of the tide, and shutting at
, many more fish are taken than can be de-
by those who, like the men of Broken-burn,
the boat-net and spear, or fishing-rod. They
a of these tide-nets, as men call them, as an
on, and pretend to a right to remove and de-
m by the strong hand. I fear me, this man
nes, whom they call the Laird, will execute
a threats, which cannot be without both loss
ger to my brother."
Geddes," said I, "ought to apply to the civil
ate; there are soldiers at Dumfries who would
hed for his protection."
a speakest, friend Latimer," answered the
s one who is still in the gall of bitterness and
iniquity. God forbid that we should endea-
reserve nets of flax and stakes of wood, or
nmon of gain which they procure for us, by
ls of men of war, and at the risk of spilling
blood!"
ject your scruples," I replied; "but since such
ray of thinking, your brother ought to avert
er by compromise or submission."
aps it would be best," answered Rachel; "but
I say? Even in the best-trained temper
remain some leaven of the old Adam; and
I know not whether it is this or a better spirit that
maketh my brother Joshua determine, that though
he will not resist force by force, neither will he yield
up his right to mere threats, or encourage wrong to
others by yielding to menaces. His partners, he
says, confide in his steadiness; and that he must not
disappoint them by yielding up their right for the
fear of the threats of man, whose breath is in his
nostrils."

This observation convinced me that the spirit of the
old sharers of the spoil was not utterly departed even
from the bosom of the peaceful Quaker; and I could
not help confessing internally that Joshua had the
right, when he averred that there was as much cou
rage in sufferance as in exertion.

As we approached the further end of the willow
walk, the sullen and continuous sound of the dashing
waters became still more and more audible, and at
length rendered it difficult for us to communicate with
each other. The conversation dropped, but apparently
my companion continued to dwell upon the apprehen-
sions which it had excited. At the bottom of the
walk, we obtained a view of the cascade, where the
swoln brook flung itself in foam and tumult over the
natural barrier of rock which seemed in vain to at-
tempt to bar its course. I gazed with delight, and,
turning to express my sentiments to my companion,
I observed that she had folded her hands in an atti-
tude of sorrowful resignation, which showed her
thoughts were far from the scene which lay before
her. When she saw that her abstraction was ob-
served, she resumed her former placidity of manner;
and having given me sufficient time to admire this
termination of our sober and secluded walk, proposed
that we should return to the house through her bro-
ther's farm. "Even we Quakers, as we are called,
have our little pride," she said; "and my brother
Joshua would not forgive me, were I not to show thee
the fields which he taketh delight to cultivate, after
the newest and best fashion; for which, I promise
thee, he hath received much praise from good judges,
as well as some ridicule from those who think it folly
to improve on the customs of our ancestors."

As she spoke, she opened a low door, leading through
a moss and ivy-covered wall, the boundary of the
pleasure-ground, into the open fields; through which
we moved by a convenient path, leading, with good
taste and simplicity, by stile and hedge-row, through
pasturage, and arable, and woodland; so that, in all
ordinary weather, the good man might, without even
soiling his shoes, perform his perambulation round the
farm. There were seats also, on which to rest; and
though not adorned with inscriptions, nor quite so
frequent in occurrence as those mentioned in the ac-
count of the Leasowes, their situation was always
chosen with respect to some distant prospect to be
commanded, or some home view to be enjoyed.

But what struck me most in Joshua's domain, was
the quantity and the tameness of the game. The hen
partridge scarce abandoned the roost at the foot of
the hedge where she had assembled her covey, though
the path went close beside her; and the hare, remain-
ing on her form, gazed at us as we passed, with her
full dark eye, or, rising lazily and hopping to a little
distance, stood erect to look at us with more curiosity
than apprehension. I observed to Miss Geddes the
extreme tameness of these timid and shy animals, and
she informed me that their confidence arose from pro-
tection in the summer, and relief during the winter.

"They are pets," she said, "of my brother, who
considers them as the better entitled to this kind-
ness that they are a race persecuted by the world in
general. He denieth himself," she said, "even the
company of a dog, that these creatures may here at
least enjoy undisturbed security. Yet this harmless or
humane propensity, or humour, hath given offence,"
she added, "to our dangerous neighbour."

She explained this, by telling me that my host of
the preceding night was remarkable for his attach-
ment to field sports, which he pursued without much
regard to the wishes of the individuals over whose
property he followed them. The undefined mixture
of respect and fear with which he was generally
regarded, induced most of the neighbouring land-

holders to connive at what they would perhaps in another have punished as a trespass; but Joshua Geddes would not permit the intrusion of any one upon his premises, and as he had before offended several country neighbours, who, because he would neither shoot himself nor permit others to do so, compared him to the dog in the manger, so he now aggravated the displeasure which the Laird of the Lakes had already conceived against him, by positively debarring him from pursuing his sport over his grounds—"So that," said Rachel Geddes, "I sometimes wish our lot had been cast elsewhere than in these pleasant borders, where if we had less of beauty around us, we might have had a neighbourhood of peace and good-will."

We at length returned to the house, where Miss Geddes showed me a small study, containing a little collection of books, in two separate presses.

"These," said she, pointing to the smaller press, "will, if thou bestowest thy leisure upon them, do thee good; and these," pointing to the other and larger cabinet, "can, I believe, do thee little harm. Some of our people do indeed hold, that every writer who is not with us is against us; but brother Joshua is mitigated in his opinions, and correspondeth with our friend John Scot of Amwell, who hath himself constructed verses well approved of even in the world.—I wish thee many good thoughts till our family meet at the hour of dinner."

Left alone, I tried both collections; the first consisted entirely of religious and controversial tracts, and the latter formed a small selection of history, and of moral writers, both in prose and verse.

Neither collection promising much amusement, thou hast, in these close pages, the fruits of my tediousness; and truly, I think, writing history (one's self being the subject) is as amusing as reading that of foreign countries, at any time.

Sam, still more drunk than sober, arrived in due time with my portmanteau, and enabled me to put my dress into order, better befitting this temple of cleanliness and decorum, where (to conclude) I believe I shall be a sojourner for more days than one.*

P. S.—I have noted your adventure, as you home-bred youths may perhaps term it, concerning the visit of your doughty Laird. We travellers hold such an incident of no great consequence, though it may serve to embellish the uniform life of Brown's Square. But art thou not ashamed to attempt to interest one who is seeing the world at large, and studying human nature on a large scale, by so bald a narrative? Why, what does it amount to, after all, but that a Tory Laird dined with a Whig Lawyer? no very uncommon matter, especially as you state Mr. Herries to have lost the estate, though retaining the designation. The Laird behaves with haughtiness and impertinence—nothing out of character in that: Is *not* kicked down stairs, as he ought to have been, were Alan Fairford half the man that he would wish his friends to think him.—Ay, but then, as the young lawyer, instead of showing his friend the door, chose to make use of it himself, he overheard the Laird aforesaid ask the old lawyer concerning Darsie Latimer—no doubt earnestly inquiring after the handsome, accomplished inmate of his family, who has so lately made Themis his bow, and declined the honour of following her father. You laugh at me for my airdrawn castles; but confess, have they not surer footing, in general, than two words spoken by such a man as Herries? And yet—and yet—I would rally the matter off, Alan; but in dark nights, even the glow-worm becomes an object of lustre, and to one plunged in my uncertainty and ignorance, the slightest gleam that promises intelligence, is interesting. My life is like the subterranean river in the Peak of Derby, visible only where it crosses the celebrated cavern. I am here, and this much I know; but where I have sprung from, or whither my course of life is like to tend, who shall tell me? Your father, too, seemed interested and alarmed, and talked of writing; would to heaven he may!—I send daily to the post-town for letters.

* In explanation of this circumstance, I cannot help adding a note not very necessary for the reader, which yet I record with pleasure, from recollection of the kindness which it evinces. In early youth I resided for a considerable time in the vicinity of the beautiful village of Kelso, where my life passed in a very solitary manner. I had few acquaintances, scarce any companions, and books, which were at the time almost essential to my happiness, were difficult to come by. It was then that I was particularly indebted to the liberality and friendship of an old lady of the Society of Friends, eminent for her benevolence and charity. Her deceased husband had been a medical man of eminence, and left her, with other valuable property, a small and well-selected library. This the kind old lady permitted me to rummage at pleasure, and carry home what volumes I chose, on condition that I should take, at the same time, some of the tracts printed for encouraging and extending the doctrines of her own sect. She did not even exact any assurance that I would read these performances, being too justly afraid of involving me in a breach of promise, but was *scarcely desirous that I should have the chance of instruction within my reach, in case whim, curiosity, or* accident, might induce me to have recourse to it.

LETTER VIII.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER

Thou mayst clap thy wings and crow as thou pleasest. You go in search of adventures, but adventures come to me unsought for; and oh! in what a pleasing shape came mine, since it arrived in the form of a client—and a fair client to boot! What think you of that, Darsie, you who are such a sworn squire of dames? Will this not match my adventures with thine, that hunt salmon on horseback, and will it not, besides, eclipse the history of a whole tribe of Broadbrims? But I must proceed methodically.

When I returned to-day from the college, I was surprised to see a broad grin distending the adust countenance of the faithful James Wilkinson, which, as the circumstance seldom happens above once a-year, was matter of some surprise. Moreover, he had a knowing glance with his eye, which I should have as soon expected from a dumb-waiter—an article of furniture, to which James, in his usual state, may be happily assimilated. "What the devil is the matter, James?"

"The devil may be in the matter, for aught I ken," said James, with another provoking grin; "for here has been a woman calling for you, Maister Alan."

"A woman calling for me?" said I in surprise; for you know well, that excepting old Aunt Peggy, who comes to dinner of a Sunday, and the still older Lady Bedrooket, who calls ten times a-year for the quarterly payment of her jointure of four hundred merks, a female scarce approaches our threshold, as my father visits all his female clients at their own lodgings. James protested, however, that there had been a lady calling, and for me. "As bonny a lass as I have seen," added James, "since I was in the Fusileers, and kept company with Peg Baxter." Thou knowest all James's gay recollections go back to the period of his military service, the years he has spent in ours having probably been dull enough.

"Did the lady leave no name nor place of address?"

"No," replied James; "but she asked when you wad be at hame, and I appointed her for twelve o'clock, when the house wad be quiet, and your father at the Bank."

"For shame, James! how can you think my father's being at home or abroad could be of consequence?—The lady is of course a decent person?"

"I'se uphaud her that, sir—she is nane of your—*whew*"—[Here James supplied a blank with a low whistle]—"but I didna ken—my maister makes an unco wark if a woman comes here."

I passed into my own room, not ill-pleased that my father was absent, notwithstanding I had thought it proper to rebuke James for having so contrived it. I disarranged my books, to give them the appearance of a graceful confusion on the table, and laying my foils (useless since your departure) across the mantelpiece, that the lady might see I was *tam Martequam Mercurio*—I endeavoured to dispose my dress so as to resemble an elegant morning dishabille—gave my hair the general shade of powder which marks the gentleman—laid my watch and seals on the table, to hint that I understood the value of time; and when I

had made all these arrangements—of which I am a little ashamed when I think of them—I had nothing better to do than to watch the dial-plate till the index pointed to noon. Five minutes elapsed, which I allowed for variation of clocks—five minutes more rendered me anxious and doubtful—and five minutes more would have made me impatient.

Laugh as thou wilt; but remember, Darsie, I was a lawyer, expecting his first client—a young man, how strictly bred up I need not remind you, expecting a private interview with a young and beautiful woman. But ere the third term of five minutes had elapsed, the door-bell was heard to tinkle low and modestly, as if touched by some timid hand.

James Wilkinson, swift in nothing, is, as thou knowest, peculiarly slow in answering the door-bell; and I reckoned on five minutes good, ere his solemn step should have ascended the stair. Time enough, thought I, for a peep through the blinds, and was hastening to the window accordingly. But I reckoned without my host; for James, who had his own curiosity as well as I, was lying *perdu* in the lobby, ready to open at the first tinkle; and there was, "This way, ma'am—Yes, ma'am—The lady, Mr. Alan," before I could get to the chair in which I proposed to be discovered, seated in all legal dignity. The consciousness of being half caught in the act of peeping, joined to that native air of awkward bashfulness of which I am told the law will soon free me, kept me standing on the floor in some confusion; while the lady, disconcerted on her part, remained on the threshold of the room. James Wilkinson, who had his senses most about him, and was perhaps willing to prolong his stay in the apartment, busied himself in setting a chair for the lady, and recalled me to my good breeding by the hint. I invited her to take possession of it, and bid James withdraw.

My visiter was undeniably a lady, and probably considerably above the ordinary rank—very modest, too, judging from the mixture of grace and timidity with which she moved, and at my entreaty sat down. Her dress was, I should suppose, both handsome and fashionable; but it was much concealed by a walking-cloak of green silk, fancifully embroidered; in which, though heavy for the season, her person was enveloped, and which, moreover, was furnished with a hood.

The devil take that hood, Darsie! for I was just able to distinguish that, pulled as it was over the face, it concealed from me, as I was convinced, one of the prettiest countenances I have seen, and which, from a sense of embarrassment, seemed to be crimsoned with a deep blush. I could see her complexion was beautiful—her chin finely turned—her lips coral—and her teeth rivals to ivory. But further the deponent sayeth not; for a clasp of gold, ornamented with a sapphire, closed the envious mantle under the incognita's throat, and the cursed hood concealed entirely the upper part of the face.

I ought to have spoke first, that is certain; but ere I could get my phrases well arranged, the young lady, rendered desperate, I suppose, by my hesitation, opened the conversation herself.

"I fear I am an intruder, sir—I expected to meet an elderly gentleman."

This brought me to myself. "My father, madam, perhaps. But you inquired for Alan Fairford—my father's name is Alexander."

"It is Mr. Alan Fairford, undoubtedly, with whom I wished to speak," she said, with greater confusion; "but I was told that he was advanced in life."

"Some mistake, madam, I presume, betwixt my father and myself—our Christian names have the same initials, though the terminations are different. —I—I—I would esteem it a most fortunate mistake if I could have the honour of supplying my father's place in any thing that could be of service to you."

"You are very obliging, sir." A pause, during which she seemed undetermined whether to rise or sit still.

"I am just about to be called to the bar, madam," said I, in hopes to remove her scruples to open her case to me; "*and if my advice or opinion* could be *of the slightest use, although I cannot* presume to say that they are much to be depended upon, yet"——

The lady arose. "I am truly sensible of your kindness, sir; and I have no doubt of your talents. I will be very plain with you—it *is* you whom I came to visit; although, now that we have met, I find it will be much better that I should commit my communication to writing."

"I hope, madam, you will not be so cruel—so tantalizing, I would say. Consider, you are my first client—your business my first consultation—do not do me the displeasure of withdrawing your confidence because I am a few years younger than you seem to have expected—My attention shall make amends for my want of experience."

"I have no doubt of either," said the lady, in a grave tone, calculated to restrain the air of gallantry with which I had endeavoured to address her. "But when you have received my letter, you will find good reasons assigned why a written communication will best suit my purpose. I wish you, sir, a good morning." And she left the apartment, her poor baffled counsel scraping, and bowing, and apologizing for any thing that might have been disagreeable to her, although the front of my offence seems to be my having been discovered to be younger than my father.

The door was opened—out she went—walked along the pavement, turned down the close, and put the sun, I believe, into her pocket when she disappeared, so suddenly did dulness and darkness sink down on the square, when she was no longer visible. I stood for a moment as if I had been senseless, not recollecting what a fund of entertainment I must have supplied to our watchful friends on the other side of the green. Then it darted on my mind that I might dog her, and ascertain at least who or what she was. Off I set—ran down the close where she was no longer to be seen, and demanded of one of the dyer's lads whether he had seen a lady go down the close, or had observed which way she turned.

"A leddy!"—said the dyer, staring at me with his rainbow countenance. "Mr. Alan, what takes you out, rinning like daft, without your hat?"

"The devil take my hat!" answered I, running back, however, in quest of it; snatched it up, and again sallied forth. But as I reached the head of the close once more, I had sense enough to recollect that all pursuit would be now in vain. Besides, I saw my friend, the journeyman dyer, in close confabulation with a pea-green personage of his own profession, and was conscious, like Scrub, that they talked of me, because they laughed consumedly. I had no mind, by a second sudden appearance, to confirm the report that Advocate Fairford was "gaen daft," which had probably spread from Campbell's close-foot to the Meal-market Stairs; and so slunk back within my own hole again.

My first employment was to remove all traces of that elegant and fanciful disposition of my effects, from which I had hoped for so much credit; for I was now ashamed and angry at having thought an instant upon the mode of receiving a visit which had commenced so agreeably, but terminated in a manner so unsatisfactory. I put my folios in their places—threw the foils into the dressing-closet—tormenting myself all the while with the fruitless doubt, whether I had missed an opportunity or escaped a stratagem, or whether the young person had been really startled, as she seemed to intimate, by the extreme youth of her intended legal adviser. The mirror was not unnaturally called in to aid; and that cabinet-counsellor pronounced me rather short, thick-set, with a cast of features fitter, I trust, for the bar than the ball—not handsome enough for blushing virgins to pine for my sake, or even to invent sham cases to bring them to my chambers—yet not ugly enough, either, to scare those away who came on real business—dark, to be sure, but *nigri sunt hyacinthi*—there are pretty things to be said in favour of that complexion.

At length—as common sense will get the better in all cases, when a man will but give it fair play—I began to stand convicted in my own mind, as an ass before the interview, for having expected too much—an ass during the interview, for having failed to ex-

tract the lady's real purpose—and an especial ass, now that it was over, for thinking so much about it. But I can think of nothing else, and therefore I am determined to think of this to some good purpose.

You remember Murtough O'Hara's defence of the Catholic doctrine of confession; because, "by his soul, his sins were always a great burden to his mind, till he had told them to the priest; and once confessed, he never thought more about them." I have tried his receipt, therefore; and having poured my secret mortification into thy trusty ear, I will think no more about this maid of the mist,

"Who, with no face, as 'twere, outfaced me."

——— Four o'clock.

Plague on her green mantle, she can be nothing better than a fairy; she keeps possession of my head yet! All during dinner-time I was terribly absent; but, luckily, my father gave the whole credit of my reverie to the abstract nature of the doctrine, *Vinco vincentem, ergo vinco te*; upon which brocard of law the Professor this morning lectured. So I got an early dismissal to my own crib, and here am I studying, in one sense, *vincera vincentem*, to get the better of the silly passion of curiosity—I think—I think it amounts to nothing else—which has taken such possession of my imagination, and is perpetually worrying me with the question—will she write or no? She will not—she will not! So says Reason, and adds, Why should she take the trouble to enter into correspondence with one, who, instead of a bold, alert, prompt gallant, proved a chickenhearted boy, and left her the whole awkwardness of explanation, which he should have met half-way? But then, says Fancy, she *will* write, for she was not a bit that sort of person whom you, Mr. Reason, in your wisdom, take her to be. She was disconcerted enough, without my adding to her distress by any impudent conduct on my part. And she will write, for———

By Heaven, she HAS written, Darsie, and with a vengeance!—Here is her letter, thrown into the kitchen by a cadie, too faithful to be bribed, either by money or whisky, to say more than that he received it, with sixpence, from an ordinary-looking woman, as he was plying on his station near the Cross.

"FOR ALAN FAIRFORD, ESQUIRE, BARRISTER.

"SIR,

"Excuse my mistake of to-day. I had accidentally learned that Mr. Darsie Latimer had an intimate friend and associate in a Mr. A. Fairford. When I inquired for such a person, he was pointed out to me at the Cross, (as I think the Exchange of your city is called,) in the character of a respectable elderly man—your father, as I now understand. On inquiry at Brown's Square, where I understood he resided, I used the full name of Alan, which naturally occasioned you the trouble of this day's visit. Upon further inquiry, I am led to believe that you are likely to be the person most active in the matter to which I am now about to direct your attention; and I regret much that circumstances, arising out of my own particular situation, prevent my communicating to you personally what I now apprize you of in this manner.

"Your friend, Mr. Darsie Latimer, is in a situation of considerable danger. You are doubtless aware, that he has been cautioned not to trust himself in England—Now, if he has not absolutely transgressed this friendly injunction, he has at least approached as nearly to the menaced danger as he could do consistently with the letter of the prohibition. He has chosen his abode in a neighbourhood very perilous to him; and it is only by a speedy return to Edinburgh, or at least by a removal to some more remote part of Scotland, that he can escape the machinations of those whose enmity he has to fear. I must speak in mystery, but my words are not the less certain; and, I believe, you know enough of your friend's fortunes *to be aware, that I could not write this much without being even more intimate with them* than you are.

"If he cannot, or will not, take the advice here given, it is my opinion that you should join him, if possible, without delay, and urge, by your personal presence and entreaty, the arguments which may prove ineffectual in writing. One word more, and I implore of your candour to take it as it is meant. No one supposes that Mr. Fairford's zeal in his friend's service, needs to be quickened by mercenary motives. But report says that Mr. Alan Fairford not having yet entered on his professional career, may, in such a case as this, want the means, though he cannot want the inclination, to act with promptitude. The enclosed note, Mr. Alan Fairford must be pleased to consider as his first professional emolument; and she who sends it hopes it will be the omen of unbounded success, though the fee come from a hand so unknown as that of "GREEN MANTLE."

A bank note of 20*l.* was the enclosure, and the whole incident left me speechless with astonishment. I am not able to read over the beginning of my own letter, which forms the introduction to this extraordinary communication. I only know that, though mixed with a quantity of foolery, (God knows, very much different from my present feelings,) it gives an account sufficiently accurate, of the mysterious person from whom this letter comes, and that I have neither time nor patience to separate the absurd commentary from the text, which it is so necessary you should know.

Combine this warning, so strangely conveyed, with the caution impressed on you by your London correspondent, Griffiths, against your visiting England—with the character of your Laird of the Solway Lakes—with the lawless habits of the people on that frontier country, where warrants are not easily executed, owing to the jealousy entertained by either country of the legal interference of the other; remember, that even Sir John Fielding said to my father, that he could never trace a rogue beyond the Briggend of Dumfries—think that the distinctions of Whig and Tory, Papist and Protestant, still keep that country in a loose and comparatively lawless state—think of all this, my dearest Darsie, and remember that, while at this Mount Sharon of yours, you are residing with a family actually menaced with forcible interference, and who, while their obstinacy provokes violence, are by principle bound to abstain from resistance.

Nay, let me tell you professionally, that the legality of the mode of fishing practised by your friend Joshua, is greatly doubted by our best lawyers; and that, if the stake-nets be considered as actually an unlawful obstruction raised in the channel of the estuary, an assembly of persons who shall proceed, *via facti*, to pull down and destroy them, would not, in the eye of the law, be esteemed guilty of a riot. So, by remaining where you are, you are likely to be engaged in a quarrel with which you have nothing to do, and thus to enable your enemies, whoever these may be, to execute, amid the confusion of a general hubbub, whatever designs they may have against your personal safety. Black-fishers, poachers, and smugglers, are a sort of gentry that will not be much checked, either by your Quaker's texts, or by your chivalry. If you are Don Quixote enough to lay lance in rest, in defence of those of the stake-net, and of the sad-coloured garment, I pronounce you but a lost knight; for, as I said before, I doubt if these potent redressers of wrongs, the justices and constables, will hold themselves warranted to interfere. In a word, return, my dear Amadis; the adventure of the Solway-nets is not reserved for your worship. Come back, and I will be your faithful Sancho Panza upon a more hopeful quest. We will beat about together, in search of this Urganda, the Unknown Sho of the Green Mantle, who can read this, the riddle of thy fate, better than wise Eppie of Buckhaven,* or Cassandra herself.

I would fain trifle, Darsie; for in debating with you, jests will sometimes go farther than arguments: but I am sick at heart, and cannot keep the ball up. If you have a moment's regard for the friendship we have so often vowed to each other, let my wishes for

* Well known in the Chap-Book, called the History of Buckhaven.

revail over your own venturous and romantic
. I am quite serious in thinking, that the in-
ion communicated to my father by this Mr.
s, and the admonitory letter of the young lady,
pon each other; and that, were you here, you
learn something from one or other, or from
hat might throw light on your birth and parent-
You will not, surely, prefer an idle whim to the
ct which is thus held out to you?
uld, agreeably to the hint I have received in
ng lady's letter, (for I am confident that such
ondition,) have ere now been with you to urge
hings, instead of pouring them out upon paper.
u know that the day for my trial is appointed;
already gone through the form of being intro-
to the examinators, and have gotten my titles
d me. All this should not keep me at home,
father would view any irregularity upon this
n as a mortal blow to the hopes which he has
ed most fondly during his life; viz. my being
to the bar with some credit. For my own
know there is no great difficulty in passing
ormal examinations, else how have some of
quaintance got through them? But, to my
these formalities compose an august and seri-
emnity, to which he has long looked forward,
absenting myself at this moment would well
ive him distract d. Yet I shall go altogether
ted myself, if I have not an instant assurance
ou that you are hastening hither—Mean while
desired Hannah to get your little crib into the
der possible. I cannot learn that my father
t written to you; nor has he spoken more of
mmunication with Birrenswork; but when I
have some inkling of the dangers you are at
incurring, I know my request that you will
immediately, will have his cordial support.
her reason yet—I must give a dinner, as usual,
ny admission, to our friends; and my father,
aside all his usual considerations of economy,
ired it may be in the best style possible. Come
then, dear Darsie! or, I protest to you, I shall
xamination, admission-dinner, and guests, to
ril, and come, in person, to fetch you with a
nce. Thine, in much anxiety, A. F.

LETTER IX.

NDER FAIRFORD, W. S., TO MR. DARSIE LATIMER.

AR MR. DARSIE,

ave been your *factor loco tutorie*, or rather, I
to say, in correctness, (since I acted without
it from the Court,) your *negotiorum gestor*;
nnexion occasions my present writing. And
h having rendered an account of my intro-
s, which have been regularly approved of, not
yourself, (whom I could not prevail upon to
more than the docket and sum total,) but
the worthy Mr. Samuel Griffiths of London,
he hand through whom the remittances were
I may, in some sense, be considered as to you
officio; yet, to speak facetiously, I trust you
t hold me accountable as a vicious intromitter,
I still consider myself as occasionally inte-
in your welfare. My motives for writing, at
se, are twofold.
've met with a Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, a
nan of very ancient descent, but who hath in
ast been in difficulties, nor do I know if his
are yet well redd. Birrenswork says, that he
s he was very familiar with your father, whom
es to have been called Ralph Latimer of Lang-
all, in Westmoreland; and he mentioned fa-
fairs, which it may be of the highest import-
you to be acquainted with; but as he seemed
ine communicating them to me, I could not
urge him thereanent. Thus much I know,
Mr. Herries had his own share in the late des-
and unhappy matter of 1745, and was in trou-
out it, although *that is probably now* over.
ver, although he did not profess the Popish re-

ligion openly, he had an eye that way. And both of these are reasons why I have hesitated to recommend him to a youth who maybe hath not altogether so well founded his opinion concerning Kirk and State, that they might not be changed by some sudden wind of doctrine. For I have observed ye, Master Darsie, to be rather tinctured with the old leaven of prelacy—this under your leave; and although God forbid that you should be in any manner disaffected to the Protestant Hanoverian line, yet ye have ever loved to hear the blawing, bleezing stories which the Hieland gentlemen tell of those troublesome times, which, it it were their will, they had better pretermit, as tending rather to shame than to honour. It is come to me also by a side wind, as I may say, that you have been neighbouring more than was needful among some of the pestilent sect of Quakers—a people who own neither priest, nor king, nor civil magistrate, nor the fabric of our law, and will not depone either *in civilibus* or *criminalibus*, be the loss to the lieges what it may. Anent which heresies, it were good ye read "the Snake in the Grass," or "the Foot out of the Snare," being both well-approved tracts touching these doctrines.

Now, Mr. Darsie, ye are to judge for yourself whether ye can safely to your soul's weal remain longer among these Papists and Quakers,—these defections on the right hand, and fallings away on the left; and truly if you can confidently resist these evil examples of doctrine, I think ye may as well tarry in the bounds where ye are, until you see Mr. Hernes of Birrenswork, who does assuredly know more of your matters than I thought had been communicated to any man in Scotland. I would fain have precognosced him myself on these affairs, but found him unwilling to speak out, as I have partly intimated before.

To call a new cause—I have the pleasure to tell you, that Alan has passed his private Scots Law examinations with good approbation—a great relief to my mind; especially as worthy Mr. Pest told me in my ear there was no fear of the "callant," as he familiarly called him, which gives me great heart. His public trials, which are nothing in comparison save a mere form, are to take place, by order of the Honourable Dean of Faculty, on Wednesday first; and on Friday he puts on the gown, and gives a bit chack of dinner to his friends and acquaintances, as is, you know, the custom. Your company will be wished for there, Master Darsie, by more than him, which I regret to think is impossible to have, as well by your engagements, as that our cousin, Peter Fairford, comes from the west on purpose, and we have no place to offer him but your chamber in the wall. And, to be plain with you, after my use and wont, Master Darsie, it may be as well that Alan and you do not meet till he is hefted as it were to his new calling. You are a pleasant gentleman, and full of daffing, which may well become you, as you have enough (as I understand) to uphold your merry humour. If you regard the matter wisely, you would perchance consider that a man of substance should have a douce and stead demeanour; yet you are so far from growing grave and considerate with the increase of your annual income, that the richer you become, the merrier I think you grow. But this must be at your own pleasure, so far as you are concerned. Alan, however, (overpassing my small savings,) has the world to win; and louping and laughing, as you and he were wont to do, would soon make the powder flee out of his wig, and the pence out of his pocket. Nevertheless, I trust you will meet when you return from your rambles; for there is a time, as the wise man sayeth, for gathering, and a time for casting away; it is always the part of a man of sense to take the gathering time first. I remain, dear sir, your well wishing friend, and obedient to command,

ALEXANDER FAIRFORD

P. S.—Alan's Thesis is upon the title *De periculo et commodo rei venditæ*, and is a very pretty piece of Latinity.—Ross-House, in our neighbourhood, is nearly finished, and is thought to excel Duff-House in ornature.

LETTER X.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

The plot thickens, Alan. I have your letter, and also one from your father. The last makes it impossible for me to comply with the kind request which the former urges. No—I cannot be with you, Alan; and that, for the best of all reasons—I cannot and ought not to counteract your father's anxious wishes. I do not take it unkind of him that he desires my absence. It is natural that he should wish for his son, what his son so well deserves—the advantage of a wiser and steadier companion than I seem to him. And yet I am sure I have often laboured hard enough to acquire that decency of demeanour which can no more be suspected of breaking bounds, than an owl of catching a butterfly.

But it was in vain that I have knitted my brows till I had the headache, in order to acquire the reputation of a grave, solid, and well-judging youth. Your father always has discovered, or thought that he discovered, a harebrained eccentricity lying folded among the wrinkles of my forehead, which rendered me a perilous associate for the future counsellor and ultimate judge. Well, Corporal Nym's philosophy must be my comfort—"Things must be as they may." —I cannot come to your father's house, where he wishes not to see me; and as to your coming hither, —by all that is dear to me, I vow that if you are guilty of such a piece of reckless folly—not to say undutiful cruelty, considering your father's thoughts and wishes—I will never speak to you again as long as I live! I am perfectly serious. And besides, your father, while he in a manner prohibits me from returning to Edinburgh, gives me the strongest reasons for continuing a little while longer in this country, by holding out the hope that I may receive from your old friend, Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, some particulars concerning my origin, with which that ancient recusant seems to be acquainted.

That gentleman mentioned the name of a family in Westmoreland, with which he supposes me connected. My inquiries here after such a family have been ineffectual, for the borderers, on either side, know little of each other. But I shall doubtless find some English person of whom to make inquiries, since the confounded fetterlock clapped on my movements by old Griffiths, prevents me repairing to England in person. At least, the prospect of obtaining some information is greater here than elsewhere; it will be an apology for my making a longer stay in this neighbourhood, a line of conduct which seems to have your father's sanction, whose opinion must be sounder than that of your wandering damoiselle.

If the road were paved with dangers which leads to such a discovery, I cannot for a moment hesitate to tread it. But in fact there is no peril in the case. If the Tritons of the Solway shall proceed to pull down honest Joshua's tide-nets, I am neither Quixote enough in disposition, nor Goliath enough in person, to attempt their protection. I have no idea of attempting to prop a falling house, by putting my shoulders against it. And indeed Joshua gave me a hint, that the company which he belongs to, injured in the way threatened, (some of them being men who thought after the fashion of the world,) would pursue the rioters at law, and recover damages, in which probably his own ideas of non-resistance will not prevent his participating. Therefore the whole affair will take its course as law will, as I only mean to interfere when it may be necessary to direct the course of the plaintiffs to thy chambers; and I request they may find thee intimate with all the Scottish statutes concerning salmon-fisheries, from the *Lex Aquarum*, downward.

As for the Lady of the Mantle, I will lay a wager that the sun so bedazzled thine eyes on that memorable morning, that every thing thou didst look upon seemed green; and notwithstanding James Wilkinson's experience in the Fusileers, as well as his negative whistle, I will venture to hold a crown that she *is but a what-shall-call-'um after all. Let not even the gold persuade you to the contrary.* She may make a shift to cause you to disgorge that, and (immense spoil!) a session's fees to boot, if you look not all the sharper about you. Or if it should be otherwise, and if indeed there lurk some mystery under this visitation, credit me, it is one which thou canst not penetrate, nor can I as yet even attempt to explain it; since, if I prove mistaken, and mistaken I may easily be, I would be fain to creep into Phalaris's bull, were it standing before me ready heated, rather than be roasted with thy raillery. Do not tax me with want of confidence; for the instant I can throw any light on the matter thou shalt have it; but while I am only blundering about in the dark, I do not choose to call wise folks to see me, perchance, break my nose against a post. So if you marvel at this,

"E'en marvel on till time makes all things plain."

In the mean time, kind Alan, let me proceed in my diurnal.

On the third or fourth day after my arrival at Mount Sharon, Time, that bald sexton to whom I have just referred you, did certainly limp more heavily along with me than he had done at first. The quaint morality of Joshua, and Huguenot simplicity of his sister, began to lose much of their raciness with their novelty, and my mode of life by dint of being very quiet, began to feel abominably dull. It was, as thou say'st, as if the Quakers had put the sun in their pockets—all around was soft and mild, and even pleasant; but there was, in the whole routine, a uniformity, a want of interest, a helpless and hopeless languor, which rendered life insipid. No doubt, my worthy host and hostess felt none of this void, this want of excitation, which was becoming oppressive to their guest. They had their little round of occupations, charities, and pleasures; Rachel had her poultry yard and conservatory, and Joshua his garden. Besides this, they enjoyed, doubtless, their devotional meditations; and, on the whole, time glided softly and imperceptibly on with them, though to me, who long for stream and cataract, it seemed absolutely to stand still. I meditated returning to Shepherd's Bush, and began to think, with some hankering, after little Benjie and the rod. The imp has ventured hither, and hovers about to catch a peep of me now and then; I suppose the little sharper is angling for a few more sixpences. But this would have been, in Joshua's eyes, a return of the washed sow to wallowing in the mire, and I resolved, while I remained his guest, to spare him so violent a shock to his prejudices. The next point was, to shorten the time of my proposed stay; but, alas! that I felt to be equally impossible. I had named a week; and however rashly my promise had been pledged, it must be held sacred, even according to the letter, from which the Friends permit no deviation.

All these considerations wrought me up to a kind of impatience yesterday evening; so that I snatched up my hat, and prepared for a sally beyond the cultivated farm and ornamented grounds of Mount Sharon, just as if I were desirous to escape from the realms of art, into those of free and unconstrained nature.

I was scarcely more delighted when I first entered this peaceful demesne, than I now was—such is the instability and inconsistency of human nature!—when I escaped from it to the open downs, which had formerly seemed so waste and dreary. The air I breathed felt purer and more bracing. The clouds, riding high upon a summer breeze, drove, in gay succession, over my head, now obscuring the sun, now letting its rays stream in transient flashes upon various parts of the landscape, and especially upon the broad mirror of the distant Frith of Solway.

I advanced on the scene with the light step of a liberated captive; and, like John Bunyan's Pilgrim, could have found in my heart to sing as I went on my way. It seemed as if my gayety had accumulated while suppressed, and that I was, in my present joyous mood, entitled to expend the savings of the previous week. But just as I was about to uplift a merry stave, I heard, to my joyful surprise, the voices of three or more choristers, singing, with considerable success, the lively old catch,

"For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking:
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belong'd to old Sir Thom o' Lyne;
As they went to the ferry, they were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking."*

As the chorus ended, there followed a loud and hearty laugh by way of cheers. Attracted by sounds which were so congenial to my present feelings, I made towards the spot from which they came,—cautiously however, for the downs, as had been repeatedly hinted to me, had no good name: and the attraction of the music, without rivalling that of the Syrens in melody, might have been followed by similarly inconvenient consequences to an incautious amateur.

I crept on, therefore, trusting that the sinuosities of the ground, broken as it was into knolls and sand-pits, would permit me to obtain a sight of the musicians before I should be observed by them. As I advanced, the old ditty was again raised. The voices seemed those of a man and two boys; they were rough, but kept good time, and were managed with too much skill to belong to the ordinary country people.

"Jack look'd at the sun, and cried, Fire, fire, fire;
Jem stabled his keffel in Birkendale mire;
Tom startled a calf, and hallo'd for a stag;
Will mounted a gate-post instead of his nag;
For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking;
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belong'd to old Sir Thom o' Lyne
As they went to the ferry they were very very merry,
For all our men were drinking."

The voices, as they mixed in their several parts, and ran through them, untwisting and again entwining all the links of the merry old catch, seemed to have a little touch of the bacchanalian spirit which they celebrated, and showed plainly that the musicians were engaged in the same joyous revel as the *mœrie* of old Sir Thom o' Lyne. At length I came within sight of them, three in number, where they sat easily niched into what you might call a *bunker*, a little sand-pit, dry and snug, and surrounded by its banks, and a screen of whins in full bloom.

The only one of the trio whom I recognised as a personal acquaintance was the notorious little Benjie, who, having just finished his stave, was cramming a huge luncheon of pie-crust into his mouth with one hand, while in the other he held a foaming tankard, his eyes dancing with all the glee of a forbidden revel; and his features, which have at all times a mischievous archness of expression, confessing the full sweetness of stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret.

There was no mistaking the profession of the male and female, who were partners with Benjie in these merry doings. The man's long loose-bodied great-coat, (wrap-rascal as the vulgar term it,) the fiddle-case, with its straps, which lay beside him, and a small knapsack which might contain his few necessaries; a clear gray eye; features which, in contending with many a storm, had not lost a wild and careless expression of glee, animated at present, when he was exercising for his own pleasure the arts which he usually practised for bread,—all announced one of those peripatetic followers of Orpheus, whom the vulgar call a strolling fiddler. Gazing more attentively, I easily discovered that though the poor musician's eyes were open, their sense was shut, and that the ecstasy with which he turned them up to Heaven, only derived its apparent expression from his own internal emotions, but received no assistance from the visible objects around. Beside him sat his female companion, in a man's hat, a blue coat, which seemed also to have been an article of male apparel, and a red petticoat. She was cleaner, in person and in clothes, than such itinerants generally are; and, having been in her day a strapping *bona roba*, she did not even yet neglect some attention to her appearance; wore a large amber necklace, and silver ear-rings, and had her plaid fastened across her breast with a brooch of the same metal.

The man also looked clean, notwithstanding the meanness of his attire, and had a decent silk handkerchief well knotted about his throat, under which peeped a clean owrelay. His beard, also, instead of displaying a grizzly stubble, unmowed for several days, flowed in thick and comely abundance over the breast, to the length of six inches, and mingled with his hair, with was but beginning to exhibit a touch of age. To sum up his appearance, the loose garment which I have described, was secured around him by a large old-fashioned belt, with brass studs, in which hung a dirk, with a knife and fork, its usual accompaniments. Altogether, there was something more wild and adventurous-looking about the man, than I could have expected to see in an ordinary modern crowder; and the bow which he now and then drew across the violin, to direct his little choir, was decidedly that of no ordinary performer.

You must understand that many of these observations were the fruits of after remark; for I had scarce approached so near as to get a distinct view of the party, when my friend Benjie's lurching attendant, which he calls by the appropriate name of Hemp, began to cock his tail and ears, and, sensible of my presence, flew, barking like a fury, to the place where I had meant to lie concealed till I heard another song. I was obliged, however, to jump on my feet, and intimidate Hemp, who would otherwise have bit me, by two sound kicks on the ribs, which sent him howling back to his master.

Little Benjie seemed somewhat dismayed at my appearance; but, calculating on my placability, and remembering, perhaps, that the ill-used Solomon was no palfrey of mine, he speedily affected great glee, and almost in one breath assured the itinerants that I was "a grand gentleman, and had plenty of money, and was very kind to poor folk;" and informed me that this was "Willie Steenson—Wandering Willie—the best fiddler that ever kittled thairm with horse-hair."

The woman rose and curtsied; and Wandering Willie sanctioned his own praises with a nod, and the ejaculation, "All is true that the little boy says."

I asked him if he was of this country.

"*This* country!" replied the blind man—"I am of every country in broad Scotland, and a wee bit of England to the boot. But yet I am, in some sense, of this country; for I was born within hearing of the roar of Solway. Will I give your honour a touch of the auld bread-winner?"

He preluded as he spoke, in a manner which really excited my curiosity; and then taking the old tune of Galashiels for his theme, he graced it with a number of wild, complicated, and beautiful variations; during which, it was wonderful to observe how his sightless face was lighted up under the conscious pride and heartfelt delight in the exercise of his own very considerable powers.

"What think you of that, now, for threescore and twa?"

I expressed my surprise and pleasure.

"A rant, man—an auld rant," said Willie; "nae thing like the music ye hae in your ball-houses and your playhouses in Edinbro'; but it's weel aneugh anes in a way at a dike-side.—Here's another—it's no a Scots tune, but it passes for ane—Oswald made it himsell, I reckon—he has cheated mony ane, but he canna cheat Wandering Willie."

* The original of this catch is to be found in Cowley's witty comedy of the Guardian, the first edition. It does not exist in the second and revised edition, called the Cutter of Coleman Street:

"CAPTAIN BLADE. Ha, ha, boys, another catch.

And all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking.

CUTTER. *One man of mine.*
DOGREL. *Two men of mine.*
BLADE. *Three men of mine.*
CUTTER. *And one man of mine.*
OMNES. *As we went by the way we were drunk, drunk, damnably drunk.*
And all our men were very very merry, &c."

Such are the words, which are somewhat altered and amplified in the text. The play was acted in presence of Charles II., then Prince of Wales, in 1641. The catch in the text has been happily set to music.

He then played your favourite air of Roslin Castle, with a number of beautiful variations, some of which I am certain were almost extempore.

"You have another fiddle there, my friend," said I—"Have you a comrade?" But Willie's ears were deaf, or his attention was still busied with the tune.

The female replied in his stead, "O ay, sir—troth we have a partner—a gangrel body like oursells. No but my hinny might have been better if he had liked; for mony a bein nook in mony a braw house has been offered to my hinny Willie, if he wad but just bide still and play to the gentles."

"Whisht, woman! whisht!" said the blind man, angrily, shaking his locks; "dinna deave the gentleman wi' your havers. Stay in a house and play to the gentles!—strike up when my leddy pleases, and lay down the bow when my lord bids! Na, na, that's nae life for Willie.—Look out, Maggie—peer out, woman, and see if ye can see Robin coming.—Deil be in him! he has gaen to the lea-side of some smuggler's punch-bowl, and he wunna budge the night, I doubt."

"That is your consort's instrument," said I—"Will you give me leave to try my skill?" I slipped at the same time a shilling into the woman's hand.

"I dinna ken whether I dare trust Robin's fiddle to ye," said Willie, bluntly. His wife gave him a twitch. "Hout awa, Maggie," he said, in contempt of the hint; "though the gentleman may hae gien ye siller, he may have nae bow-hand for a' that, and I'll no trust Robin's fiddle wi' an ignoramus.—But that's no sae muckle amiss," he added, as I began to touch the instrument; "I am thinking ye have some skill o' the craft."

To confirm him in this favourable opinion, I began to execute such a complicated flourish as I thought must have turned Crowdero into a pillar of stone with envy and wonder. I scaled the top of the finger-board, to dive at once to the bottom—skipped with flying fingers, like Timotheus, from shift to shift—struck arpeggios and harmonic tones, but without exciting any of the astonishment which I had expected.

Willie indeed listened to me with considerable attention; but I was no sooner finished, than he immediately mimicked on his own instrument the fantastic complication of tones which I had produced, and made so whimsical a parody of my performance, that, although somewhat angry, I could not help laughing heartily, in which I was joined by Benjie, whose reverence for me held him under no restraint; while the poor dame, fearful, doubtless, of my taking offence at this familiarity, seemed divided betwixt her conjugal reverence for her Willie, and her desire to give him a hint for his guidance.

At length the old man stopped of his own accord, and, as if he had sufficiently rebuked me by his mimickry, he said, "But for a' that, ye will play very weel wi' a little practice and some gude teaching. But ye maun learn to put the heart into it, man—to put the heart into it."

I played an air in simpler taste, and received more decided approbation.

"That's something like it, man. Od, ye are a clever birkie!"

The woman touched his coat again. "The gentleman is a gentleman, Willie—ye maunna speak that gate to him, hinny."

"The deevil I maunna!" said Willie; "and what for maunna I?—If he was ten gentles, he canna draw a bow like me, can he?"

"Indeed I cannot, my honest friend," said I; "and if you will go with me to a house hard by, I would be glad to have a night with you."

Here I looked round, and observed Benjie smothering a laugh, which I was sure had mischief in it. I seized him suddenly by the ear, and made him confess that he was laughing at the thoughts of the reception which a fiddler was likely to get from the Quakers at Mount Sharon. I chucked him from me, not sorry that his mirth had reminded me in time of what I had for the moment forgotten; and invited the itinerant to go with me to Shepherd's Bush, from which I proposed to send word to Mr. Geddes that I should not return home that evening. But the minstrel declined this invitation also. He was engaged for the night, he said, to a dance in the neighbourhood, and vented a round execration on the laziness or drunkenness of his comrade, who had not appeared at the place of rendezvous.

"I will go with you instead of him," said I, in a sudden whim; "and I will give you a crown to introduce me as your comrade."

"*You* gang instead of Rob the Rambler! My certie, freend, ye are no blate!" answered Wandering Willie, in a tone which announced death to my frolic.

But Maggie, whom the offer of the crown had not escaped, began to open on that scent with a maundering sort of lecture. "O Willie! hinny Willie, whan will ye learn to be wise? There's a crown to be win for naething but saying ae man's name instead of anither. And, wae's me! I hae just a shilling of this gentleman's gieing, and a bodle of my ain; and ye wunna bend your will nae muckle as to take up the siller that's flung at your feet! Ye will die the death of a cadger's powney in a wreath of drift! and what can I do better than lie doun and die wi' you? for ye winna let me win siller to keep either you or mysell leevin."

"Haud your nonsense tongue, woman," said Willie, but less absolutely than before. "Is he a real gentleman, or ane of the player-men?"

"I'se uphaud him a real gentleman," said the woman.

"I'se uphaud ye ken little of the matter," said Willie; "let us see haud of your hand, neebor, gin ye like."

I gave him my hand. He said to himself, "Ay, ay, here are fingers that have seen canny service." Then running his hand over my hair, my face, and my dress, he went on with his soliloquy; "Ay, ay, muisted hair, braid-claith o' the best, and seenteen hundred linen on his back, at the least o' it.—And how do ye think, my braw birkie, that ye are to pass for a tramping fiddler?"

"My dress is plain," said I,—indeed I had chosen my most ordinary suit, out of compliment to my Quaker friends,—"and I can easily pass for a young farmer out upon a frolic. Come, I will double the crown I promised you."

"Damn your crowns!" said the disinterested man of music. "I would like to have a round wi' you, that's certain;—but a farmer, and with a hand that never held pleugh-stilt or pettle, that will never do. Ye may pass for a trades-lad from Dumfries, or a student upon the ramble, or the like o' that. But hark ye, lad; if ye expect to be ranting amang the queans o' lasses where ye are gaun, ye will come by the waur, I can tell ye; for the fishers are wild chaps, and will bide nae taunts."

I promised to be civil and cautious; and, to smooth the good woman, I slipped the promised piece into her hand. The acute organs of the blind man detected this little manœuvre.

"Are ye at it again wi' the siller, ye jaud? I'll be sworn ye wad rather hear ae twalpenny clink against another, than have a spring from Rory Dall,* if he was coming alive again, anes errand. Gang doun the gate to Lucky Gregson's, and get the things ye want, and bide there till ele'en hours in the morn; and if ye see Robin, send him on to me."

"Am I no gaun to the ploy, then?" said Maggie, in a disappointed tone.

"And what for should ye?" said her lord and master; "to dance a' night, I'se warrant, and no to be fit to walk your tae's-length the morn, and we have ten Scots miles afore us? Na, na. Stable the steed, and pit your wife to bed, when there's night wark to do."

"Aweel, aweel, Willie hinnie, ye ken best; but O, take an unco care o' yourself, and mind ye hae nae the blessing o' sight."

"Your tongue gars me whiles tire of the blessing of hearing, woman," replied Willie, in answer to this tender exhortation.

But I now put in for my interest. "Hollo, good folks, remember that I am to send the boy to Mount Sharon, and if you go to the Shepherd's Bush, honest

* Blind Rorie, a famous performer, according to tradition.

ow the deuce am I to guide the blind man
is going? I know little or nothing of the

ken mickle less of my hinny, sir," replied
that think he needs ony guiding; he's the
himsell, that ye'll find between Criffell and
Horse-road and footpath, parish-road and
high-road and cross-road, he kens ilka foot
in Nithsdale."

might have said in braid Scotland, gude-
led the fiddler. "But gang your ways,
iat's the first wise word ye hae spoke the
ah it was dark night, and rain, and wind,
tleman's sake, that I might show him there
when ane had better want een than have
I am as true a guide by darkness as by

ly as well pleased that my companion was
give me this last proof of his skill, I wrote
h a pencil, desiring Samuel to bring my
midnight, when I thought my frolic would
gh over, to the place to which the bearer
ect him, and I sent little Benjie with an
the worthy Quakers.

arted in different directions, the good wo-
"Oh, sir, if ye wad but ask Willie to tell
nie tales to shorten the gate! He can speak
inister frae the pu'pit, and he might have
nister himsell, but"——

your tongue, ye fule!" said Willie,—"But
—gie me a kiss, we maunna part in anger,
—And thus our society separated.*

LETTER XI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

e now to conceive us proceeding in our dif-
ections across the bare downs. Yonder flies
ie to the northward, with Hemp scamper-
heels, both running as if for dear life, so
e rogue is within sight of his employer, and
take the walk very easy, so soon as he is
en. Stepping westward, you see Mag-
orm and high-crowned hat, relieved by the
of her plaid upon the left shoulder, darken-
e distance diminishes her size, and as the
eams begin to sink upon the sea. She is
r quiet journey to the Shepherd's Bush.
toutly striding over the lea, you have a full
arsie Latimer, with his new acquaintance,
g Willie, who, bating that he touched the
w and then with his staff, not in a doubtful
anner, but with the confident air of an ex-
pilot, heaving the lead when he has the
by heart, walks as firmly and boldly as if he
the eyes of Argus. There they go, each
iolin slung at his back, but one of them at
lly ignorant whither their course is directed.
erefore did you enter so keenly into such a
? says my wise counsellor—Why, I think,
whole, that as a sense of loneliness, and a
or that kindness which is interchanged in
d me to take up my temporary residence at
haron, the monotony of my life there, the
plicity of the conversation of the Geddeses,
niformity of their amusements and employ-
earied out my impatient temper, and pre-
for the first escapade which chance might
my way.

ould I have given that I could have pro-
it solemn grave visage of thine, to dignify
, as it has done full many a one of thine
thou hast so happy a knack of doing the
lish things in the wisest manner, that thou
ass thy extravagances for rational actions,
e eyes of prudence herself.

he direction which my guide observed, I be-
spect that the dell at Brokenburn was our
destination; and it became important to me

tain that in many cases the blind have, by constant
their other organs, learned to overcome a defect
would think incapable of being supplied. Every
remember the celebrated Blind Jack of Knaresbo-
lived by laying out roads.

to consider whether I could, with propriety, or even perfect safety, intrude myself again upon the hospitality of my former host. I therefore asked Willie, whether we were bound for the Laird's, as folk called him.

"Do ye ken the Laird?" said Willie, interrupting a sonata of Corelli, of which he had whistled several bars with great precision.

"I know the Laird a little," said I; "and therefore, I was doubting whether I ought to go to his town in disguise."

"And I should doubt, not a little only but a great deal, before I took ye there, my chap," said Wandering Willie; "for I am thinking it wad be worth little less than broken banes baith to you and me. Na, na, chap, we are no ganging to the Laird's, but to a blithe birling at the Brokenburn-foot, where there will be mony a braw lad and lass; and maybe there may be some of the Laird's folk, for he never comes to sic splores himsell. He is all for fowling-piece and salmon spear, now that pike and musket are out of the question."

"He has been a soldier, then?" said I.

"I'se warrant him a soger," answered Willie; "but take my advice and speer as little about him as he does about you. Best to let sleeping dogs lie. Better say nothing about the Laird, my man, and tell me instead, what sort of a chap ye are, that are sae ready to cleik in with an auld gaberlunzie fiddler? Maggie says ye're gentle, but a shilling maks a' the difference that Maggie kens, betwee a gentle and a semple, and your crowns wad mak ye a prince of the blood in her een. But I am ane that kens full weel that ye may wear good claithes, and have a saft hand, and yet that may come of idleness as weel as gentrice."

I told him my name, with the same addition I had formerly given to Mr. Joshua Geddes; that I was a law-student, tired of my studies, and rambling about for exercise and amusement.

"And are ye in the wont of drawing up wi' a' the gangrel bodies that ye meet on the high-road, or find cowering in a sand-bunker upon the links?" demanded Willie.

"Oh no; only with honest folks like yourself, Willie," was my reply.

"Honest folks like me!—How do ye ken whether I am honest, or what I am?—I may be the deevil himsell for what ye ken; for he has power to come disguised like an angel of light; and besides, he is a prime fiddler. He played a sonata to Corelli, ye ken."

There was something odd in this speech, and the tone in which it was said. It seemed as if my companion was not always in his constant mind, or that he was willing to try if he could frighten me. I laughed at the extravagance of his language, however, and asked him in reply, if he was fool enough to believe that the foul fiend would play so silly a masquerade.

"Ye ken little about it—little about it," said the old man, shaking his head and beard, and knitting his brows—"I could tell ye something about that."

What his wife mentioned of his being a tale-teller, as well as a musician, now occurred to me; and as you know I like tales of superstition, I begged to have a specimen of his talent as we went along.

"It is very true," said the blind man, "that when I am tired of scraping thairm or singing ballants, I whiles make a tale serve the turn among the country bodies; and I have some fearsome anes, that make the auld carlines shake on the settle, and the bits o' bairns skirl on their minnies out frae their beds. But this that I am gaun to tell you was a thing that befell in our ain house in my father's time—that is, my father was then a hafflins callant; and I tell it to you, that it may be a lesson to you, that are but a young, thoughtless chap, wha ye draw up wi' on a lonely road; for muckle was the dool and care that came o't to my gudesire."

He commenced his tale accordingly, in a distinct narrative tone of voice, which he raised and depressed with considerable skill; at times sinking almost into a whisper, and turning his clear but sightless eyeballs upon my face, as if it had been possible for him to

witness the impression which his narrative made upon my features. I will not spare you a syllable of it, although it be of the longest; so I make a dash——and begin

WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE.

YE maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that Ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will lang mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Highlandmen in Montrose's time; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the saxteen hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came in, wha was in sic favour as the Laird of Redgauntlet? He was knighted at Lonon court, wi' the King's ain sword; and being a redhot prelatist, he came down here, rampauging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy, (and of lunacy, for what I ken,) to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Redgauntlet was aye for the strong hand; and his name is kend as wide in the country as Claverhouse's or Tam Dalyell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave, could hide the puir hill-folk when Redgauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And troth when they fand them, they didna mak muckle mair ceremony than a Highlandman wi' a roebuck—It was just, "Will ye tak the test?"—if not, "Make ready—present—fire!"—and there lay the recusant.

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought he had a direct compact with Satan—that he was proof against steel—and that bullets happed aff his buff-coat like hailstanes from a hearth—that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrifra-gawns*—and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they ware on him was, "Deil scowp wi' Redgauntlet!" He wasna a bad maister to his ain folk though, and was weel aneugh liked by his tenants; and as for the lackies and troopers that raid out wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs ca'd those killing times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at ony time.

Now you are to ken that my gudesire lived on Redgauntlet's grund—they ca' the place Primrose-Knowe. We had lived on the grund, and under the Redgauntlets, since the riding days, and lang before. It was a pleasant bit; and I think the air is callerer and fresher there than ony where else in the country. It's a' deserted now; and I sat on the broken door-cheek three days since, and was glad I couldna see the plight the place was in; but that's a' wide o' the mark. There dwelt my gudesire Steenie Steenson, a rambling, rattling chiel he had been in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes; he was famous at "Hoopers and Girders"—a' Cumberland couldna touch him at "Jockie Lattin"—and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle. The like o' Steenie wasna the sort that they made Whigs o'. And so he became a Tory, as they ca' it, which we now ca' Jacobites, just out of a kind of needcessity, that he might belang to some side or other. He had nae ill-will to the Whig bodies, and liked little to see the blude rin, though, being obliged to follow Sir Robert in hunting and hosting, watching and wardings, he saw muckle mischief, and maybe did some, that he couldna avoid.

Now Steenie was a kind of favourite with his master, and kend a' the folks about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment. Auld Dougal MacCullum, the butler, that had followed Sir Robert through gude and ill, thick and thin, pool and stream, was specially fond of the pipes, and aye gae my gudesire his gude word wi' the Laird; for Dougal could turn his master round his finger.

Weel, round came the Revolution, and it had like to have broken the hearts baith of Dougal and his master. But the change was not a'thegither sae great as they feared, and other folk thought for. The Whigs made an unco crawing what they wad do with their auld enemies, and in special wi' Sir Robert Redgauntlet. But there were ower mony great folks dipped in the same doings, to mak a spick and span new warld. So parliament passed it a' ower easy; and Sir Robert, bating that he was held to hunting foxes instead of Covenanters, remained just the man he was. His revel was as loud, and his hall as weel lighted, as ever it had been, though maybe he lacked the fines of the non-conformists, that used to come to stock his larder and cellar; for it is certain he began to be keener about the rents than his tenants used to find him before, and they behoved to be prompt to the rent-day, or else the Laird wasna pleased. And he was sic an awsome body, that naebody cared to anger him; for the oaths he swore, and the rage that he used to get into, and the looks that he put on, made men sometimes think him a devil incarnate.†

Weel, my gudesire was nae manager—no that he was a very great misguider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms' rent in arrear. He got the first brash at Whitsunday put ower wi' fair word and piping; but when Martinmas came, there was a summons from the grund-officer to come wi' the rent on a day preceese, or else Steenie behoved to flit. Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he was weel-freended, and at last he got the haill scraped thegither—a thousand merks—the maist of it was from a neighbour they ca'd Laurie Lapraik—a sly tod. Laurie had walth o' gear—could hunt wi' the hound and rin wi' the hare—and be Whig or Tory, saunt or sinner, as the wind stood. He was a professor in this Revolution warld, but he liked an orra sough of this warld; and a tune on the pipes weel aneugh at a by-time, and abune a', he thought he had gude security for the siller he lent my gudesire ower the stocking at Primrose-Knowe.

Away trots my gudesire to Redgauntlet Castle, wi' a heavy purse and a light heart, glad to be out of the Laird's danger. Weel, the first thing he learned at the Castle was, that Sir Robert had fretted himself into a fit of the gout, because he did not appear before twelve o'clock. It wasna a'thegither for sake of the money, Dougal thought; but because he didna like to part wi' my gudesire aff the grund. Dougal was glad to see Steenie, and brought him into the great oak parlour, and there sat the Laird his leesome lane, excepting that he had beside him a great, ill-favoured jackanape, that was a special pet of his; a cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played—ill to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, chattering and yowling, and pinching and biting folk, especially before ill weather, or disturbances in the state. Sir Robert ca'd it Major Weir, after the warlock that was burnt;‡ and few folk liked either the name or the conditions of the creature—they thought there was something in it by ordinar—and my gudesire was not just easy in his mind when the door shut on him, and he saw himself in the room wi' naebody but the Laird, Dougal MacCallum, and the Major, a thing that hadna chanced to him before.

Sir Robert sat, or, I should say, lay, in a great armed chair, wi' his grand velvet gown, and his feet on a cradle; for he had baith gout and gravel, and his face looked as gash and ghastly as Satan's. Major Weir sat opposite to him, in a red laced coat, and the Laird's wig on his head; and aye as Sir Robert girned wi' pain, the jackanape girned too, like a sheep's-head between a pair of tangs—an ill-faured, fearsome couple they were. The Laird's buff-coat was hung on a pin behind him, and his broadsword and his pistols within reach; for he keepit up the auld fashion of having the weapons ready, and a horse

* *A precipitous side of a mountain in Moffatdale.*

† The caution and moderation of King William III., and his principles of unlimited toleration, deprived the Cameronians of the opportunity they ardently desired, to retaliate the injuries which they had received during the reign of prelacy, and purify the land, as they called it, from the pollution of blood. They esteemed the Revolution, therefore, only a half measure, which neither comprehended the rebuilding the Kirk in its full splendour, nor the revenge of the death of the Saints on their persecutors.

‡ A celebrated wizard, executed at Edinburgh for sorcery and other crimes.

saddled day and night, just as he used to do when he was able to loup on horseback, and away after ony of the hill-folk he could get speerings of. Some said it was for fear of the Whigs taking vengeance, but I judge it was just his auld custom—he wasna gien to fear ony thing. The rental-book, wi' its black cover and brass clasps, was lying beside him; and a book of sculduddry sangs was put betwixt the leaves, to keep it open at the place where it bore evidence against the Goodman of Primrose-Knowe, as behind the hand with his mails and duties. Sir Robert gave my gudesire a look, as if he would have withered his heart in his bosom. Ye maun ken he had a way of bending his brows, that men saw the visible mark of a horse-shoe in his forehead, deep-dinted, as if it had been stamped there.

"Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle?" said Sir Robert. "Zounds! if you are"—

My gudesire, with as gude a countenance as he could put on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money on the table wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever. The Laird drew it to him hastily—"Is it all here, Steenie, man?"

"Your honour will find it right," said my gudesire.

"Here, Dougal," said the Laird, "gie Steenie a tass of brandy down stairs, till I count the siller and write the receipt."

But they werena weel out of the room, when Sir Robert gied a yelloch that garr'd the Castle rock! Back ran Dougal—in flew the livery-men—yell on yell gied the Laird, ilk ane mair awfu' than the ither. My gudesire knew not whether to stand or flee, but he ventured back into the parlour, where a' was gaun hirdy-girdie—naebody to say 'come in,' or 'gae out.' Terribly the Laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and wine to cool his throat; and hell, hell, hell, and its flames, was aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, and when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried out it was burning; and folk say that it *did* bubble and sparkle like a seething caldron. He flung the cup at Dougal's head, and said he had given him blood instead of burgundy; and, sure aneugh, the lass washed clotted blood aff the carpet the neist day. The jackanape they ca'd Major Weir, it jibbered and cried as if it was mocking its master; my gudesire's head was like to turn—he forgot baith siller and receipt, and down stairs he banged; but as he ran, the shrieks came faint and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groan, and word gaed through the Castle, that the Laird was dead.

Weel, away came my gudesire, wi' his finger in his mouth, and his best hope was, that Dougal had seen the money-bag, and heard the Laird speak of writing the receipt. The young Laird, now Sir John, came from Edinburgh, to see things put to rights. Sir John and his father never gree'd weel. Sir John had been bred an advocate, and afterwards sat in the last Scots Parliament and voted for the Union, having gotten, it was thought, a rug of the compensations—if his father could have come out of his grave, he would have brained him for it on his awn hearthstane. Some thought it was easier counting with the auld rough Knight than the fair-spoken young ane—but mair of that anon.

Dougal MacCallum, poor body, neither grat nor graned, but gaed about the house looking like a corpse, but directing, as was his duty, a' the order of the grand funeral. Now, Dougal looked aye waur and waur when night was coming, and was aye the last to gang to his bed, whilk was in a little round just opposite the chamber of dais, whilk his master occupied while he was living, and where he now lay in state, as they ca'd it weel-a-day! The night before the funeral, Dougal could keep his awn counsel nae langer; he came doun with his proud spirit, and fairly asked auld Hutcheon to sit in his room with him for an hour. When they were in the round, Dougal took ae tass of brandy to himsell, and gave another to Hucheon, wished him all health and lang life, and said that, for himsell, he was na lang for this world; for that, every night since Sir Robert's death, his silver call had sounded from the state chamber, just as it used to do at nights in his lifetime, to call Dougal to help to turn him in his bed. Dougal said, that being alone with the dead on that floor of the tower, (for naebody cared to wake Sir Robert Redgauntlet like another corpse,) he had never daurec to answer the call, but that now his conscience checked him for neglecting his duty; for, "though death breaks service," said MacCallum, "it shall never break my service to Sir Robert; and I will answer his next whistle, so be you will stand by me, Hutcheon."

Hutcheon had nae will to the wark, but he had stood by Dougal in battle and broil, and he wad not fail him at his pinch; so down the carles sat ower a stoup of brandy, and Hutcheon, who was something of a clerk, would have read a chapter of the Bible; but Dougal would hear naething but a blaud of Davie Lindsay, whilk was the waur preparation.

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, sure aneugh the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert was blowing it, and up gat the twa auld serving-men, and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which showed him the foul fiend in his ane shape, sitting on the Laird's coffin! Over he cowped as if he had been dead. He could not tell how lang he lay in a trance at the door, but when he gathered himself, he cried on his neighbour, and getting nae answer, raised the house, when Dougal was found lying dead within twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. As for the whistle, it was gane ance and aye; but mony a time was it heard at the top of the house on the bartizan, and amang the auld chimneys and turrets, where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogle-wark.

But when a' was ower, and the Laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my gudesire for the full sum that stood against him in the rental-book. Weel, away he trots to the Castle, to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking rapier by his side, instead of the auld broadsword that had a hundred-weight of steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. I have heard their communing so often tauld ower, that I almost think I was there mysell, though I could na be born at the time. (In fact, Alan, my companion mimicked, with a good deal of humour, the flattering, conciliating tone of the tenant's address, and the hypocritical melancholy of the Laird's reply. His grand-father, he said, had, while he spoke, his eye fixed on the rental-book, as if it were a mastiff-dog that he was afraid would spring up and bite him.)

"I wuss ye joy, sir, of the head seat, and the white loaf, and the braid lairdship. Your father was a kind man to friends and followers; muckle grace to you, Sir John, to fill his shoon—his boots, I suld say, for he seldom wore shoon, unless it were muils when he had the gout."

"Ay, Steenie," quoth the Laird, sighing deeply and putting his napkin to his een, "his was a sudden call, and he will be missed in the country; no time to set his house in order—weel prepared God ward, no doubt, which is the root of the matter—but left us behind a tangled hesp to wind, Steenie.—Hem! hem! We maun go to business, Steenie; much to do, and little time to do it in."

Here he opened the fatal volume. I have heard of a thing they call Doomsday-book—I am clear it has been a rental of back-ganging tenants.

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft, sleekit tone of voice—"Stephen Stephenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand—due at last term."

Stephen. "Please your honour, Sir John, I paid it to your father."

Sir John. "Ye took a receipt then, doubtless, Stephen; and can produce it?"

Stephen. "Indeed I hadna time, an it like your honour; for nae sooner had I set down the siller, and just as his honour Sir Robert, that's gaen, drew it to

'him to count, and write out the receipt, he was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him."

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye maybe paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis qualis* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower strictly to work with no poor man."

Stephen. "Troth, Sir John, there was naebody in the room but Dougal MacCallum, the butler. But, as your honour kens, he has e'en followed his auld master."

"Very unlucky again, Stephen," said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. "The man to whom ye paid the money is dead—and the man who witnessed the payment is dead too—and the siller, which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard tell of in the repositories. How am I to believe a' this?"

Stephen. "I dinna ken, your honour; but there is a bit memorandum note of the very coins; for, God help me! I had to borrow out of twenty purses; and I am sure that ilka man there set down will take his grit oath for what purpose I borrowed the money."

Sir John. "I have little doubt ye *borrowed* the money, Steenie. It is the *payment* to my father that I want to have some proof of."

Stephen. "The siller maun be about the house, Sir John. And since your honour never got it, and his honour that was canna have ta'en it wi' him, may be some of the family may have seen it."

Sir John. "We will examine the servants, Stephen; that is but reasonable."

But lackey and lass, and page and groom, all denied stoutly that they had ever seen such a bag of money as my gudesire described. What was waur, he had unluckily not mentioned to any living soul of them his purpose of paying his rent. Ae quean had noticed something under his arm, but she took it for the pipes.

Sir John Redgauntlet ordered the servants out of the room, and then said to my gudesire, "Now, Steenie, ye see you have fair play; and, as I have little doubt ye ken better where to find the siller than ony other body, I beg, in fair terms, and for your own sake, that you will end this fasherie; for, Stephen, ye maun pay or flit."

"The Lord forgie your opinion," said Stephen, driven almost to his wit's end—"I am an honest man."

"So am I, Stephen," said his honour; "and so are all the folks in the house, I hope. But if there be a knave amongst us, it must be he that tells the story he cannot prove." He paused, and then added, mair sternly, "If I understand your trick, sir, you want to take advantage of some malicious reports concerning things in this family, and particularly respecting my father's sudden death, thereby to cheat me out of the money, and perhaps take away my character, by insinuating that I have received the rent I am demanding.—Where do you suppose this money to be?—I insist upon knowing."

My gudesire saw every thing look sae muckle against him that he grew nearly desperate—however, he shifted from one foot to another, looked to every corner of the room, and made no answer.

"Speak out, sirrah," said the Laird, assuming a look of his father's, a very particular ane, which he had when he was angry—it seemed as if the wrinkles of his frown made that selfsame fearful shape of a horse's shoe in the middle of his brow;—"Speak out, sir! I *will* know your thoughts;—do you suppose that I have this money?"

"Far be it frae me to say so," said Stephen.

"Do you charge any of my people with having taken it?"

"I wad be laith to charge them that may be innocent," said my gudesire; "and if there be any one that is guilty, I have nae proof."

"Somewhere the money must be, if there is a word of truth in your story," said Sir John; "I ask where you think it is—and demand a correct answer?"

"In hell, if you *will* have my thoughts of it," said my gudesire, driven to extremity,—"in hell! with *your father, his jackanape,* and his silver whistle!"

Down the stairs he ran, (for the parlour was nae place for him after such a word,) and he heard the Laird swearing blood and wounds behind fast as ever did Sir Robert, and roaring for and the baron-officer.

Away rode my gudesire to his chief cred they ca'd Laurie Lapraik,) to try if he co ony thing out of him; but when he tauld hi got but the warst word in his wame—thic and dyvour, were the saftest terms; and t of these hard terms, Laurie brought up the of his dipping his hand in the blood of God just as if a tenant could have helped riding Laird, and that a laird like Sir Robert Re My gudesire was, by this time, fur beyond t of patience, and while he and Laurie we speed the liars, he was wanchancie aneugh Lapraik's doctrine as weel as the man, things that garr'd folk's flesh grue that hea —he wasna just himsell, and he had lived set in his day.

At last they parted, and my gudesire w hame through the wood of Pitmurkie, that black firs, as they say.—I ken the wood, b may be black or white for what I can tel entry of the wood there is a wild commo the edge of the common, a little lonely char that was keepit then by an ostler-wife, the cau' her Tibbie Faw, and there puir Steeni a mutchkin of brandy, for he had had no re the haill day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him bite of meat, but he couldna think o't, nor take his foot out of the stirrup, and took off t wholely at twa draughts, and named a toas the first was, the memory of Sir Robert Re and might he never lie quiet in his grave t righted his poor bond tenant; and the seco health to Man's Enemy, if he would but get the pock of siller, or tell him what came saw the haill world was like to regard him and a cheat, and he took that waur than ruin of his house and hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a c turned, and the trees made it yet darker, a the beast take its ain road through the woo all of a sudden, from tired and wearied th before, the nag began to spring, and flee, a that my gudesire could hardly keep the sadc the whilk, a horseman, suddenly riding up b said, "That's a mettle beast of yours, fre you sell him?"—So saying, he touched th neck with his riding-wand, and it fell int heigh-ho of a stumbling trot. "But his spu out of him, I think," continued the stran that is like mony a man's courage, that i wad do great things till he come to the proc

My gudesire scarce listened to this, but sp horse, with "Gude e'en to you, freend."

But it's like the stranger was anc tha lightly yield his point; for, ride as Steenie was aye beside him at the selfsame pace. my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, grew half an to say the truth, half feared.

"What is it that ye want with me, fre said. "If ye be a robber, I have nae money a leal man, wanting company, I have nae mirth or speaking; and if ye want to ken th scarce ken it mysell."

"If you will tell me your grief," said the "I am one that, though I have been sair m the world, am the only hand for helping my

So my gudesire, to ease his ain heart, n from any hope of help, told him the story fro ning to end.

"It's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "b I can help you."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and ta day—I ken nae other help on earth," said sire.

"But there may be some under the earth," stranger. "Come, I'll be frank wi' you; I c you the money on bond, but you would ma ple my terms. Now, I can tell you, that Laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses wailing of your family, and if ye daur ventu to see him, he will give you the receipt."

My gudesire's hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humoursome chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was hauld wi' brandy, and desperate wi' distress; and he said, he had courage to go to the gate of hell, and a step farther for that receipt.—The stranger laughed.

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my father would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer court-yard, through the muckle faulding yetts, and aneath the auld portcullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as used to be in Sir Robert's house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my gudesire, as seemed to him, fastened his horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning, when he gaed to wait on the young Sir John.

"God!" said my gudesire, "if Sir Robert's death be but a dream!"

He knocked at the ha' door just as he was wont, and his auld acquaintance, Dougal MacCallum,—just after his wont, too,—came to open the door, and said, "Piper Steenie, are ye there, lad? Sir Robert has been crying for you."

My gudesire was like a man in a dream—he looked for the stranger, but he was gane for the time. At last he just tried to say, "Ha! Dougal Driveower, are ye living? I thought ye had been dead."

"Never fash yoursell wi' me," said Dougal, "but look to yoursell; and see ye tak naething frae onybody here, neither meat, drink, or siller, except just the receipt that is your ain."

So saying, he led the way out through halls and trances that were weel kend to my gudesire, and into the auld oak parlour; and there was as much singing of profane songs, and birling of red wine, and speaking blasphemy and sculduddry, as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blitheest.

But, Lord take us in keeping! what a set of ghastly revellers they were that sat round that table!—My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane to their place, for often had he piped to the most part in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalyell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprung; and Dumbarton Douglas, the twice-turned traitor baith to country and king. There was the Bluidy Advocate MacKenyie, who, for his wordly wit and wisdom, had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, as beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks, streaming down over his laced buff-coat, and his left hand always on his right spuleblade, to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made.* He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy, haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed, and sung, and laughed, that the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laughter passed into such wild sounds, as made my gudesire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

They that waited at the table were just the wicked serving-men and troopers, that had done their work and cruel bidding on earth. There was the Lang Lad of the Nethertown, that helped to take Argyle; and the Bishop's summoner, that they called the Deil's Rattle-bag; and the wicked guardsmen, in their laced coats; and the savage Highland Amorites, that shed blood like water; and many a proud servingman, haughty of heart and bloody of hand, cringing to the rich, and making them wickeder than they would be; grinding the poor to powder, when the rich had broken them to fragments. And mony, mony mair were coming and ganging, a' as busy in their vocation as if they had been alive.

Sir Robert Redgauntlet, in the midst of a' this fearful riot, cried, wi' a voice like thunder, on Steenie Piper, to come to the board-head where he was sitting; his legs stretched out before him, and swathed up with flannel, with his holster pistols aside him, while the great broadsword rested against his chair, just as my gudesire had seen him the last time upon earth—the very cushion for the jackanape was close to him, but the creature itsell was not there—it wasna its hour, it's likely; for he heard them say as he came forward, "Is not the Major come yet?" And another answered, "The jackanape will be here betimes the morn." And when my gudesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said, "Weel, piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado my father gat breath to say, that Sir John would not settle without his honour's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert—"Play us up, 'Weel hoddled, Luckie.'"

Now this was a tune my gudesire learned frae a warlock, that heard it when they were worshipping Satan at their meetings; and my gudesire had sometimes played it at the ranting suppers in Redgauntlet Castle, but never very willingly; and now he grew cauld at the very name of it, and said, for excuse, he hadna his pipes wi' him.

"MacCallum, ye limb of Beelzebub," said the fearfu' Sir Robert, "bring Steenie the pipes that I am keeping for him!"

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes which might have served the piper of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my gudesire a nudge as he offered them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the chanter was of steel, and hented to a white heat; so he had fair warning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused himself again, and said, he was faint and frightened, and had not wind aneugh to fill the bag.

"Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; "for we do little else here; and it's ill speaking between a fou man and a fasting."

Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas said to keep the King's messenger in hand, while he cut the head off MacLellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle;* and that put Steenie mair and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said he came neither to eat, or drink, or make minstrelsy; but simply for his ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get a discharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time, that he charged Sir Robert for conscience-sake—(he had no power to say the holy name)—and as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no snares for him, but just to give him his ain.

The appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a large pocket book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is your receipt, ye pitiful cur: and for the money, my dog-whelp of a son may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

* The personages here mentioned are most of them characters of historical fame; but those less known and remembered may be found in the tract entitled, "The Judgment and Justice of God Exemplified, or, a Brief Historical Account of some of the Wicked Lives and Miserable Deaths of some of the most remarkable Apostates and Bloody Persecutors, from the Reformation till after the Revolution." This constitutes a sort of postcript or appendix to John Howie of Lochgoin's "Account of the Lives of the most eminent Scots Worthies." The author has, with considerable ingenuity, reversed his reasoning upon the inference to be drawn from the prosperity or misfortunes which befall individuals in this world, either in the course of their lives or in the hour of death. In the account of the martyrs' sufferings, such inflictions are mentioned only as trials permitted by Providence, for the better and brighter display of their faith, and constancy of principle. But when similar afflictions befell the opposite party, they are imputed to the direct vengeance of Heaven upon their impiety. If, indeed, the life of any person obnoxious to the historian's censures happened to have passed in unusual prosperity, the mere fact of its being finally concluded by death, is assumed as an undeniable token of the judgment of Heaven, and, to render the conclusion inevitable, his last scene *is generally garnished with some singular circumstance. Thus the Duke of Lauderdale is said*, through *old age but immense corpulence, to have become so sunk in parts, "that his heart was not the bigness of a walnut."*

* The reader is referred for particulars to Pitscottie's Historie of Scotland.

My gudesire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire, when Sir Robert roared aloud, "Stop though, thou sack-doudling son of a whore! I am not done with thee. Hens we do nothing for nothing; and you must return on this very day twelvemonth, to pay your master the homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud, "I refer mysell to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him; and he sunk on the earth with such a sudden shock, that he lost both breath and sense.

How lang Steenie lay there, he could not tell; but when he came to himsell, he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet parochine, just at the door of the family aisle, and the scutcheon of the auld knight, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morning fog on grass and gravestane around him, and his horse was feeding quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have thought the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand, fairly written and signed by the auld Laird; only the last letters of his name were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden pain.

Sorely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through the mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of the Laird.

"Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you brought me my rent?"

"No," answered my gudesire, "I have not; but I have brought your honour Sir Robert's receipt for it."

"How, sirrah?—Sir Robert's receipt!—You told me he had not given you one."

"Will your honour please to see if that bit line is right?"

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with much attention; and at last, at the date, which my gudesire had not observed,—"*From my appointed place*," he read, "*this twenty-fifth of November.*"—"What!—That is yesterday!—Villain, thou must have gone to hell for this!"

"I got it from your honour's father—whether he be in heaven or hell, I know not," said Steenie.

"I will delate you for a warlock to the Privy Council!" said Sir John. "I will send you to your master, the devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!"

"I intend to delate mysell to the Presbytery," said Steenie, "and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me."

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the full history; and my gudesire told it him from point to point, as I have told it you—word for word, neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, very composedly, "Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honour of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, to keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect is to have a redhot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scauding your fingers with a redhot chanter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I shall not know what to think of it.—But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are cats enough about the old house, but I think they kitten without the ceremony of bed or cradle."

"We were best ask Hutcheon," said my gudesire; "he kens a' the odd corners about as weel as—another serving-man that is now gane, and that I wad not like to name."

Aweel, Hutcheon, when he was asked, told them, that a ruinous turret, lang disused, next to the clock-house, only accessible by a ladder, for the opening was on the outside, and far above the battlements, was called of old the Cat's Cradle.

"There will I go immediately," said Sir John; and he took (with what purpose, Heaven kens) one of his father's pistols from the hall-table, where they had *lain since the night he died, and hastened to the bat-lements.*

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auld and frail, and wanted ane or twa rounds. However, up got Sir John, and entered at the turret door, where his body stopped the only little light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him wi' a vengeance, maist dang him back ower—bang gaid the knight's pistol, and Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my gudesire that stood beside him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jackanape down to them, and cries that the siller is fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra things besides, that had been missing for mony a day. And Sir John, when he had riped the turret weel, led my gudesire into the dining-parlour, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he should have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him to make amends.

"And now, Steenie," said Sir John, "although this vision of yours tends, on the whole, to my father's credit, as an honest man, that he should, even after his death, desire to see justice done to a poor man like you, yet you are sensible that ill-dispositioned men might make bad constructions upon it, concerning his soul's health. So, I think, we had better lay the haill dirdum on that ill-deedie creature, Major Weir, and say naething about your dream in the wood of Pitmurkie. You had taken ower muckle brandy to be very certain about ony thing; and, Steenie, this receipt," (his hand shook while he held it out,)—"its but a queer kind of document, and we will do best, I think, to put it quietly in the fire."

"Od, but for as queer as it is, it's a' the voucher I have for my rent," said my gudesire, who was afraid, it may be, of losing the benefit of Sir Robert's discharge.

"I will bear the contents to your credit in the rental-book, and give you a discharge under my own hand," said Sir John, "and that on the spot. And, Steenie, if you can hold your tongue about this matter, you shall sit, from this term downward, at an easier rent."

"Mony thanks to your honour," said Steenie, who saw easily in what corner the wind was; "doubtless I will be conformable to all your honour's commands; only I would willingly speak wi' some powerful minister on the subject, for I do not like the sort of soumons of appointment whilk your honour's father"——

"Do not call the phantom my father!" said Sir John, interrupting him.

"Weel, then, the thing that was so like him,"—said my gudesire; "he spoke of my coming back to him this time twelvemonth, and it's a weight on my conscience."

"Aweel, then," said Sir John, "if you be so much distressed in mind, you may speak to our minister of the parish; he is a douce man, regards the honour of our family, and the mair that he may look for some patronage from me."

Wi' that my gudesire readily agreed that the receipt should be burnt, and the Laird threw it into the chimney with his ain hand. Burn it would not for them, though; but away it flew up the lum, wi' a lang train of sparks at its tail, and a hissing noise like a squib.

My gudesire gaed down to the manse, and the minister, when he had heard the story, said, it was his real opinion, that though my gudesire had gaen very far in tampering with dangerous matters, yet, as he had refused the devil's aries, (for such was the offer of meat and drink,) and had refused to do homage by piping at his bidding, he hoped, that if he held a circumspect walk hereafter, Satan could take little advantage by what was come and gane. And, indeed, my gudesire, of his ain accord, lang forswore baith the pipes and the brandy—it was not even till the year was out, and the fatal day passed, that he would so much as take the fiddle, or drink requebaugh or tippenny.

Sir John made up his story about the jackanape as he liked himsell: and some believe till this day, there was no more in the matter than the fighting wicked

of the brute. Indeed, ye'll no hinder some to threap, that it was nane o' the Auld Enemy that Dougal and my gudesire saw in the Laird's room, but only that wanchancy creature, the Major, capering on the coffin; and that as to the blawing on the Laird's whistle that was heard after he was dead, the filthy brute could do that as weel as the Laird himsell, if no better. But Heaven kens the truth, whilk first came out by the minister's wife, after Sir John and her ain gudeman were baith in the moulds. And then, my gudesire, wha was failed in his limbs, but not in his judgment or memory—at least nothing to speak of—was obliged to tell the real narrative to his freends, for the credit of his good name. He might else have been charged for a warlock.*

THE shades of evening were growing thicker around us as my conductor finished his long narrative with this moral—"Ye see, birkie, it is nae chancy thing to tak a stranger traveller for a guide, when ye are in an uncouth land."

"I should not have made that inference," said I. "Your grandfather's adventure was fortunate for himself, whom it saved from ruin and distress: and fortunate for his landlord also, whom it prevented from committing a gross act of injustice."

"Ay, but they had baith to sup the sauce o't sooner or later," said Wandering Willie—"What was fristed wasna forgiven. Sir John died before he was much over threescore; and it was just like of a moment's illness. And for my gudesire, though he departed in fulness of years, yet there was my father, a yauld man of forty-five, fell down betwixt the stilts of his pleugh, and raise never again, and left nae bairn but me, a puir sightless, fatherless, motherless creature, could neither work nor want. Things gaed weel aneugh at first; for Sir Redwald Redgauntlet, the only son of Sir John, and the oye of auld Sir Robert, and, waes me! the last of the honourable house, took the farm off our hands, and brought me into his household to have care of me. He liked music, and I had the best teachers baith England and Scotland could gie me. Mony a merry year was I wi' him; but waes me! he gaed out with other pretty men in the forty-five—I'll say nae mair about it—My head never settled weel since I lost him; and if I say another word about it, deil a bar will I have the heart to play the night.—Look out, my gentle chap," he resumed in a different tone, "ye should see the lights in Brokenburn Glen by this time."

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* I have heard in my youth some such wild tale as that placed in the mouth of the blind fiddler, of which, I think, the hero was Sir Robert Grierson of Lagg, the famous persecutor. But the belief was general throughout Scotland, that the excessive lamentation over the loss of friends disturbed the repose of the dead, and broke even the rest of the grave. There are several instances of this in tradition, but one struck me particularly, as I heard it from the lips of one who professed receiving it from those of a ghost-seer. This was a Highland lady, named Mrs. C—— of B——, who probably believed firmly in the truth of an apparition, which seems to have originated in the weakness of her nerves and strength of her imagination. She had been lately left a widow by her husband, with the office of guardian to their only child. The young man added to the difficulties of his charge by an extreme propensity for a military life, which his mother was unwilling to give way to, while she found it impossible to repress it. About this time the Independent Companies, formed for the preservation of the peace of the Highlands, were in the course of being levied; and as a gentleman named Cameron, nearly connected with Mrs. C——, commanded one of those companies, she was at length persuaded to compromise the matter with her son, by permitting him to enter this company in the capacity of a cadet; thus gratifying his love of a military life without the dangers of foreign service, to which no one then thought these troops were at all liable to be exposed, while even their active service at home was not likely to be attended with much danger. She readily obtained a promise from her relative that he would be particular in his attention to her son, and therefore concluded she had accommodated matters between her son's wishes and his safety in a way sufficiently attentive to both. She set off to Edinburgh to get what was awanting for his outfit, and shortly afterwards received melancholy news from the Highlands. The Independent Company into which her son was to enter had a skirmish with a party of catherans engaged in some act of spoil, and her friend the Captain being wounded, and out of the reach of medical assistance, died in consequence. This news was a thunderbolt to the poor mother who was at once deprived of her kinsman's advice and assistance, and instructed by his fate of the unexpected danger to which her son's new calling exposed him. She remained also in great sorrow for her relative, whom she loved with sisterly affection. These conflicting causes of anxiety, together with her uncertainty whether to continue or change her son's destination, were terminated in the following manner:—

The house in which Mrs. C—— resided in the old town of Edinburgh, was a flat or story of a land, accessible, as was then universal, by a common stair. The family who occupied the story beneath were her acquaintances, and she was in the habit of drinking tea with them every evening. It was accordingly about six o'clock, when, recovering herself from a deep fit of anxious reflection, she was about to leave the parlour in which she sat in order to attend this engagement. The door through which she was to pass opened, as was very common in Edinburgh, into a dark passage. In this passage, and within a yard of her when she opened the door, stood the apparition of her kinsman, the deceased officer, in his full tartans, and wearing his bonnet. Terrified at what she saw, or thought she saw, she closed the door hastily, and, sinking on her knees by a chair, prayed to be delivered from the horrors of the vision. She remained in that posture till her friends below tapped on the floor to intimate that tea was ready. Recalled to herself by the signal, she arose, and, on opening the apartment door, again was confronted by the visionary Highlander, whose bloody brow bore token, on this second appearance, to the death he had died. Unable to endure this repetition of her terrors, Mrs. C—— sunk on the floor in a swoon. Her friends below, startled with the noise, came up stairs, and, alarmed at the situation in which they found her, insisted on her going to bed and taking some medicine, in order to compose what they took for a nervous attack. They had no sooner left her in quiet, than the apparition of the soldier was once more visible in the apartment. This time she took courage and said, "In the name of God, Donald, why do you haunt one who respected and loved you when living?" To which he answered readily, in Gaelic, "Cousin, why did you not speak sooner? My rest is disturbed by your unnecessary lamentation—your tears scald me in my shroud. I come to tell you that my untimely death ought to make no difference in your views for your son; God will raise patrons to supply my place, and he will live to the fulness of years, and die honoured and at peace." *The lady of course followed her kinsman's advice; and as she was accounted a person of strict veracity, we may conclude the first apparition an illusion of the fancy, the final one a lively dream suggested by the other two.*

LETTER XII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Tam Luter was their minstrel meet,
Gude Lord as he could lance,
He played sae shrill and sang sae sweet,
Till Towsie took a trance.
Auld Lightfoot there he did forleet,
And counterfeited France;
He used himself as man discreet,
And took up Morrice dance,
She loed,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

KING JAMES I.

I CONTINUE to scribble at length, though the subject may seem somewhat deficient in interest. Let the grace of the narrative, therefore, and the concern we take in each other's matters, make amends for its tenuity. We fools of fancy, who suffer ourselves, like Malvolio, to be cheated with our own visions, have, nevertheless, this advantage over the wise ones of the earth, that we have our whole stock of enjoyments under our own command, and can dish for ourselves an intellectual banquet with most moderate assistance from external objects. It is, to be sure, something like the feast which the Barmecide served up to Alnaschar; and we cannot be expected to get fat upon such diet. But then, neither is there repletion nor nausea, which often succeed the grosser and more material revel. On the whole, I still pray, with the Ode to Castle Building—

> "Give me thy hope which sickens not the heart;
> Give me thy wealth which has no wings to fly;
> Give me the bliss thy visions can impart;
> Thy friendship give me, warm in poverty!"

And so, despite thy solemn smile and sapient shake of the head, I will go on picking such interest as I can out of my trivial adventures, even though that interest should be the creation of my own fancy; nor will I cease to inflict on thy devoted eyes the labour of perusing the scrolls in which I shall record my narrative.

My last broke off as we were on the point of descending into the glen at Brokenburn, by the dangerous track which I had first travelled *en croupe*, behind a furious horseman, and was now again to brave under the precarious guidance of a blind man.

It was now getting dark; but this was no inconvenience to my guide, who moved on, as formerly, with instinctive security of step, so that we soon reached the bottom, and I could see lights twinkling in the cottage which had been my place of refuge on a former occasion. It was not thither, however, that

our course was directed. We left the habitation of the Laird to the left, and turning down the brook, soon approached the small hamlet which had been erected at the mouth of the stream, probably on account of the convenience which it afforded as a harbour to the fishing-boats. A large low cottage, full in our front, seemed highly illuminated; for the light not only glanced from every window and aperture in its frail walls, but was even visible from rents and fractures in the roof, composed of tarred shingles, repaired in part by thatch and *divot*.

While these appearances engaged my attention, that of my companion was attracted by a regular succession of sounds, like a bouncing on the floor, mixed with a very faint noise of music, which Willie's acute organs at once recognised and accounted for, while to me it was almost inaudible. The old man struck the earth with his staff in a violent passion. "The whoreson fisher rabble! They have brought another violer upon my walk! They are such struggling blackguards, that they must run in their very music; but I'll sort them waur than ony gauger in the country.—Stay—hark—it's no a fiddle neither—it's the pipe and tabor bastard, Simon of Sowport, frae the Nicol Forest; but I'll pipe and tabor him! —Let me hae ance my left hand on his cravat, and ye shall see what my right will do. Come away, chap—come away, gentle chap—nae time to be picking and wailing your steps." And on he passed with long and determined strides, dragging me along with him.

I was not quite easy in his company; for, now that his minstrel pride was hurt, the man had changed from the quiet, decorous, I might almost say respectable person, which he seemed while he told his tale, into the appearance of a fierce brawling, dissolute stroller. So that when he entered the large hut, where a great number of fishers, with their wives and daughters, were engaged in eating, drinking, and dancing, I was somewhat afraid that the impatient violence of my companion might procure us an indifferent reception.

But the universal shout of welcome with which Wandering Willie was received—the hearty congratulation—the repeated "Here's t'ye, Willie!"—"Whare hae ye been, ye blind deevil?" and the call upon him to pledge them—above all, the speed with which the obnoxious pipe and tabor were put to silence, gave the old man such effectual assurance of undiminished popularity and importance, as at once put his jealousy to rest, and changed his tone of offended dignity, into one better fitted to receive such cordial greetings. Young men and women crowded round, to tell how much they were afraid some mischance had detained him, and how two or three young fellows had set out in quest of him.

"It was nae mischance, praised be Heaven," said Willie, "but the absence of the lazy loon Rob the Rambler, my comrade, that didna come to meet me on the Links; but I hae gotten a braw consort in his stead, worth a dozen of him, the unhanged blackguard."

"And wha is't tou's gotten, Wullie, lad?" said half a score of voices, while all eyes were turned on your humble servant, who kept the best countenance he could, though not quite easy at becoming the centre to which all eyes were pointed.

"I ken him by his hemmed cravat," said one fellow; "it's Gil Hobson, the souple tailor frae Burgh.—Ye are welcome to Scotland, ye prick-the-clout loon," he said, thrusting forth a paw much the colour o' a badger's back, and of most portentous dimensions.

"Gil Hobson? Gil whoreson?" exclaimed Wandering Willie; "it's a gentle chap that I judge to be an apprentice wi' auld Joshua Geldes, to the quaker-trade."

"What trade be's that, man?" said he of the badger-coloured fist.

"Canting and lying,"—said Willie, which produced a thundering laugh; "but I am teaching the *callant a better trade, and that is feasting* and fiddling."

Willie's conduct in thus announcing something *like my real character, was contrary to* compact; and yet I was rather glad he did so, for the consequence of putting a trick upon these rude and ferocious men, might, in case of discovery, have been dangerous to us both, and I was at the same time delivered from the painful effort to support a fictitious character. The good company, except perhaps one or two of the young women, whose looks expressed some desire for better acquaintance, gave themselves no farther trouble about me; but, while the seniors resumed their places near an immense bowl, or rather reeking caldron of brandy-punch, the younger arranged themselves on the floor, and called loudly on Willie to strike up.

With a brief caution to me, to "mind my credit, for fishers have ears, though fish have none," Willie led off in capital style, and I followed, certainly not so as to disgrace my companion, who, every now and then, gave me a nod of approbation. The dances were, of course, the Scottish jigs, and reels, and "twasome dances," with a strathspey or hornpipe for interlude; and the want of grace, on the part of the performers, was amply supplied by truth of ear, vigour and decision of step, and the agility proper to the northern performers. My own spirits rose with the mirth around me, and with old Willie's admirable execution, and frequent "weel dune, gentle chap, yet!"—and, to confess the truth, I felt a great deal more pleasure in this rustic revel, than I have done at the more formal balls and concerts in your famed city, to which I have sometimes made my way. Perhaps this was because I was a person of more importance to the presiding matron of Brokenburn-foot, than I had the means of rendering myself to the far-famed Miss Nickie Murray, the patroness of your Edinburgh assemblies. The person I mean was a buxom dame of about thirty, her fingers loaded with many a silver ring, and three or four of gold; her ankles liberally displayed from under her numerous blue, white, and scarlet short petticoats, and attired in hose of the finest and whitest lamb's-wool, which arose from shoes of Spanish cordwain, fastened with silver buckles. She took the lead in my favour, and declared, "that the brave young gentleman should not weary himself to death wi' playing, but take the floor for a dance or twa."

"And what's to come of me, Dame Martin?" said Willie.

"Come o' thee?" said the dame; "mischanter on the auld beard o' ye! ye could play for twenty hours on end, and tire out the haill country-side wi' dancing before you laid down your bow, saving for a by-drink or the like o' that."

"In troth, dame," answered Willie, "ye are nae sae far wrang; sae if my comrade is to take his dance, ye maun gie me my drink, and then bob it away like Madge of Middlebie."

The drink was soon brought; but while Willie was partaking of it, a party entered the hut, which arrested my attention at once, and intercepted the intended gallantry with which I had proposed to present my hand to the fresh-coloured, well-made, white-ankled Thetis, who had obtained me manumission from my musical task.

This was nothing less than the sudden appearance of the old woman whom the Laird had termed Mabel; Cristal Nixon, his male attendant; and the young person who had said grace to us when I supped with him.

This young person—Alan, thou art in thy way a bit of a conjurer—this young person whom I *did not* describe, and whom you, for that very reason, suspected was not an indifferent object to me—is, I am sorry to say it, in very fact not so much so as in prudence she ought. I will not use the name of *love* on this occasion; for I have applied it too often to transient whims and fancies to escape your satire, should I venture to apply it now. For it is a phrase, I must confess, which I have used—a romancer would say, profaned—a little too often, considering how few years have passed over my head. But seriously, the fair chaplain of Brokenburn has been often in my head when she had no business there; and if this can give thee any clew for explaining my motives in lingering about the country, and assuming the character of Willie's companion, why, hang thee, thou

art welcome to make use of it—a permission for which thou need'st not thank me much, as thou wouldst not have failed to assume it, whether it were given or no.'

Such being my feelings, conceive how they must have been excited, when, like a beam upon a cloud, I saw this uncommonly beautiful girl enter the apartment in which they were dancing; not, however, with the air of an equal, but that of a superior, come to grace with her presence the festival of her dependants. The old man and woman attended, with looks as sinister as hers were lovely, like two of the worst winter months waiting upon the bright-eyed May.

When she entered—wonder if thou wilt—she wore *a green mantle*, such as thou hast described as the garb of thy fair client, and confirmed what I had partly guessed from thy personal description, that my chaplain and thy visiter were the same person. There was an alteration on her brow the instant she recognised me. She gave her cloak to her female attendant, and, after a momentary hesitation, as if uncertain whether to advance or retire, she walked into the room with dignity and composure, all making way, the men unbonneting, and the women curtseying respectfully, as she assumed a chair which was reverently placed for her accommodation, apart from others.

There was then a pause, until the bustling mistress of the ceremonies, with awkward, but kindly courtesy, offered the young lady a glass of wine, which was at first declined, and at length only thus far accepted, that, bowing round to the festive company, the fair visiter wished them all health and mirth, and, just touching the brim with her lip, replaced it on the salver. There was another pause; and I did not immediately recollect, confused as I was by this unexpected apparition, that it belonged to me to break it. At length a murmur was heard around me, being expected to exhibit,—nay, to lead down the dance,—in consequence of the previous conversation.

"Deil's in the fiddler lad," was muttered from more quarters than one—"saw folk ever sic a thing as a shamefaced fiddler before?"

At length a venerable Triton, seconding his remonstrances with a hearty thump on my shoulder, cried out, "To the floor—to the floor, and let us see how ye can fling—the lasses are a' waiting."

Up I jumped, sprung from the elevated station which constituted our orchestra, and, arranging my ideas as rapidly as I could, advanced to the head of the room, and, instead of offering my hand to the white-footed Thetis aforesaid, I venturously made the same proposal to her of the Green Mantle.

The nymph's lovely eyes seemed to open with astonishment at the audacity of this offer; and, from the murmurs I heard around me, I also understood that it surprised, and perhaps offended, the bystanders. But after the first moment's emotion, she wreathed her neck, and drawing herself loftily up, like one who was willing to show that she was sensible of the full extent of her own condescension, extended her hand towards me, like a princess gracing a squire of low degree.

There is affectation in all this, thought I to myself, if the Green Mantle has borne true evidence—for young ladies do not make visits, or write letters to counsel learned in the law, to interfere in the motions of those whom they hold as cheap as this nymph seems to do me; and if am cheated by a resemblance of cloaks, still I am interested to show myself, in some degree, worthy of the favour she has granted with so much state and reserve. The dance to be performed was the old Scots Jigg, in which you are aware I used to play no sorry figure at La Pique's, when thy clumsy movements used to be rebuked by raps over the knuckles with that great professor's fiddlestick. The choice of the tune was left to my comrade Willie, who, having finished his drink, feloniously struck up to the well-known and popular measure,

> "Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
> And merrily danced the Quaker."

which mantled on the lip of my partner, had a different expression from that of ridicule, and seemed to say, "Do not take this to heart." And I did not, Alan. My partner danced admirably, and I, like one who was determined, if outshone, which I could not help, not to be altogether thrown into the shade.

I assure you, our performance, as well as Willie's music, deserved more polished spectators and auditors; but we could not then have been greeted with such enthusiastic shouts of applause as attended while I handed my partner to her seat, and took my place by her side, as one who had a right to offer the attentions usual on such an occasion. She was visibly embarrassed, but I was determined not to observe her confusion, and to avail myself of the opportunity of learning whether this beautiful creature's mind was worthy of the casket in which Nature had lodged it.

Nevertheless, however courageously I formed this resolution, you cannot but too well guess the difficulties which I must needs have felt in carrying it into execution; since want of habitual intercourse with the charmers of the other sex has rendered me a sheepish cur, only one grain less awkward than thyself. Then she was so very beautiful, and assumed an air of so much dignity, that I was like to fall under the fatal error of supposing she should only be addressed with something very clever; and in the hasty racking which my brains underwent in this persuasion, not a single idea occurred that common sense did not reject as fustian on the one hand, or weary, flat, and stale triticism on the other. I felt as if my understanding were no longer my own, but was alternately under the dominion of Aldiborontiphoscophornio, and that of his facetious friend Rigdum-Funnidos. How did I envy at that moment our friend Jack Oliver, who produces with such happy complacence his fardel of small talk, and who, as he never doubts his own powers of affording amusement, passes them current with every pretty woman he approaches, and fills up the intervals of chat by his complete acquaintance with the exercise of the fan, the *flacon*, and the other duties of the *Cavaliere Servente*. Some of these I attempted, but I suppose it was awkwardly; at least the Lady Greenmantle received them as a princess accepts the homage of a clown.

Mean time the floor remained empty, and as the mirth of the good meeting was somewhat checked, I ventured, as a dernier resort, to propose a minuet. She thanked me, and told me haughtily enough, "she was here to encourage the harmless pleasures of these good folks, but was not disposed to make an exhibition of her own indifferent dancing for their amusement."

She paused a moment, as if she expected me to suggest something; and as I remained silent and rebuked, she bowed her head more graciously, and said, "Not to affront you, however, a country-dance, if you please."

What an ass was I, Alan, not to have anticipated her wishes! Should I not have observed that the ill-favoured couple, Mabel and Cristal had placed themselves on each side of her seat, like the supporters of the royal arms? the man, thick, short, shaggy, and hirsute, as the lion; the female, skin-dried tight-laced, long, lean, and hungry-faced, like the unicorn. I ought to have recollected, that under the close inspection of two such watchful salvages, our communication, while in repose, could not have been easy; that the period of dancing a minuet was not the very choicest time for conversation; but that the noise, the exercise, and the mazy confusion of a country-dance, where the inexperienced performers were every now and then running against each other, and compelling the other couples to stand still for a minute at a time, besides the more regular repose afforded by the intervals of the dance itself, gave the best possible openings for a word or two spoken in season, and without being liable to observation.

We had but just led down when an opportunity of the kind occurred, and my partner said, with great gentleness and modesty, "It is not perhaps very proper in me to acknowledge an acquaintance that is not claimed; but I believe I speak to Mr. Darsie Latimer?"

in astounding laugh arose at my expense, and I would have been annihilated, but that the smile

"Darsie Latimer was indeed the person that had now the honour and happiness"——

I would have gone on in the false gallop of compliment, but she cut me short. "And why," she said, "is Mr. Latimer here, and in disguise, or at least assuming an office unworthy of a man of education?—I beg pardon," she continued,—"I would not give you pain, but surely making an associate of a person of that description"——

She looked towards my friend Willie, and was silent. I felt heartily ashamed of myself, and hastened to say it was an idle frolic, which want of occupation had suggested, and which I could not regret, since it had procured me the pleasure I at present enjoyed.

Without seeming to notice my compliment, she took the next opportunity to say, "Will Mr. Latimer permit a stranger who wishes him well to ask, whether it is right that, at his active age, he should be in so far void of occupation, as to be ready to adopt low society for the sake of idle amusement?"

"You are severe, madam," I answered; "but I cannot think myself degraded by mixing with any society where I meet"——

Here I stopped short, conscious that I was giving my answer an unhandsome turn. The *argumentum ad hominem*, the last to which a polite man has recourse, may, however, be justified by circumstances, but seldom or never the *argumentum ad fœminam*.

She filled up the blank herself which I had left. "Where you meet *me*, I suppose you would say? But the case is different. I am, from my unhappy fate, obliged to move by the will of others, and to be in places which I would by my own will gladly avoid. Besides, I am, except for these few minutes, no participator of the revels—a spectator only, and attended by my servants. Your situation is different—you are here by choice, the partaker and minister of the pleasures of a class below you in education, birth, and fortunes.—If I speak harshly, Mr. Latimer," she added, with much sweetness of manner, "I mean kindly."

I was confounded by her speech, "severe in youthful wisdom;" all of *naive* or lively, suitable to such a dialogue, vanished from my recollection, and I answered, with gravity like her own, "I am, indeed, better educated than these poor people; but you, madam, whose kind admonition I am grateful for, must know more of my condition than I do myself—I dare not say I am their superior in birth, since I know nothing of my own, or in fortunes, over which hangs an impenetrable cloud."

"And why should your ignorance on these points drive you into low society and idle habits?" answered my female monitor. "Is it manly to wait till fortune cast her beams upon you, when by exertion of your own energy you might distinguish yourself?—Do not the pursuits of learning lie open to you—of manly ambition—of war?—But no—not of war, that has already cost you too dear."

"I will be what you wish me to be," I replied with eagerness—"You have but to choose my path, and you shall see if I do not pursue it with energy were it only because you command me."

"Not because I command you," said the maiden, "but because reason, common sense, manhood, and, in one word, regard for your own safety, give the same counsel."

"At least permit me to reply, that reason and sense never assumed a fairer form—of persuasion," I hastily added; for she turned from me—nor did she give me another opportunity of continuing what I had to say till the next pause of the dance, when, determined to bring our dialogue to a point, I said, "You mentioned manhood also, madam, and, in the same breath, personal danger. My ideas of manhood suggest that it is cowardice to retreat before dangers of a doubtful character. You, who appear to know so much of my fortunes that I might call you my guardian angel, tell me what these dangers are, that I may judge whether manhood calls on me to face or to fly them."

She was evidently perplexed by this appeal.

"You make me pay dearly for acting as your humane adviser," *she replied at last*: "I acknowledge an interest in your fate, and yet I dare not tell you whence it arises; neither am I at liberty to say why, or from whom, you are in danger; but it is not less true that danger is near and imminent. Ask me no more, but, for your own sake, begone from this country. Elsewhere you are safe—here you do but invite your fate."

"But, am I doomed to bid thus farewell to almost the only human being who has showed an interest in my welfare?—Do not say so—say that we shall meet again, and the hope shall be the leading star to regulate my course!"

"It is more than probable," she said—"much more than probable, that we may never meet again. The help which I now render you is all that may be in my power; it is such as I should render to a blind man whom I might observe approaching the verge of a precipice; it ought to excite no surprise, and requires no gratitude."

So saying, she again turned from me, nor did she address me until the dance was on the point of ending, when she said, "Do not attempt to speak to, or approach me again in the course of the night; leave the company as soon as you can, but not abruptly, and God be with you."

I handed her to her seat, and did not quit the fair palm I held, without expressing my feelings by a gentle pressure. She coloured slightly, and withdrew her hand, but not angrily. Seeing the eyes of Cristal and Mabel sternly fixed on me, I bowed deeply, and withdrew from her; my heart saddening, and my eyes becoming dim in spite of me, as the shifting crowd hid us from each other.

It was my intention to have crept back to my comrade Willie, and resumed my bow with such spirit as I might, although at the moment I would have given half my income for an instant's solitude. But my retreat was cut off by Dame Martin, with the frankness—if it is not an inconsistent phrase—of rustic coquetry, that goes straight up to the point.

"Ay, lad, ye seem unca sune weary, to dance sae lightly? Better the nag that ambles a' the day, than him that makes a brattle for a mile, and then's dune wi' the road."

This was a fair challenge, and I could not decline accepting it. Besides, I could see Dame Martin was queen of the revels; and so many were the rude and singular figures about me, that I was by no means certain whether I might not need some protection. I seized on her willing hand, and we took our places in the dance, where, if I did not acquit myself with all the accuracy of step and movement which I had before attempted, I at least came up to the expectations of my partner, who said, and almost swore, "I was prime at it;" while, stimulated to her utmost exertions, she herself frisked like a kid, snapped her fingers like castanets, whooped like a Bacchanal, and bounded from the floor like a tennis-ball,—ay, till the colour of her garters was no particular mystery. She made the less secret of this, perhaps, that they were sky-blue, and fringed with silver.

The time has been that this would have been special fun; or rather, last night was the only time I can recollect these four years when it would *not* have been so; yet, at this moment, I cannot tell you how I longed to be rid of Dame Martin. I almost wished she would sprain one of those "many-twinkling" ankles, which served her so alertly; and when, in the midst of her exuberant caprioling, I saw my former partner leaving the apartment, and with eyes, as I thought, turning towards me, this unwillingness to carry on the dance increased to such a point, that I was almost about to feign a sprain or a dislocation myself, in order to put an end to the performance. But there were around me scores of old women, all of whom looked as if they might have some sovereign recipe for such an accident; and, remembering Gil Blas and his pretended disorder in the robbers' cavern, I thought it as wise to play Dame Martin fair, and dance till she thought proper to dismiss me. What I did I resolved to do stenuously, and in the latter part of the exhibition, I cut and sprang from the floor as high and as perpendicularly as Dame Martin herself; and received, I promise you, thunders of applause, for the common people always prefer exertion and agility to grace. At length Dame Martin could

dance no more, and, rejoicing at my release, I led her to a seat, and took the privilege of a partner to attend her.

"Hegh, sirs," exclaimed Dame Martin, "I am sair forfoughen! Troth, callant, I think ye hae been amaist the death o' me."

I could only atone for the alleged offence by fetching her some refreshment, of which she readily partook.

"I have been lucky in my partners," I said, "first that pretty young lady, and then you, Mrs. Martin."

"Hout wi' your fleeching," said Dame Martin. Gae wa—gae wa, lad; dinna blaw in folks's lugs that gate; me and Miss Lilias even'd thegither! Na, na, lad—od, she is maybe four or five years younger than the like o' me,—by and attour her gentle havings."

"She is the Laird's daughter?" said I, in as careless a tone of inquiry as I could assume.

"His daughter, man? Na, na, only his niece—and sib aneugh to him, I think."

"Ay, indeed," I replied; I thought she had borne his name?'

"She bears her ain name, and that's Lilias."

"And has she no other name?" asked I.

"What needs she another till she gets a gudeman? answered my Thetis, a little miffed perhaps—to use the women's phrase—that I turned the conversation upon my former partner, rather than addressed it to herself.

There was a short pause, which was interrupted by Dame Martin observing, "They are standing up again."

"True," said I, having no mind to renew my late violent *capriole*, "and I must go help old Willie."

Ere I could extricate myself, I heard poor Thetis address herself to a sort of Mer-man in a jacket of seaman's blue, and a pair of trowsers, (whose hand, by the way, she had rejected at an earlier part of the evening,) and intimate that she was now disposed to take a trip.

"Trip away then, dearie," said the vindictive man of the waters, without offering his hand; "there," pointing to the floor, "is a roomy berth for you."

Certain I had made one enemy, and perhaps two, I hastened to my original seat beside Willie, and began to handle my bow. But I could see that my conduct had made an unfavourable impression; the words, "flory conceited chap,"—"hafflins gentle," and at length, the still more alarming epithet of "spy," began to be buzzed about, and I was heartily glad when the apparition of Sam's visage at the door, who was already possessed of and draining a can of punch, gave me assurance that my means of retreat were at hand. I intimated as much to Willie, who probably had heard more of the murmurs of the company than I had, for he whispered, "Ay, ay—awa wi' ye—ower lang here—slide out canny—dinna let them see ye are on the tramp."

I slipped half-a-guinea into the old man's hand, who answered, "Truts! pruts! nonsense! but I'se no refuse, trusting ye can afford it.—Awa wi' ye—and if ony body stops ye, cry on me."

I glided, by his advice, along the room as if looking for a partner, joined Sam, whom I disengaged with some difficulty from his can, and we left the cottage together in a manner to attract the least possible observation. The horses were tied in a neighbouring shed, and as the moon was up and I was now familiar with the road, broken and complicated as it is, we soon reached the Shepherd's Bush, where the old landlady was sitting up waiting for us, under some anxiety of mind, to account for which she did not hesitate to tell me that some folks had gone to Brokenburn from her house, or neighbouring towns, that did not come so safe back again. "Wandering Willie," she said, "was doubtless a kind of protection."

Here Willie's wife, who was smoking in the chimney corner, took up the praises of her "hinnie," as she called him, and endeavoured to awaken my generosity afresh, by describing the dangers *from which*, as she was *pleased to allege, her husband's countenance had assuredly been the means of preserving me. I was not, however, to be fooled out of* more money at this time, and went to bed in haste, full of various cogitations.

I have since spent a couple of days betwixt Mount Sharon and this place, and betwixt reading, writing to thee this momentous history, forming plans for seeing the lovely Lilias, and—partly, I think, for the sake of contradiction—angling a little in spite of Joshua's scruples—though I am rather liking the amusement better as I begin to have some success in it.

And now, my dearest Alan, you are in full possession of my secret—let me as frankly into the recesses of your bosom. How do you feel towards this fair ignis fatuus, this lily of the desert? Tell me honestly; for however the recollection of her may haunt my own mind, my love for Alan Fairford surpasses the love of woman. I know, too, that when you *do* love, it will be to

"Love once and love no more."

A deep-consuming passion, once kindled in a breast so steady as yours, would never be extinguished but with life. I am of another and more volatile temper, and though I shall open your next with a trembling hand, and uncertain heart, yet let it bring a frank confession that this fair unknown has made a deeper impression on your gravity than you reckoned for, and you will see I can tear the arrow from my own wound, barb and all. In the mean time, though I have formed schemes once more to see her, I will, you may rely on it, take no step for putting them into practice. I have refrained from this hitherto, and I give you my word of honour, I shall continue to do so; yet why should you need any further assurance from one who is so entirely yours as D. L.

P. S.—I shall be on thorns till I receive your answer. I read, and re-read your letter, and cannot for my soul discover what your real sentiments are. Sometimes I think you write of her as one in jest—and sometimes I think that cannot be. Put me at ease as soon as possible.

LETTER XIII

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

I WRITE on the instant, as you direct; and in a tragi-comic humour, for I have a tear in my eye and a smile on my cheek. Dearest Darsie, sure never a being but yourself could be so generous—sure never a being but yourself could be so absurd! I remember when you were a boy you wished to make your fine new whip a present to old aunt Peggy, merely because she admired it; and now, with like unreflecting and unappropriate liberality, you would resign your beloved to a smoke-dried young sophister, who cares not one of the hairs which it is his occupation to split, for all the daughters of Eve. *I* in love with your Lilias—your green-mantle—your unknown enchantress!—why I scarce saw her for five minutes, and even then only the tip of her chin was distinctly visible. She was well made, and the tip of her chin was of a most promising cast for the rest of the face; but, Heaven save you! she came upon business! and for a lawyer to fall in love with a pretty client on a single consultation, would be as wise as if he became enamoured of a particularly bright sunbeam which chanced for a moment to gild his bar-wig. I give you my word I am heart-whole; and, moreover, I assure you, that before I suffer a woman to sit near my heart's core, I must see her full face, without mask or mantle, ay, and know a good deal of her mind into the bargain. So never fret yourself on my account, my kind and generous Darsie; but, for your own sake, have a care, and let not an idle attachment, so lightly taken up, lead you into serious danger.

On this subject I feel so apprehensive, that now when I am decorated with the honours of the gown, I should have abandoned my career at the very starting to come to you, but for my father having contrived to clog my heels with fetters of a professional nature. I will tell you the matter at length, for it is comical enough; and why should not you list to my juridical adventures, as well as I to those of your fabulous knight-errantry?

It was after dinner, and I was considering how I might best introduce to my father the private resolution I had formed to set off for Dumfries-shire, or whether I had not better run away at once, and plead my excuse by letter, when, assuming the peculiar look with which he communicates any of his intentions respecting me, that he suspects may not be altogether acceptable, "Alan," he said, "ye now wear a gown—ye have opened shop, as we would say of a more mechanical profession; and, doubtless, ye think the floor of the courts is strewed with guineas, and that ye have only to stoop down to gather them?"

"I hope I am sensible, sir," I replied, "that I have some knowledge and practice to acquire, and must stoop for that in the first place."

"It is well said," answered my father; and always afraid to give too much encouragement, added, "Very well said, if it be well acted up to—Stoop to get knowledge and practice is the very word. Ye know very well, Alan, that in the other faculty who study the *Ars medendi*, before the young doctor gets to the bedsides of palaces, he must, as they call it, walk the hospitals; and cure Lazarus of his sores, before he be admitted to prescribe for Dives, when he has gout or indigestion"——

"I am aware, sir, that"——

"Whisht—do not interrupt the court—Well—also the chirurgeons have a useful practice, by which they put their apprentices and *tyrones* to work upon senseless dead bodies, to which, as they can do no good, so they certainly can do as little harm; while at the same time the *tyro*, or apprentice, gains experience, and becomes fit to whip off a leg or arm from a living subject, as cleanly as ye would slice an onion."

"I believe I guess your meaning, sir," answered I; "and were it not for a very particular engagement"——

"Do not speak to me of engagements; but whisht—there is a good lad—and do not interrupt the court."

My father, you know, is apt—be it said with all filial duty—to be a little prolix in his harangues. I had nothing for it but to lean back and listen.

"Maybe you think, Alan, because I have, doubtless, the management of some actions in dependence, whilk my worthy clients have intrusted me with, that I may think of sirting them your way *instanter*; and so setting you up in practice, so far as my small business or influence may go; and, doubtless, Alan, that is a day whilk I hope may come round. But then, before I give, as the proverb hath it, 'My own fish-guts to my own sea-maws,' I must, for the sake of my own character, be very sure that my sea-maw can pick them to some purpose. What say ye?"

"I am so far," answered I, "from wishing to get early into practice, sir, that I would willingly bestow a few days"——

"In farther study, ye would say, Alan. But that is not the way either—ye must walk the hospitals—ye must cure Lazarus—ye must cut and carve on a departed subject, to show your skill."

"I am sure," I replied, "I will undertake the cause of any poor man with pleasure, and bestow as much pains upon it as if it were a duke's; but for the next two or three days"——

"They must be devoted to close study, Alan—very close study indeed; for ye must stand primed for a hearing, *in presentia Dominorum*, upon Tuesday next."

"I, sir!" I replied in astonishment—"I have not opened my mouth in the Outer-House yet!"

"Never mind the Court of the Gentiles, man," said my father; "we will have you into the Sanctuary at once—over shoes, over boots."

"But, sir, I should really spoil any cause thrust on me so hastily."

"Ye cannot spoil it, Alan," said my father, rubbing his hands with much complacency; "that is the very cream of the business, man—it is just, as I said before, a subject upon whilk all the *tyrones* have been *trying their whittles* for fifteen years; and as there *have been about ten or a dozen agents* concerned, *and each took his own way, the case* is come to that pass, that Stair or Arniston could not mend it; and I do not think even you, Alan, can do it much harm—ye may get credit by it, but ye can lose none."

"And pray what is the name of my happy client, sir?" said I, ungraciously enough, I believe.

"It is a well-known name in the Parliament-House," replied my father. "To say the truth, I expect him every moment; it is Peter Peebles."*

"Peter Peebles!" exclaimed I, in astonishment; "he is an insane beggar—as poor as Job, and as mad as a March hare!"

"He has been pleaing in the court for fifteen years," said my father, in a tone of commiseration, which seemed to acknowledge that this fact was enough to account for the poor man's condition both in mind and circumstances.

"Besides, sir," I added he is on the Poor's Roll; and you know there are advocates regularly appointed to manage those cases; and for me to presume to interfere"——

"Whisht, Alan!—never interrupt the court—all *that* is managed for ye like a tee'd ball;" (my father sometimes draws his similes from his once favourite game of golf;)—"you must know, Alan, that Peter's cause was to have been opened by young Dumtoustie ye may ken the lad, a son of Dumtoustie of that ilk, member of Parliament for the county of ———, and a nephew of the Laird's younger brother, worthy Lord Bladderskate, whilk ye are aware sounds as like being akin to a peatship† and a sheriffdom, as a sieve is akin to a riddle. Now, Saunders Drudgeit, my lord's clerk, came to me this morning in the House, like ane bereft of his wits; for it seems that young Dumtoustie is ane of the Poor's Lawyers, and Peter Peebles's process had been remitted to him of course. But so soon as the harebrained goose saw the pokes,‡ (as indeed, Alan, they are none of the least,) he took fright, called for his nag, lap on, and away to the country is he gone; and so, said Saunders, my lord is at his wit's end wi' vexation and shame, to see his nevoy break off the course at the very starting. 'I'll tell you, Saunders,' said I, 'were I my lord, and a friend or kinsman of mine should leave the town while the court was sitting, that kinsman, or be he what he liked, should never darken my door again.' And then, Alan, I thought to turn the ball our own way; and I said that you were a gey sharp birkie, just off the irons, and if it would oblige my lord, and so forth, you would open Peter's cause on Tuesday, and make some handsome apology for the necessary absence of your learned friend, and the loss which your client and the court had sustained, and so forth. Saunders lap at the proposition, like a cock at a grosart; for, he said, the only chance was to get a new hand, that did not ken the charge he was taking upon him; for there was not a lad of two Sessions' standing that was not dead-sick of Peter Peebles and his cause; and he advised me to break the matter gently to you at the first; but I told him you were a good bairn, Alan, and had no will and pleasure in these matters but mine."

What could I say, Darsie, in answer to this arrangement, so very well meant—so very vexatious at the same time?—To imitate the defection and flight of young Dumtoustie, was at once to destroy my father's hopes of me for ever; nay, such is the keenness with which he regards all connected with his profession, it might have been a step to breaking his heart. I was obliged, therefore, to bow in sad acquiescence, when my father called to James Wilkinson to bring the two bits of pokes he would find on his table.

Exit James, and presently re-enters, bending under the load of two huge leathern bags, full of papers to the brim, and labelled on the greasy backs with the

* This unfortunate litigant (for a person named Peter Peebles actually flourished) frequented the courts of justice in Scotland about the year 1792, and the sketch of his appearance is given from recollection. The author is of opinion that he himself had at one time the honour to be counsel for Peter Peebles, whose voluminous course of litigation served as a sort of assay-pieces to most young men who were called to the bar. The scene of the consultation is entirely imaginary.

† Formerly, a lawyer, supposed to be under the peculiar patronage of any particular judge, was invidiously termed his peat or pet.

‡ Process-bags.

magic impress of the clerks of court, and the title, *Peebles against Plainstanes*. This huge mass was deposited on the table, and my father, with no ordinary glee in his countenance, began to draw out the various bundles of papers, secured by none of your red tape or whipcord, but stout, substantial casts of tarred rope, such as might have held small craft at their moorings.

I made a last and desperate effort to get rid of the impending job. "I am really afraid, sir, that this case seems so much complicated, and there is so little time to prepare, that we had better move the Court to supersede it till next Session."

"How, sir?—how, Alan?" said my father—"Would you approbate and reprobate sir?—You have accepted the poor man's cause, and if you have not his fee in your pocket, it is because he has none to give you; and now would you approbate and reprobate in the same breath of your mouth?—Think of your oath of office, Alan, and your duty to your father, my dear boy."

Once more, what could I say?—I saw, from my father's hurried and alarmed manner, that nothing could vex him so much as failing in the point he had determined to carry, and once more intimated my readiness to do my best, under every disadvantage.

"Well, well, my boy," said my father, "the Lord will make your days long in the land, for the honour you have given to your father's gray hairs. You may find wiser advisers, Alan, but none that can wish you better."

My father, you know, does not usually give way to expressions of affection, and they are interesting in proportion to their rarity. My eyes began to fill at seeing his glisten; and my delight at having given him such sensible gratification would have been unmixed, but for the thoughts of you. These out of the question, I could have grappled with the bags, had they been as large as corn-sacks. But, to turn what was grave into farce, the door opened, and Wilkinson ushered in Peter Peebles.

You must have seen this original, Darsie, who, like others in the same predicament, continues to haunt the courts of justice, where he has made shipwreck of time, means, and understanding. Such insane papers have sometimes seemed to me to resemble wrecks lying upon the shoals on the Goodwin Sands, or in Yarmouth Roads, warning other vessels to keep aloof from the banks on which they have been lost; or rather such ruined clients are like scarecrows and potato-bogles, distributed through the courts to scare away fools from the scene of litigation.

The identical Peter wears a huge great-coat, threadbare and patched itself, yet carefully so disposed and secured by what buttons remain, and many supplementary pins, as to conceal the still more infirm state of his under garments. The shoes and stockings of a ploughman were, however, seen to meet at his knees, with a pair of brownish, blackish breeches: a rusty-coloured handkerchief, that has been black in its day, surrounded his throat, and was an apology for linen. His hair, half gray half black, escaped in elf-locks around a huge wig, made of tow, as it seemed to me, and so much shrunk, that it stood upon the very top of his head; above which he plants, when covered, an immense cocked hat, which, like the chieftain's banner in an ancient battle, may be seen any sederunt day betwixt nine and ten, high towering above all the fluctuating and changeful scene in the Outer House, where his eccentricities often make him the centre of a group of petulant and teasing boys, who exercise upon him every art of ingenious torture. His countenance, originally that of a portly, comely burgess, is now emaciated with poverty and anxiety, and rendered wild by an insane lightness about the eyes; a withered and blighted skin and complexion; features begrimed with snuff, charged with the self-importance peculiar to insanity; and a habit of perpetually speaking to himself. Such was my unfortunate client; and I must allow, Darsie, that my profession had need to do a great deal of good, if *as is much to be feared, it brings* many *individuals to such a pass.*

After we had been, with a good deal of form, presented to each other, at which time I easily saw by my father's manner that he was desirous of supporting Peter's character in my eyes, as much as circumstances would permit, "Alan," he said, "this is the gentleman who has agreed to accept of you as his counsel, in place of young Dumtoustie."

"Entirely out of favour to my old acquaintance your father," said Peter, with a benign and patronising countenance, "out of respect to your father, and my old intimacy with Lord Bladderskate. Otherwise, by the *Regiam Majestatem!* I would have presented a petition and complaint against Daniel Dumtoustie, Advocate, by name and surname—I would, by all the practiques!—I know the forms of process; and I am not to be trifled with."

My father here interrupted my client, and reminded him that there was a good deal of business to do, as he proposed to give the young counsel an outline of the state of the conjoined process, with a view to letting him into the merits of the cause, disencumbered from the points of form. "I have made a short abbreviate, Mr. Peebles," said he; "having sat up late last night, and employed much of this morning in wading through these papers, to save Alan some trouble, and I am now about to state the result."

"I will state it myself," said Peter, breaking in without reverence upon his solicitor.

"No, by no means," said my father; "I am your agent for the time."

"Mine eleventh in number," said Peter; "I have a new one every year; I wish I could get a new coat as regularly."

"Your agent for the time," resumed my father; "and you, who are acquainted with the forms, know that the client states the cause to the agent—the agent to the counsel"——

"The counsel to the Lord Ordinary," continued Peter, once set a-going, like the peal of an alarm clock, "the Ordinary to the Inner-House, the President to the Bench. It is just like the rope to the man, the man to the axe, the axe to the ox, the ox to the water, the water to the fire"——

"Hush, for Heaven's sake, Mr. Peebles," said my father, cutting his recitation short; "time wears on—we must get to business—you must not interrupt the court, you know.—Hem, hem! From this abbreviate it appears"——

"Before you begin," said Peter Peebles, "I'll thank you to order me a morsel of bread and cheese, or some cauld meat, or broth, or the like alimentary provision; I was so anxious to see your son, that I could not eat a mouthful of dinner.

Heartily glad, I believe, to have so good a chance of stopping his client's mouth effectually, my father ordered some cold meat; to which James Wilkinson, for the honour of the house, was about to add the brandy bottle, which remained on the sideboard, but, at a wink from my father, supplied its place with small beer. Peter charged the provisions with the rapacity of a famished lion; and so well did the diversion engage him, that though, while my father stated the case, he looked at him repeatedly, as if he meant to interrupt his statement, yet he always found more agreeable employment for his mouth, and returned to the cold beef with an avidity which convinced me he had not had such an opportunity for many a day of satiating his appetite. Omitting much formal phraseology, and many legal details, I will endeavour to give you, in exchange for your fiddler's tale, the history of a litigant, or rather, the history of his lawsuit.

"Peter Peebles and Paul Plainstanes," said my father, "entered into partnership, in the year ——, as mercers and linendrapers, in the Luckenbooths, and carried on a great line of business to mutual advantage. But the learned counsel needeth not to be told, *societas est mater discordiarum*, partnership oft makes pleaship. The company being dissolved by mutual consent in the year ——, the affairs had to be wound up, and after certain attempts to settle the matter extrajudicially, it was at last brought into the Court, and has branched out into several distinct processes, most of which have been conjoined by the Ordinary. It is to the state of these processes that counsel's attention is particularly directed. There is

the original action of Peebles *v.* Plainstanes, convening him for payment of 3000*l.*, less or more, as alleged balance due by Plainstanes. 2dly, There is a counter action, in which Plainstanes is pursuer and Peebles defender, for 2500*l.*, less or more, being balance alleged *per contra*, to be due by Peebles. 3dly, Mr. Peebles's seventh agent advised an action of Compt and Reckoning at his instance, wherein what balance should prove due on either side might be fairly struck and ascertained. 4thly, To meet the hypothetical case, that Peebles might be found liable in a balance to Plainstanes, Mr. Wildgoose, Mr. Peebles's eighth agent, recommended a Multiplepoinding, to bring all parties concerned into the field."

My brain was like to turn at this account of lawsuit within law suit, like a nest of chip-boxes, with all of which I was expected to make myself acquainted.

"I understand," I said, "that Mr. Peebles claims a sum of money from Plainstanes—how then can he be his debtor? and if not his debtor, how can he bring a Multiplepoinding, the very summons of which sets forth, that the pursuer does owe certain moneys, which he is desirous to pay by warrant of a judge?"*

"Ye know little of the matter, I doobt, friend," said Mr. Peebles; "a Multiplepoinding is the safest *remedium juris* in the whole form of process. I have known it conjoined with a declarator of marriage.—Your beef is excellent," he said to my father, who in vain endeavoured to resume his legal disquisition; "but something highly powdered—and the twopenny is undeniable; but it is small swipes—small swipes—more of hop than malt—with your leave I'll try your black bottle."

My father started to help him with his own hand, and in due measure; but, infinitely to my amusement, Peter got possession of the bottle by the neck, and my father's ideas of hospitality were far too scrupulous to permit his attempting, by any direct means, to redeem it; so that Peter returned to the table triumphant, with his prey in his clutch.

"Better have a wine-glass, Mr. Peebles," said my father, in an admonitory tone, "you will find it pretty strong."

"If the kirk is ower muckle, we can sing mass in the quire," said Peter, helping himself in the goblet out of which he had been drinking the small beer. "What is it, usquebaugh?—BRANDY, as I am an honest man! I had almost forgotten the name and taste of brandy.—Mr. Fairford elder, your good health," (a monthful of brandy)—"Mr. Alan Fairford, wishing you well through your arduous undertaking," (another go-down of the comfortable liquor.) "And now, though you have given a tolerable breviate of this great lawsuit, of whilk every body has heard something that has walked the boards in the Outer-House, (here's to ye again, by way of interim decreet,) yet ye have omitted to speak a word of the arrestments."

"I was just coming to that point, Mr. Peebles."

"Or of the action of suspension of the charge on the bill."

"I was just coming to that."

"Or the advocation of the Sheriff-Court process."

"I was just coming to it."

"As Tweed comes to Melrose, I think," said the litigant; and then filling his goblet about a quarter full of brandy, as if in absence of mind, "Oh, Mr. Alan Fairford, ye are a lucky man to buckle to such a cause as mine at the very outset! it is like a specimen of all causes, man. By the Regiam, there is not a *remedium juris* in the practiques but ye'll find a spice o't. Here's to your getting wool through with it—Pshut—I am drinking naked spirits, I think. But a the heathen be ower strong, we'll christen him with the brewer," (here he added a little small beer to his beverage, paused, rolled his eyes, winked, and proceeded,)—"Mr. Fairford—the action of assault and battery, Mr. Fairford, when I compelled the villain Plainstanes to pull my nose within two steps of King Charles's statue, in the Parliament Close—there I had him in a hose-net. Never man could tell me *how to shape that process—no counsel* that ever selled wind could condescend and say whether it were best to proceed by way of petition and complaint, *ad vindictam publicam*, with consent of his Majesty's advocate, or by action on the statute for battery, *pendente lite*, whilk would be the winning my plea at once, and so getting a back-door out of Court.—By the Regiam, that beef and brandy is unco het at my heart—I maun try the ale again," (sipped a little beer;) "and the ale's but cauld, I maun e'en put in the rest of the brandy."

He was as good as his word, and proceeded in so loud and animated a style of elocution, thumping the table, drinking and snuffing alternately, that my father, abandoning all attempts to interrupt him, sat silent and ashamed, suffering and anxious for the conclusion of the scene.

"And then to come back to my pet process of all—my battery and assault process, when I had the good luck to provoke him to pull my nose at the very threshold of the Court, whilk was the very thing I wanted—Mr. Pest, ye ken him, Daddie Fairford? Old Pest was for making it out *hamesucken*, for he said the Court might be said—said—ugh!—to be my dwelling-place. I dwell mair there than ony gate else, and the essence of hamesucken is to strike a man in his dwelling place—mind that, young advocate—and so there's hope Plainstanes may be hanged, as many has for a less matter; for, my Lords,—will Pest say to the Justiciary bodies,—my Lords, the Parliament House is Peebles's place of dwelling, says he—being *communis forum*, and *commune forum est commune domicilium*—Lass, fetch another glass of whisky, and score it—time to gae hame—by the practiques, I cannot find the jug—yet there's twa of them, I think. By the Regiam, Fairford—Daddie Fairford—lend us twal pennies to buy aneeshing, mine is done—Macer, call another cause."

The box fell from his hands, and his body would at the same time have fallen from the chair, had I not supported him.

"This is intolerable," said my father—"Call a chairman, James Wilkinson, to carry this degraded, worthless, drunken beast home."

When Peter Peebles was removed from this memorable consultation, under the care of an able-bodied Celt, my father hastily bundled up the papers, as a showman, whose exhibition has miscarried, hastes to remove his booth. "Here are my memoranda, Alan," he said, in a hurried way; "look them carefully over—compare them with the processes, and turn it in your head before Tuesday. Many a good speech has been made for a beast of a client; and hark ye, lad, hark ye—I never intended to cheat you of your fee when all was done, though I would have liked to have heard the speech first; but there is nothing like corning the horse before the journey. Here are five goud guineas in a silk purse—of your poor mother's netting, Alan—she would have been a blithe woman to have seen her young son with a gown on his back—but no more of that—be a good boy, and to the work like a tiger."

I did set to work, Darsie; for who could resist such motives? With my father's assistance, I have mastered the details, confused as they are; and on Tuesday, I shall plead as well for Peter Peebles, as I could for a duke. Indeed, I feel my head so clear on the subject, as to be able to write this long letter to you; into which, however, Peter and his lawsuit have insinuated themselves so far, as to show you how much they at present occupy my thoughts. Once more, be careful of yourself, and mindful of me, who am ever thine, while

ALAN FAIRFORD.

From circumstances, to be hereafter mentioned, it was long ere this letter reached the person to whom it was addressed.

CHAPTER I.

NARRATIVE.

THE advantage of laying before the reader, in the words of the actors themselves, the adventures which we must otherwise have narrated in our own, has

* *Multiplepoinding is, I believe, equivalent to what is called in England a case of Double Distress.*

given great popularity to the publication of epistolary correspondence, as practised by various great authors, and by ourselves in the preceding chapters. Nevertheless, a genuine correspondence of this kind (and Heaven forbid it should be in any respect sophisticated by interpolations of our own!) can seldom be found to contain all in which it is necessary to instruct the reader for his full comprehension of the story. Also it must often happen that various prolixities and redundancies occur in the course of an interchange of letters, which must hang as a dead weight on the progress of the narrative. To avoid this dilemma, some biographers have used the letters of the personages concerned, or liberal extracts from them, to describe particular incidents, or express the sentiments which they entertained; while they connect them occasionally with such portions of narrative, as may serve to carry on the thread of the story.

It is thus that the adventurous travellers, who explore the summit of Mont Blanc, now move on through the crumbling snow-drift so slowly, that their progress is almost imperceptible, and anon abridge their journey by springing over the intervening chasms which cross their path, with the assistance of their pilgrim-staves. Or, to make a briefer simile, the course of story-telling which we have for the present adopted, resembles the original discipline of the dragoons, who were trained to serve either on foot or horseback, as the emergencies of the service required. With this explanation, we shall proceed to narrate some circumstances which Alan Fairford did not, and could not, write to his correspondent.

Our reader, we trust, has formed somewhat approaching to a distinct idea of the principal characters who have appeared before him during our narrative; but in case our good opinion of his sagacity has been exaggerated, and in order to satisfy such as are addicted to the laudable practice of *skipping*, (with whom we have at times a strong fellow-feeling,) the following particulars may not be superfluous.

Mr. Saunders Fairford, as he was usually called, was a man of business of the old school, moderate in his charges, economical and even niggardly in his expenditure, strictly honest in conducting his own affairs, and those of his clients, but taught by long experience to be wary and suspicious in observing the motions of others. Punctual as the clock of Saint Giles tolled nine, the neat dapper form of the little hale old gentleman was seen at the threshold of the Court hall, or at farthest, at the head of the Back Stairs, trimly dressed in a complete suit of snuff-coloured brown, with stockings of silk or woollen, as suited the weather; a bobwig, and a small cocked hat; shoes blacked as Warren would have blacked them; silver shoe-buckles, and a gold stock-buckle. A nosegay in summer, and a sprig of holly in winter, completed his well-known dress and appearance. His manners corresponded with his attire, for they were scrupulously civil, and not a little formal. He was an elder of the kirk, and, of course, zealous for King George and the government even to slaying, as he had showed by taking up arms in their cause. But then, as he had clients and connexions of business among families of opposite political tenets, he was particularly cautious to use all the conventional phrases which the civility of the time had devised, as an admissible mode of language betwixt the two parties. Thus he spoke sometimes of the Chevalier, but never either of the Prince, which would have been sacrificing his own principles, or of the Pretender, which would have been offensive to those of others. Again, he usually designated the Rebellion as the *affair* of 1745, and spoke of any one engaged in it as a person who had been *out* at a certain period.* So that, on the whole, Mr. Fairford was a man much liked and respected on all sides, though his friends would not have been sorry if he had given a dinner more frequently, as his cellar contained some choice old wine, of which such rare occasions, he was no niggard.

The whole pleasure of this good old-fashioned of method, besides that which he really felt in discharge of his daily business, was the hope t his son Alan, the only fruit of a union which early dissolved, attain what in the father's eye the proudest of all distinctions—the rank and fa a well-employed lawyer.

Every profession has its peculiar honours, and Fairford's mind was constructed upon so limite exclusive a plan, that he valued nothing, save th jects of ambition which his own presented. would have shuddered at Alan's acquiring the re of a hero, and laughed with scorn at the equall ren laurels of literature; it was by the path law alone that he was desirous to see him ri eminence, and the probabilities of success or pointment were the thoughts of his father by da his dream by night.

The disposition of Alan Fairford, as well talents, were such as to encourage his father pectations. He had acuteness of intellect, join habits of long and patient study, improved no by the discipline of his father's house; to whic nerally speaking, he conformed with the utmo cility, expressing no wish for greater or more fre relaxation than consisted with his father's ar and severe restrictions. When he did indulge i juvenile frolics, his father had the candour to l whole blame upon his more mercurial comp Darsie Latimer.

This youth, as the reader must be aware, had received as an inmate into the family of Mr. ford, senior, at a time when some of the delic constitution which had abridged the life of hi sort, began to show itself in the son, and wh father was, of course, peculiarly disposed to i his slightest wish. That the young Englishma able to pay a considerable board, was a matter importance to Mr. Fairford; it was enough th presence seemed to make his son cheerful and l He was compelled to allow that "Darsie was lad, though unsettled," and he would have had difficulty in getting rid of him, and the apprehe which his levities excited, had it not been f voluntary excursion which gave rise to the pre correspondence, and in which Mr. Fairford s rejoiced, as affording the means of separating from his gay companion, at least until he should assumed, and become accustomed to, the du his dry and laborious profession.

But the absence of Darsie was far from pro the end which the elder Mr. Fairford had ex and desired. The young men were united closest bonds of intimacy; and the more s neither of them sought nor desired to admit any into their society. Alan Fairford was averse t ral company, from a disposition naturally re and Darsie Latimer from a painful sense of hi unknown origin, peculiarly afflicting in a where high and low are professed genealogists young men were all in all to each other; it is n der, therefore, that their separation was pain that its effects upon Alan Fairford, joined anxiety occasioned by the tenor of his frien ters, greatly exceeded what the senior had anti The young man went through his usual du studies, and the examinations to which he w jected, but with nothing like the zeal and a which he had formerly displayed; and his anxi observant father saw but too plainly that hi was with his absent comrade.

A philosopher would have given way to thi feeling, in hopes to have diminished its exc permitted the youths to have been some ti ther, that their intimacy might have been by degrees; but Mr. Fairford only saw th mode of continued restraint, which, how desirous of veiling under some plausible the anxiety which he felt on this occa

* OLD-FASHIONED SCOTTISH CIVILITY.—Such were literally the points of politeness observed in general society during the author's youth, where it was by no means unusual in a company assembled by chance, to find individuals who had borne arms on one side or other in the civil broils of 1745. Nothing, according to my recollection, could be more gentle and decorous than the respect these old enemies paid to each other's prejudices. But in this I speak generally. I have seen explosions.

"Alan," he said, "was ance wud, and aye waur; and he was expecting every moment when he would start off in a wildgoose-chase after the callant Latimer; Will Sampson, the horse-hirer in Candlemaker Row, had given him a hint that Alan had been looking for a good hack, to go to the country for a few days. And then to oppose him downright—he could not but think on the way his poor mother was removed—Would to Heaven he was yoked to some tight piece of business, no matter whether well or ill paid, but some job that would hamshackle him at least until the Courts rose, if it were but for decency's sake."

Peter Drudgeit sympathized, for Peter had a son, who, reason or none, would needs exchange the torn and inky fustian sleeves for the blue jacket and white lapelle; and he suggested, as the reader knows, the engaging our friend Alan in the matter of Poor Peter Peebles, just opened by the desertion of young Dumtoustie, whose defection would be at the same time concealed; and this, Drudgeit said, "would be felling two dogs with one stone."

With these explanations, the reader will hold a man of the elder Fairford's sense and experience free from the hazardous and impatient curiosity with which boys fling a puppy into a deep pond, merely to see if the creature can swim. However confident in his son's talents, which were really considerable, he would have been very sorry to have involved him in the duty of pleading a complicated and difficult case, upon his very first appearance at the bar, had he not resorted to it as an effectual way to prevent the young man from taking a step, which his habits of thinking represented as a most fatal one at his outset of life.

Betwixt two evils, Mr. Fairford chose that which was in his own apprehension the least; and, like a brave officer sending forth his son to battle, rather chose he should die upon the breach, than desert the conflict with dishonour. Neither did he leave him to his own unassisted energies. Like Alpheus preceding Hercules, he himself encountered the Augean mass of Peter Peebles's law-matters. It was to the old man a labour of love to place in a clear and undistorted view the real merits of this case, which the carelessness and blunders of Peter's former solicitors had converted into a huge chaotic mass of unintelligible technicality; and such was his skill and industry, that he was able, after the severe toil of two or three days, to present to the consideration of the young counsel the principal facts of the case, in a light equally simple and comprehensible. With the assistance of a solicitor so affectionate and indefatigable, Alan Fairford was enabled, when the day of trial arrived, to walk towards the Court, attended by his anxious yet encouraging parent, with some degree of confidence that he would lose no reputation upon this arduous occasion.

They were met at the door of the Court by Poor Peter Peebles, in his usual plentitude of wig and celsitude of hat. He seized on the young pleader like a lion on his prey. "How is a' wi' you, Mr. Alan—how is a' wi' you, man?—The awfu' day is come at last—a day that will be lang minded in this house. Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstanes—conjoined processes—Hearing in presence—stands for the Short Roll for this day—I have not been able to sleep for a week for thinking of it, and, I dare to say, neither has the Lord President himself—for such a cause!! But your father garr'd me tak a wee drap ower muckle of his pint bottle the other night; it's no right to mix brandy wi' business, Mr. Fairford. I would have been the waur o' liquor if I would have drank as muckle as you twa would have had me. But there's a time for a' things, and if ye will dine with me after the case is heard, or, whilk is the same, or maybe better, *I'll* gang my ways hame wi' *you* and I winna object to a cheerfu' glass, within the bounds of moderation."

Old Fairford shrugged his shoulders and hurried past the client, saw his son wrapt in the sable bombazine, which, in his eyes, was more venerable than *an archbishop's lawn, and could not help fondly patting his shoulder, and whispering to him to take courage, and show he was worthy to wear it.* The party entered the Outer Hall of the Court, once the place of meeting of the ancient Scottish Parliament, and which corresponds to the use of Westminster Hall in England, serving as a vestibule to the Inner-House, as it is termed, and a place of dominion to certain sedentary personages called Lords Ordinary.

The earlier part of the morning was spent by old Fairford in reiterating his instructions to Alan, and in running from one person to another, from whom he thought he could still glean some grains of information, either concerning the point at issue, or collateral cases. Mean time Poor Peter Peebles, whose shallow brain was altogether unable to bear the importance of the moment, kept as close to his young counsel as shadow to substance, affected now to speak loud, now to whisper in his ear, now to deck his ghastly countenance with wreathed smiles, now to cloud it with a shade of deep and solemn importance, and anon to contort it with the sneer of scorn and derision. These moods of the client's mind were accompanied with singular "mopings and mowings," fantastic gestures, which the man of rags and litigation deemed appropriate to his changes of countenance. Now he brandished his arm aloft, now thrust his fist straight out, as if to knock his opponent down. Now he laid his open palm on his bosom, and now flinging it abroad, he gallantly snapped his fingers in the air.

These demonstrations, and the obvious shame and embarrassment of Alan Fairford, did not escape the observation of the juvenile idlers in the hall. They did not, indeed, approach Peter with their usual familiarity, from some feeling of deference towards Fairford, though many accused him of conceit in presuming to undertake at this early stage of his practice a case of considerable difficulty. But Alan, notwithstanding this forbearance, was not the less sensible that he and his companion were the subjects of many a passing jest, and many a shout of laughter, with which that region at all times abounds.

At length the young counsel's patience gave way, and as it threatened to carry his presence of mind and recollection along with it, Alan frankly told his father, that unless he was relieved from the infliction of his client's personal presence and instructions, he must necessarily throw up his brief, and decline pleading the case.

"Hush, hush, my dear Allan," said the old gentleman, almost at his own wit's end upon hearing this dilemma; "dinna mind the silly ne'er-do-weel; we cannot keep the man from hearing his own cause, though he be not quite right in the head."

"On my life, sir," answered Alan, "I shall be unable to go on, he drives every thing out of my remembrance; and if I attempt to speak seriously of the injuries he has sustained, and the condition he is reduced to, how can I expect but that the very appearance of such an absurd scarecrow will turn it all into ridicule?"

"There is something in that," said Saunders Fairford, glancing a look at Poor Peter, and then cautiously inserting his forefinger under his bob-wig, in order to rub his temple and aid his invention; "he is no figure for the fore-bar to see without laughing; but how to get rid of him? To speak sense, or any thing like it, is the last thing he will listen to.—Stay, ay—Alan, my darling, hae patience; I'll get him off on the instant, like a gowff ba'."

So saying, he hastened to his ally, Peter Drudgeit, who, on seeing him with marks of haste in his gait, and care upon his countenance, clapped his pen behind his ear, with "What's the stir now, Mr. Saunders?—Is there aught wrang?"

"Here's a dollar, man," said Mr. Saunders; "now, or never, Peter, do me a good turn. Yonder's your namesake, Peter Peebles, will drive the swine thro' our bonny hanks of yarn;* get him over to John's Coffee-house, man—gie him his meridian—keep him there, drunk or sober, till the hearing is ower."

* The simile is obvious, from the old manufacture of Scotland, when the gudewife's thrift, as the yarn wrought in the winter was called, when laid down to bleach by the burn-side, was peculiarly exposed to the inroads of the pigs, seldom well regulated about a Scottish farm-house.

"Enough said," quoth Peter Drudgeit, no way displeased with his own share in the service required,—"We'se do your bidding."

"Accordingly, the scribe was presently seen whispering in the ear of Peter Peebles, whose responses came forth in the following broken form:—

"Leave the Court for ae minute on this great day of judgment?—not I, by the Reg——Eh! what? Brandy, did ye say—French Brandy?—couldna ye fetch a stoup to the bar under your coat, man?—Impossible? Na, if it's clean impossible, and if we have an hour good till they get through the single bills and the summar-roll, I carena if I cross the close wi' you; I am sure I need something to keep my heart up this awful day; but I'll no stay above an instant—not above a minute of time—nor drink aboon a single gill."

In a few minutes afterwards, the two Peters were seen moving through the Parliament Close, (which newfangled affectation has termed a Square,) the triumphant Drudgeit leading captive the passive Peebles, whose legs conducted him towards the dramshop, while his reverted eyes were fixed upon the Court. They dived into the Cimmerian abysses of John's Coffee-house,* formerly the favourite rendezvous of the classical and genial Doctor Pitcairn, and were for the present seen no more.

Relieved from his tormentor, Alan Fairford had time to rally his recollections, which, in the irritation of his spirits, had nearly escaped him, and to prepare himself for a task, the successful discharge or failure in which must, he was aware, have the deepest influence upon his fortunes. He had pride, was not without a consciousness of talent, and the sense of his father's feelings upon the subject impelled him to the utmost exertion. Above all, he had that sort of self-command which is essential to success in every arduous undertaking, and he was constitutionally free from that feverish irritability, by which those whose over-active imaginations exaggerate difficulties, render themselves incapable of encountering such when they arrive.

Having collected all the scattered and broken associations which were necessary, Alan's thoughts reverted to Dumfries-shire, and the precarious situation in which he feared his beloved friend had placed himself; and once and again he consulted his watch, eager to have his present task commenced and ended, that he might hasten to Darsie's assistance. The hour and moment at length arrived. The Macer shouted, with all his well-remembered brazen strength of lungs, "Poor Peter Peebles *versus* Plainstanes, Peter Dumtoustie *et* Tough:—Maister Da-a-niel Dumtoustie!" Dumtoustie answered not the summons, which, deep and swelling as it was, could not reach across the Queensferry; but our Maister Alan Fairford appeared in his place.

The Court was very much crowded; for much amusement had been received on former occasions when Peter had volunteered his own oratory, and had been completely successful in routing the gravity of the whole procedure, and putting to silence, not indeed the counsel of the opposite party, but his own.

Both bench and audience seemed considerably surprised at the juvenile appearance of the young man who appeared in the room of Dumtoustie, for the purpose of opening this complicated and long depending process, and the common herd were disappointed at the absence of Peter the client, the Punchinello of the expected entertainment. The Judges looked with a very favourable countenance on our friend Alan, most of them being acquainted, more or less, with so old a practitioner as his father, and all, or almost all, affording, from civility, the same fair play to the first pleading of a counsel, which the House of Commons yields to the maiden speech of one of its members.

Lord Bladderskate was an exception to this general expression of benevolence. He scowled upon Alan from beneath his large, shaggy, gray eye-brows, just as if the young lawyer had been usurping his nephew's honours, instead of covering his disgrace; and, from feelings which did his lordship little honour, he privately hoped the young man would not succeed in the cause which his kinsman had abandoned.

Even Lord Bladderskate, however, was, in spite of himself, pleased with the judicious and modest tone in which Alan began his address to the Court, apologizing for his own presumption, and excusing it by the sudden illness of his learned brother, for whom the labour of opening a cause of some difficulty and importance had been much more worthily designed. He spoke of himself as he really was, and of young Dumtoustie as what he ought to have been, taking care not to dwell on either topic a moment longer than was necessary. The old Judge's looks became benign; his family pride was propitiated, and, pleased equally with the modesty and civility of the young man whom he had thought forward and officious, he relaxed the scorn of his features into an expression of profound attention; the highest compliment, and the greatest encouragement, which a judge can render to the counsel addressing him.

Having succeeded in securing the favourable attention of the court, the young lawyer, using the lights which his father's experience and knowledge of business had afforded him, proceeded with an address and clearness, unexpected from one of his years, to remove from the case itself those complicated formalities with which it had been loaded, as a surgeon strips from a wound the dressings which have been hastily wrapped round it, in order to proceed to his cure *secundum artem*. Developed of the cumbrous and complicated technicalities of litigation, with which the perverse obstinacy of the client, the inconsiderate haste or ignorance of his agents, and the evasions of a subtle adversary had invested the process, the cause of Poor Peter Peebles, standing upon its simple merits, was no bad subject for the declamation of a young counsel, nor did our friend Alan fail to avail himself of its strong points.

He exhibited his client as a simple-hearted, honest, well-meaning man, who, during a copartnership of twelve years, had gradually become impoverished, while his partner, (his former clerk,) having no funds but his share of the same business, into which he had been admitted without any advance of stock, had become gradually more and more wealthy.

"Their association," said Alan, and the little flight was received with some applause, "resembled the ancient story of the fruit which was carved with a knife poisoned on one side of the blade only, so that the individual to whom the envenomed portion was served, drew decay and death from what afforded savour and sustenance to the consumer of the other moiety." He then plunged boldly into the *mare magnum* of accompts between the parties; he pursued each false statement from the waste-book to the day-book, from the day-book to the bill-book, from the bill-book to the ledger; placed the artful interpolations and insertions of the fallacious Plainstanes in array against each other, and against the fact; and, availing himself to the utmost of his father's previous labours, and his own knowledge of accompts, in which he had been sedulously trained, he laid before the Court a clear and intelligible statement of the affairs of the copartnery, showing with precision, that a large balance must, at the dissolution, have been due to his client, sufficient to have enabled him to have carried on business on his own account, and thus to have retained his situation in society, as an independent and industrious tradesman. "But, instead of this justice being voluntarily rendered by the former clerk to his former master,—by the party obliged to his benefactor—by one honest man to another,—his wretched client had been compelled to follow his quondam clerk, his present debtor, from Court to Court; had found

* This small dark coffee-house, now burnt down, was the resort of such writers and clerks belonging to the Parliament House above thirty years ago, as retained the ancient Scottish custom of a meridian, as it was called, or noontide dram of spirits. If their proceedings were watched, they might be seen to turn fidgety about the hour of noon, and exchange looks with each other from their separate desks, till at length some one more formal and dignified presence assumed the honour of leading the band, when away they went, threading the crowd like a string of wild-fowl, crossed the square or close, and following each other into the coffee-house, received in turn from the hand of the waiter, the meridian, which was placed ready at the bar. What they did, day by day: and though they did not speak to each other, they seemed to attach a certain degree of sociability to performing the ceremony in company.

just claims met with well-invented but unfounded counter-claims; had seen his party shift his character of pursuer or defender, as often as Harlequin effects his transformations, till, in a chase so varied and so long, the unhappy litigant had lost substance, reputation, and almost the use of reason itself, and came before their Lordships an object of thoughtless derision to the unreflecting, of compassion to the better-hearted, and of awful meditation to every one, who considered that, in a country where excellent laws were administered by upright and incorruptible judges, a man might pursue an almost indisputable claim through all the mazes of litigation; lose fortune, reputation, and reason itself in the chase, and at length come before the Supreme Court of his country in the wretched condition of his unhappy client, a victim to protracted justice, and to that hope delayed which sickens the heart."

The force of this appeal to feeling made as much impression on the Bench, as had been previously effected by the clearness of Alan's argument. The absurd form of Peter himself, with his tow-wig, was fortunately not present to excite any ludicrous emotion, and the pause that took place when the young lawyer had concluded his speech, was followed by a murmur of approbation, which the ears of his father drank in as the sweetest sounds that had ever entered them. Many a hand of gratulation was thrust out to his grasp, trembling as it was with anxiety, and finally with delight; his voice faltering, as he replied, "Ay, ay, I kend Alan was the lad to make a spoon or spoil a horn."*

The counsel on the other side arose, an old practioner, who had noted too closely the impression made by Alan's pleading, not to fear the consequences of an immediate decision. He paid the highest compliments to his very young brother—"the Benjamin, as he would presume to call him, of the learned Faculty—said the alleged hardships of Mr. Peebles were compensated, by his being placed in a situation where the benevolence of their Lordships had assigned him gratuitously such assistance as he might not otherwise have obtained at a high price—and allowed his young brother had put many things in such a new point of view, that, although he was quite certain of his ability to refute them, he was honestly desirous of having a few hours to arrange his answer, in order to be able to follow Mr. Fairford from point to point. He had further to observe, there was one point of the case to which his brother, whose attention had been otherwise so wonderfully comprehensive, had not given the consideration which he expected; it was founded on the interpretation of certain correspondence which had passed betwixt the parties, soon after the dissolution of the copartnery."

The Court having heard Mr. Tough, readily allowed him two days for preparing himself, hinting, at the same time, that he might find his task difficult, and affording the young counsel, with high encomiums upon the mode in which he had acquitted himself, the choice of speaking, either now or at next calling of the the cause, upon the point which Plainstane's lawyer had adverted to.

Alan modestly apologized for what in fact had been an omission very pardonable in so complicated a case, and professed himself instantly ready to go through that correspondence, and prove that it was in form and substance exactly applicable to the view of the case he had submitted to their lordships. He applied to his father, who sat behind him, to hand him, from time to time, the letters, in the order in which he meant to read and comment upon them.

Old Counsellor Tough had probably formed an ingenious enough scheme to blunt the effect of the young lawyer's reasoning, by thus obliging him to follow up a process of reasoning, clear and complete in itself, by a hasty and extemporary appendix. If so, he seemed likely to be disappointed; for Alan was well prepared on this, as on other parts of the cause, and recommenced his pleading with a degree of animation and spirit, which added force even to what he had formerly stated, and might perhaps have occasioned the old gentleman to regret his having again called him up; when his father, as he handed him the letters, put one into his hand which produced a singular effect on the pleader.

At the first glance, he saw that the paper had no reference to the affairs of Peter Peebles; but the first glance also showed him, what, even at that time, and in that presence, he could not help reading; and which, being read, seemed totally to disconcert his ideas. He stopped short in his harangue—gazed on the paper with a look of surprise and horror—uttered an exclamation, and, flinging down the brief which he had in his hand, hurried out of Court without returning a single word of answer to the various questions, "what was the matter?"—"Was he taken unwell?"—"Should not a chair be called?" &c. &c. &c.

The elder Mr. Fairford, who remained seated, and looking as senseless as if he had been made of stone, was at length recalled to himself by the anxious inquiries of the judges and the counsel after his son's health. He then rose with an air, in which was mingled the deep habitual reverence in which he held the Court, with some internal cause of agitation, and with difficulty mentioned something of a mistake—a piece of bad news—Alan, he hoped, would be well enough to-morrow. But unable to proceed farther, he clasped his hands together, exclaiming, "My son! my son!" and left the court hastily, as if in pursuit of him.

"What's the matter with the auld bitch next?" said an acute metaphysical judge, though somewhat coarse in his manners, aside to his brethren. "This is a daft cause, Bladderskate—first, it drives the poor man mad that aught it—then your nevoy goes daft with fright, and flies the pit—then this smart young hopeful is aff the hooks with too hard study, I fancy—and now auld Saunders Fairford is as lunatick as the best of them. What say ye till't, ye bitch?"

"Nothing, my lord," answered Bladderskate, much too formal to admire the levities in which his philosophical brother sometimes indulged—"I say nothing, but pray to Heaven to keep our own wits."

"Amen, amen," answered his learned brother; "for some of us have but few to spare."

The Court then arose, and the audience departed, greatly wondering at the talent displayed by Alan Fairford, at his first appearance, in a case so difficult and so complicated, and assigning a hundred conjectural causes, each different from the others, for the singular interruption which had clouded his day of success. The worst of the whole was, that six agents, who had each come to the separate resolution of thrusting a retaining fee into Alan's hand as he left the court, shook their heads as they returned the money into their leathern pouches, and said, "that the lad was clever, but they would like to see more of him before they engaged him in the way of business—they did not like his lowping away like a flea in a blanket."

CHAPTER II.

Had our friend Alexander Fairford known the consequences of his son's abrupt retreat from the Court, which was mentioned in the end of the last chapter, it might have accomplished the prediction of the lively old judge, and driven him utterly distracted. As it was, he was miserable enough. His son had risen to degrees higher in his estimation than ever, by his display of juridical talents, which seemed to assure him that the applause of the judges and professors of the law, which, in his estimation, was worth that of all mankind besides, authorized to the fullest extent the advantageous estimate which even his parental partiality had been induced to form of Alan's powers. On the other hand, he felt that he was himself a little humbled, from a disguise which he had practised towards this son of his hopes and wishes.

The truth was, that on the morning of this eventful day, Mr. Alexander Fairford had received from his correspondent and friend, Provost Crosbie of Dumfries, a letter of the following tenor:—

* Said of an adventurous gipsy, who resolves at all risks to convert a sheep's horn into a spoon.

† Tradition ascribes this whimsical style of language to the ingenious and philosophical Lord Kaimes.

"DEAR SIR,

"YOUR respected favour of 25th ultimo, per favour of Mr. Darsie Latimer, reached me in safety, and I showed to the young gentleman such attentions as he was pleased to accept of. The object of my present writing is twofold. First, the council are of opinion that you should now begin to stir in the thirlage cause; and they think they will be able, from evidence *noviter repertum*, to enable you to amend your condescendence upon the use and wont of the burgh, touching the *grana invecta et illata*. So you will please consider yourself as authorized to speak to Mr. Pest, and lay before him the papers which you will receive by the coach. The council think that a fee of two guineas may be sufficient on this occasion, as Mr. Pest had three for drawing the original condescendence.

"I take the opportunity of adding, that there has been a great riot among the Solway fishermen, who have destroyed, in a masterful manner, the stake-nets set up near the mouth of this river; and have besides attacked the house of Quaker Geddes, one of the principal partners of the Tide-net Fishing Company, and done a great deal of damage. Am sorry to add, young Master Latimer was in the fray, and has not since been heard of. Murder is spoke of, but that may be a word of course. As the young gentleman has behaved rather oddly while in these parts, as in declining to dine with me more than once, and going about the country with strolling fiddlers and such-like, I rather hope that his present absence is only occasioned by a frolic; but as his servant has been making inquiries of me respecting his master, I thought it best to acquaint you in course of post. I have only to add, that our sheriff has taken a precognition, and committed one or two of the rioters. If I can be useful in this matter, either by advertising for Mr. Latimer as missing, publishing a reward, or otherwise, I will obey your respected instructions, being your most obedient to command,

"WILLIAM CROSBIE."

When Mr. Fairford received this letter, and had read it to an end, his first idea was to communicate it to his son, that an express might be instantly despatched, or a King's messenger sent with proper authority to search after his late guest.

The habits of the fishers were rude, as he well knew, though not absolutely sanguinary or ferocious; and there had been instances of their transporting persons who had interfered in their smuggling trade to the Isle of Man, and elsewhere, and keeping them under restraint for many weeks. On this account Mr. Fairford was naturally led to feel anxiety concerning the fate of his late inmate; and, at a less interesting moment, would certainly have set out himself, or licensed his son to go in pursuit of his friend.

But alas! he was both a father and an agent. In the one capacity, he looked on his son as dearer to him than all the world besides; in the other, the lawsuit which he conducted was to him like an infant to its nurse, and the case of Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstanes was, he saw, adjourned, perhaps *sine die*, should this document reach the hands of his son. The mutual and enthusiastical affection betwixt the young men was well known to him; and he concluded, that if the precarious state of Latimer were made known to Alan Fairford, it would render him not only unwilling, but totally unfit, to discharge the duty of the day, to which the old gentleman attached such ideas of importance.

On mature reflection, therefore, he resolved, though not without some feelings of compunction, to delay communicating to his son the disagreeable intelligence which he had received, until the business of the day should be ended. The delay, he persuaded himself, could be of little consequence to Darsie Latimer, whose folly, he dared to say, had led him into some scrape which would meet an appropriate punishment, in some accidental restraint, which would be thus prolonged for only a few hours longer. Besides, he would have time to speak to the Sheriff of the county —perhaps to the King's Advocate—and set about the matter in a regular manner, or, as he termed it, as summing up the duties of a solicitor, to *agé as accords.**

The scheme, as we have seen, was partially successful, and was only ultimately defeated, as he confessed to himself with shame, by his own very unbusiness-like mistake of shuffling the Provost's letter, in the hurry and anxiety of the morning, among some papers belonging to Peter Peebles's affairs, and then handing it to his son, without observing the blunder. He used to protest, even till the day of his death, that he never had been guilty of such an inaccuracy as giving a paper out of his hand without looking at the docketing, except on that unhappy occasion, when, of all others, he had such particular reason to regret his negligence.

Disturbed by these reflections, the old gentleman had, for the first time in his life, some disinclination, arising from shame and vexation, to face his own son; so that to protract for a little the meeting which he feared would be a painful one, he went to wait upon the Sheriff-depute, who he found had set off for Dumfries, in great haste, to superintend in person the investigation which had been set on foot by his Substitute. This gentleman's clerk could say little on the subject of the riot, excepting that it had been serious, much damage done to property, and some personal violence offered to individuals; but as far as he had yet heard, no lives lost on the spot.

Mr. Fairford was compelled to return home with this intelligence; and on inquiring at James Wilkinson where his son was, received for answer, that "Maister Alan was in his own room, and very busy."

"We must have our explanation over," said Saunders Fairford to himself. "Better a finger off as aye wagging;" and going to the door of his son's apartment he knocked at first gently—then more loudly—but received no answer. Somewhat alarmed at this silence, he opened the door of the chamber—it was empty—clothes lay mixed in confusion with the law-books and papers, as if the inmate had been engaged in hastily packing for a journey. As Mr. Fairford looked around in alarm, his eye was arrested by a sealed letter lying upon his son's writing-table, and addressed to himself. It contained the following words:—

"MY DEAREST FATHER,

"You will not, I trust, be surprised, nor perhaps very much displeased, to learn that I am now on my way to Dumfries-shire, to learn, by my own personal investigation, the present state of my dear friend, and afford him such relief as may be in my power, and which, I trust, will be effectual. I do not presume to reflect upon you, dearest sir, for concealing from me information of so much consequence to my peace of mind and happiness; but I hope your having done so will be, if not an excuse, at least some mitigation of my present offence, in taking a step of consequence without consulting your pleasure; and, I must further own, under circumstances which perhaps might lead to your disapprobation of my purpose. I can only say, in further apology, that if any thing unhappy, which Heaven forbid! shall have occurred to the person who, next to yourself, is dearest to me in this world, I shall have on my heart, as a subject of eternal regret, that being in a certain degree warned of his danger, and furnished with the means of obviating it, I did not instantly hasten to his assistance, but preferred giving my attention to the business of this unlucky morning. No view of personal distinction, nothing, indeed, short of your earnest and often expressed wishes, could have detained me in town till this day; and having made this sacrifice to filial duty, I trust you will hold me excused, if I now obey the calls of friendship and humanity. Do not be in the least anxious on my account; I shall know, I trust, how to conduct myself with due caution in any emergence which may occur, otherwise my legal studies for so many years have been to little purpose. I am fully provided with money, and also with arms in case of need; but you may rely on my prudence in avoiding all occasions of

* A Scots law phrase of no very determinate import, meaning, generally, to do what is fitting.

uming the latter, short of the last necessity. God Almighty bless you, my dearest father! and grant that you may forgive the first, and, I trust, the last act approaching towards premeditated disobedience, of which I either have now, or shall hereafter have, to accuse myself. I remain, till death, your dutiful and affectionate son, "ALAN FAIRFORD.

"P. S.—I shall write with the utmost regularity, acquainting you with my motions, and requesting your advice. I trust my stay will be very short, and I think it possible that I may bring back Darsie along with me."

The paper dropped from the old man's hand when he was thus assured of the misfortune which he apprehended. His first idea was to get a post-chaise and pursue the fugitive; but he recollected, that, upon the very rare occasions when Alan had shown himself indocile to the *patria potestas*, his natural ease and gentleness of disposition seemed hardened into obstinacy, and that now, entitled, as arrived at the years of majority, and a member of the learned Faculty, to direct his own motions, there was great doubt, whether, in the event of his overtaking his son, he might be able to prevail upon him to return back. In such a risk of failure, he thought it wiser to desist from his purpose, especially as even his success in such a pursuit would give a ridiculous *éclat* to the whole affair, which could not be otherwise than prejudicial to his son's rising character.

Bitter, however, were Saunders Fairford's reflections, as, again picking up the fatal scroll, he threw himself into his son's leathern easy-chair, and bestowed upon it a disjointed commentary. "Bring back Darsie? little doubt of that—the bad shilling is sure enough to come back again. I wish Darsie no worse ill than that he were carried where the silly fool Alan should never see him again. It was an ill hour that he darkened my doors in, for, ever since that, Alan has given up his ane old-fashioned motherwit, for the t'other's capernointed maggots and nonsense. Provided with money? you must have more than I know of, then, my friend, for I trow I kept you pretty short for your own good.—Can he have gotten more fees? or, does he think five guineas has neither beginning nor end?—Arms! What would he do with arms, or what would any man do with them that is not a regular soldier under government, or else a thief-taker? I have had enough of arms, I trow, although I carried them for King George and the government. But this is a worse strait than Falkirk-field yet!—God guide us, we are poor inconsistent creatures! To think the lad should have made so able an appearance, and then bolted off this gate, after a glaiket ne'er-do-well, like a hound upon a false scent!—Las-a-day! it's a sore thing to see a stunkard cow kick down the pail when it's reaming fou.—But, after all, it's an ill bird that defiles its ain nest. I must cover up the scandal as well as I can.—What's the matter now, James?"

"A message, sir," said James Wilkinson, "from my Lord President; and he hopes Mr. Alan is not seriously indisposed."

"From the Lord President? the Lord preserve us!—I'll send an answer this instant; bid the lad sit down, and ask him to drink, James.—Let me see," continued he, taking a sheet of gilt paper, "how we are to draw our answers."

Ere his pen had touched the paper, James was in the room again.

"What now James?"

"Lord Bladderskate's lad is come to ask how Mr. Alan is, as he left the Court"——

"Ay, ay, ay," answered Saunders, bitterly; "he has e'en made a moonlight flitting, like my lord's ane nevoy."

"Shall I say sae, sir?" said James, who, as an old soldier, was literal in all things touching the service.

"The devil! no, no!—Bid the lad sit down and *taste our ale. I will write* his lordship an answer."

Once more the gilt paper was resumed, and once *more the door was opened by James.*

"Lord —— sends his servitor to ask after Mr Alan."

"Oh, the deevil take their civility!" said poor Saunders. "Set him down to drink too—I will write to his Lordship."

"The lads will bide your pleasure, sir, as lang as I keep the bicker fou; but this ringing is like to wear out the bell, I think; there are they at it again."

He answered the fresh summons accordingly, and came back to inform Mr. Fairford, that the Dean of Faculty was below, inquiring for Mr. Alan.—"Will I set him down to drink, too?" said James.

"Will you be an idiot, sir?" said Mr. Fairford, "Show Mr. Dean into the parlour."

In going slowly down stairs, step by step, the perplexed man of business had time enough to reflect, that if it be possible to put a fair gloss upon a true story, the verity always serves the purpose better than any substitute which ingenuity can devise. He therefore told his learned visiter, that although his son had been incommoded by the heat of the court, and the long train of hard study, by day and night, preceding his exertions, yet he had fortunately so far recovered as to be in condition to obey upon the instant a sudden summons which had called him to the country, on a matter of life and death.

"It should be a serious matter indeed that takes my young friend away at this moment," said the good-natured Dean. "I wish he had staid to finish his pleading, and put down old Tough. Without compliment, Mr. Fairford, it was as fine a first appearance as I ever heard. I should be sorry your son did not follow it up in a reply. Nothing like striking while the iron is hot."

Mr. Saunders Fairford made a better grimace as he acquiesced in an opinion which was indeed decidedly his own; but he thought it most prudent to reply, "that the affair which rendered his son Alan's presence in the country absolutely necessary, regarded the affairs of a young gentleman of great fortune, who was a particular friend of Alan's, and who never took any material step in his affairs, without consulting his counsel learned in the law."

"Well well, Mr. Fairford, you know best," answered the learned Dean; "If there be death or marriage in the case, a will or a wedding is to be preferred to all other business. I am happy Mr. Alan is so much recovered as to be able for travel, and wish you a very good morning."

Having thus taken his ground to the Dean of Faculty, Mr. Fairford hastily wrote cards in answer to the inquiry of three judges, accounting for Alan's absence in the same manner. These, being properly sealed and addressed, he delivered to James, with directions to dismiss the party-coloured gentry, who in the mean while, had consumed a gallon of twopenny ale while discussing points of law, and addressing each other by their master's titles.*

The exertion which these matters demanded, and the interest which so many persons of legal distinction appeared to have taken in his son, greatly relieved the oppressed spirit of Saunders Fairford, who continued to talk mysteriously of the very important business which had interfered with his son's attendance during the brief remainder of the session. He endeavoured to lay the same unction to his own heart; but here the application was less fortunate, for his conscience told him, that no end, however important, which could be achieved in Darsie Latimer's affairs, could be balanced against the reputation which Alan was like to forfeit, by deserting the cause of Poor Peter Peebles.

In the mean while, although the haze which surrounded the cause, or causes, of that unfortunate litigant had been for a time dispelled by Alan's eloquence, like a fog by the thunder of artillery, yet it seemed

* The Scottish Judges are distinguished by the title of lord prefixed to their own temporal designation. As the ladies of these official dignitaries do not bear any share in their husband's honours, they are distinguished only by their lord's family name. They were not always contented with this species of Salique law, which certainly is somewhat inconsistent. But their pretensions to title are said to have been long since repelled by James V., the Sovereign who founded the College of Justice. "I," said he, "made the carles lords, but who the devil made the carlines ladies?"

more to settle down upon the mass of litigation, as the palpable darkness of Egypt, at the very of Mr. Tough's voice, who on the second day Alan's departure, was heard in answer to the g counsel. Deep-mouthed, long-breathed, and acious, taking a pinch of snuff betwixt every nce, which otherwise seemed interminable—the r pleader prosed over all the themes which had reated so luminously by Fairford; he quietly and ceptibly replaced all the rubbish which the other leared away; and succeeded in restoring the veil ecurity and unintelligibility which had for many darkened the case of Peebles against Plain-s; and the matter was once more hung up by a to an accountant, with instruction to report answer. So different a result from that which blic had been led to expect from Alan's speech, rise to various speculations.

client himself opined that it was entirely , first, to his own absence during the first day's ng, being, as he said, deboshed with brandy, baugh, and other strong waters, at John's Coffee-, *per ambages* of Peter Drudgeit, employed to effect by and through the device, counsel, and e of Saunders Fairford, his agent, or pretended . Secondly, by the flight and voluntary deser-of the younger Fairford, the advocate; on ac- of which he served both father and son with a n and complaint against them, for malversation ice. So that the apparent and most probable of this cause seemed to menace the melancholy Saunders Fairford with additional subject for e and mortification; which was the more galling, s conscience told him that the case was really away, and that a very brief resumption of the r argument, with reference to the necessary au-ies and points of evidence, would have enabled by the mere breath, as it were, of his mouth, to away the various cobwebs with which Mr. h had again invested the proceedings. But it he said, just like a decreet in absence, and was or want of a contradictor.

the mean time, nearly a week passed over with-Fr. Fairford hearing a word directly from his son. arned, indeed, by a letter from Mr. Crosbie, that ung counsellor had safely reached Dumfries, ad left that town upon some ulterior researches, rpose of which he had not communicated. The an, thus left to suspense, and to mortifying re-tions, deprived also of the domestic society to he had been habituated, began to suffer in as well as in mind. He had formed the deter-ion of setting out in person for Dumfries-shire, after having been dogged, peevish, and snappish clerks and domestics, to an unusual and almost rable degree, the acrimonious humours settled issing-hot fit of the gout, which is a well-known of the most froward spirits, and under whose line we shall, for the present, leave him, as the uation of this history assumes, with the next n, a form somewhat different from direct narra-nd epistolary correspondence, though partaking character of both.

CHAPTER III.

JOURNAL OF DARSIE LATIMER.

[Following address is written on the inside of the envelope which contained the Journal.]

o what hands soever these leaves may fall, they struct him, during a certain time at least, in the y of the life of an unfortunate young man, who, in art of a free country, and without any crime being his charge, has been, and is, subjected to a of unlawful and violent restraint. He who this letter, is therefore conjured to apply to the t magistrate, and, following such indications as apers may afford, to exert himself for the relief , who, while he possesses every claim to assist-which oppressed innocence can give, has at the time, both the inclination and the means of *grateful to his deliverers. Or, if the person ob- these letters shall want courage or means to* effect the writer's release, he is, in that case, conjured, by every duty of a man to his fellow-mortals, and of a Christian towards one who professes the same holy faith, to take the earliest measures for conveying them with speed and safety to the hands of Alan Fairford, Esq., Advocate, residing in the family of his father, Alexander Fairford, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Brown's Square, Edinburgh. He may be assured of a liberal reward, besides the consciousness of having discharged a real duty to humanity.

My Dearest Alan,

Feeling as warmly towards you in doubt and in distress, as I ever did in the brightest days of our intimacy, it is to you whom I address a history which may perhaps fall into very different hands. A portion of my former spirit descends to my pen, when I write your name, and indulging the happy thought that you may be my deliverer from my present uncomfortable and alarming situation, as you have been my guide and counsellor on every former occasion, I will subdue the dejection which would otherwise overwhelm me. Therefore, as, Heaven knows, I have time enough to write, I will endeavour to pour my thoughts out, as fully and freely as of old, though probably without the same gay and happy levity.

If the papers should reach other hands than yours, still I will not regret this exposure of my feelings; for, allowing for an ample share of the folly incidental to youth and inexperience, I fear not that I have much to be ashamed of in my narrative; nay, I even hope that the open simplicity and frankness with which I am about to relate every singular and distressing circumstance, may prepossess even a stranger in my favour; and that, amid the multitude of seemingly trivial circumstances which I detailed at length, a clew may be found to effect my liberation.

Another chance certainly remains—the Journal, as I may call it, may never reach the hands, either of the dear friend to whom it is addressed, or those of an indifferent stranger, but may become the prey of the persons by whom I am at present treated as a prisoner. Let it be so—they will learn from it little but what they already know; that, as a man, and an Englishman, my soul revolts at the usage which I have received; that I am determined to essay every possible means to obtain my freedom; that captivity has not broken my spirit, and that, although they may doubtless complete their oppression by murder, I am still willing to bequeath my cause to the justice of my country. Undeterred, therefore, by the probability that my papers may be torn from me, and subjected to the inspection of one in particular, who, causelessly my enemy already, may be yet farther incensed at me for recording the history of my wrongs, I proceed to resume the history of events which have befallen me since the conclusion of my last letter to my dear Alan Fairford, dated, if I mistake not, on the 5th day of this still current month of August.

Upon the night preceding the date of that letter, I had been present, for the purpose of an idle frolic, at a dancing party at the village of Brokenburn, about six miles from Dumfries; many persons must have seen me there, should the fact appear of importance sufficient to require investigation. I danced, played on the violin, and took part in the festivity, till about midnight, when my servant, Samuel Owen, brought me my horses, and I rode back to a small inn called Shepherd's Bush, kept by Mrs. Gregson, which had been occasionally my residence for about a fortnight past. I spent the earlier part of the forenoon in writing a letter which I have already mentioned, to you, my dear Alan, and which, I think, you must have received in safety. Why did I not follow your advice, so often given me? Why did I linger in the neighbourhood of a danger, of which a kind voice had warned me? These are now unavailing questions. I was blinded by a fatality, and remained fluttering like a moth around the candle, until I have been scorched to some purpose.

The greater part of the day had passed, and time hung heavy on my hands. I ought, perhaps, to have

at recollecting what has been often objected to me by the dear friend to whom this letter is addressed, viz. the facility with which I have, in moments of indolence, suffered my motions to be directed by any person who chanced to be near me, instead of taking the labour of thinking or deciding for myself. I had employed for some time, as a sort of guide and errand-boy, a lad named Benjamin, the son of one widow Coltherd, who lives near the Shepherd's Bush, and I cannot but remember that, upon several occasions, I had of late suffered him to possess more influence over my motions, than at all became the difference of our age and condition. At present he exerted himself to persuade me that it was the finest possible sport to see the fish taken out from the nets placed in the Solway at the reflux of the tide, and urged my going thither this evening so much, that, looking back on the whole circumstances, I cannot but think he had some especial motive for his conduct. These particulars I have mentioned, that if these papers fall into friendly hands, the boy may be sought after and submitted to examination.

His eloquence being unable to persuade me that I should take any pleasure in seeing the fruitless struggles of the fish when left in the nets and deserted by the tide, he artfully suggested, that Mr. and Miss Geddes, a respectable Quaker family well known in the neighbourhood, and with whom I had contracted habits of intimacy, would possibly be offended if I did not make them an early visit. Both, he said, had been particularly inquiring the reasons of my leaving their house rather suddenly on the previous day. I resolved, therefore, to walk up to Mount Sharon and make my apologies, and I agreed to permit the boy to attend upon me, and wait my return from the house, that I might fish on my way homeward to Shepherd's Bush, for which amusement, he assured me, I would find the evening most favourable. I mention this minute circumstance, because I strongly suspect that this boy had a presentiment how the evening was to terminate with me, and entertained the selfish though childish wish of securing to himself an angling-rod which he had often admired, as a part of my spoils. I may do the boy wrong, but I had before remarked in him the peculiar art of pursuing the trifling objects of cupidity proper to his age, with the systematic address of much riper years.

When we had commenced our walk, I upbraided him with the coolness of the evening, considering the season, the easterly wind, and other circumstances, unfavourable for angling. He persisted in his own story, and made a few casts, as if to convince me of my error, but caught no fish; and, indeed, as I am now convinced, was much more intent on watching my motions, than on taking any. When I ridiculed him once more on his fruitless endeavours, he answered with a sneering smile, that "the trouts would not rise, because there was thunder in the air;" an intimation which, in one sense, I have found too true.

I arrived at Mount Sharon; was received by my friends there with their wonted kindness; and after being a little rallied on my having suddenly left them on the preceding evening, I agreed to make atonement by staying all night, and dismissed the lad who attended with my fishing-rod, to carry that information to Shepherd's Bush. It may be doubted whether he went thither, or in a different direction.

Betwixt eight and nine o'clock when it began to become dark, we walked on the terrace to enjoy the appearance of the firmament, glittering with ten million of stars; to which a slight touch of early frost gave tenfold lustre. As we gazed on this splendid scene, Miss Geddes, I think, was the first to point out to our admiration a shooting or falling star, which, she said, drew a long train after it. Looking to the part of the heavens which she pointed out, I distinctly observed two successive sky-rockets arise, and burst in the sky.

"These meteors," said Mr. Geddes, in answer to his sister's observation, "are not formed in heaven, nor do they bode any good to the dwellers upon earth."

As he spoke, I looked to another quarter of the sky, and a rocket, as if a signal in answer to those which had already appeared, rose high from the earth, and burst apparently among the stars.

Mr. Geddes seemed very thoughtful for some minutes, and then said to his sister, "Rachel, though it waxes late, I must go down to the fishing station, and pass the night in the overseer's room there."

"Nay, then," replied the lady, "I am but too well assured that the sons of Belial are menacing these nets and devices. Joshua, art thou a man of peace, and wilt thou willingly and wittingly thrust thyself, where thou mayst be tempted by the old man Adam within thee, to enter into debate and strife?"

"I am a man of peace, Rachel," answered Mr. Geddes, "even to the utmost extent which our friends can demand of humanity; and neither have I ever used, nor, with the help of God, will I at any future time employ, the arm of flesh to repel or to revenge injuries. But if I can, by mild reasons, and firm conduct, save those rude men from committing a crime, and the property belonging to myself and others from sustaining damage, surely I do but the duty of a man and a Christian."

With these words, he ordered his horse instantly; and his sister ceasing to argue with him, folded her arms upon her bosom, and looked up to heaven with a resigned and yet sorrowful countenance.

These particulars may appear trivial; but it is better, in my present condition, to exert my faculties in recollecting the past, and in recording it, than waste them in vain and anxious anticipations of the future.

It would have been scarcely proper in me to remain in the house, from which the master was thus suddenly summoned away; and I therefore begged permission to attend him to the fishing station, assuring his sister that I would be a guarantee for his safety.

The proposal seemed to give much pleasure to Miss Geddes. "Let it be so, brother," she said; "and let the young man have the desire of his heart, that there may be a faithful witness to stand by thee in the hour of need, and to report how it shall fare with thee."

"No, Rachel," said the worthy man, "thou art to blame in this, that, to quiet thy apprehensions on my account, thou shouldst thrust into danger—if danger it shall prove to be—this youth, our guest; for whom, doubtless, in case of mishap, as many hearts will ache as may be afflicted on our account."

"Nay, my good friend," said I, taking Mr. Geddes's hand, "I am not so happy as you suppose me. Were my span to be concluded this evening, few would so much as know that such a being had existed for twenty years on the face of the earth; and of these few, only one would sincerely regret me. Do not, therefore, refuse me the privilege of attending you; and of showing, by so trifling an act of kindness, that if I have few friends, I am at least desirous to serve them."

"Thou hast a kind heart, I warrant thee," said Joshua Geddes, returning the pressure of my hand. "Rachel, the young man shall go with me. Why should he not face danger, in order to do justice and preserve peace? There is that within me," he added, looking upwards, and with a passing enthusiasm which I had not before observed, and the absence of which perhaps rather belonged to the sect than to his own personal character—"I say, I have that within which assures me, that though the ungodly may rage even like the storm of the ocean, they shall not have freedom to prevail against us."

Having spoken thus, Mr. Geddes appointed a pony to be saddled for my use; and having taken a basket with some provisions, and a servant to carry back the horses, for which there was no accommodation at the fishing station, we set off about nine o'clock at night, and after three quarters of an hour's riding, arrived at our place of destination.

The station consists, or then consisted, of huts for four or five fishermen, a cooperage and sheds, and a better sort of cottage, at which the superintendent resided. We gave our horses to the servant, to be carried back to Mount Sharon; my companion expressing himself humanely anxious for their safety—and knocked at the door of the house. At first we only heard a barking of dogs; but these animals be-

same quiet on snuffing beneath the door, and acknowledging the presence of friends. A hoarse voice then demanded, in rather unfriendly accents, who we were, and what we wanted; and it was not until Joshua named himself, and called upon his superintendent to open, that the latter appeared at the door of the hut, attended by three large dogs of the Newfoundland breed. He had a flambeau in his hand, and two large heavy ship-pistols stuck into his belt. He was a stout, elderly man, who had been a sailor, as I learned, during the earlier part of his life, and was now much confided in by the Fishing Company, whose concerns he directed under the orders of Mr. Geddes.

"Thou didst not expect me to-night, friend Davies?" said my friend to the old man, who was arranging seats for us by the fire.

"No, Master Geddes," answered he, "I did not expect you, nor, to speak the truth, did I wish for you either."

"These are plain terms, John Davies," answered Mr. Geddes.

"Ay, ay, sir, I know your worship loves no holyday speeches."

"Thou dost guess, I suppose, what brings us here so late, John Davies?" said Mr. Geddes.

"I do suppose, sir," answered the superintendent, 'that it was because these d—d smuggling wreckers on the coast are showing their lights to gather their forces, as they did the night before they broke down the dam-dike and wears up the country; but if that same be the case, I wish once more you had staid away, for your worship carries no fighting tackle aboard, I think; and there will be work for such ere morning, your worship."

"Worship is due to Heaven only, John Davies," said Geddes. "I have often desired thee to desist from using that phrase to me."

"I won't, then," said John; "no offence meant: But how the devil can a man stand picking his words, when he is just going to come to blows?"

"I hope not, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes. 'Call in the rest of the men, that I may give them their instructions."

"I may cry till doomsday, Master Geddes, ere a soul answers—the cowardly lubbers have all made sail—the cooper, and all the rest of them, so soon as they heard the enemy were at sea. They have all taken to the long-boat, and left the ship among the breakers, except little Phil and myself—they have, by ——!"

"Swear not at all, John Davies—thou art an honest man; and I believe without an oath, that thy comrades love their own bones better than my goods and chattels. And so thou hast no assistance but little Phil against a hundred men or two?"

"Why, there are the dogs, your honour knows, Neptune and Thetis—and the puppy may do something; and then though your worship—I beg pardon—though your honour be no great fighter, this young gentleman may bear a hand."

"Ay, and I see you are provided with arms," said Mr. Geddes; "let me see them."

"Ay, ay, sir; here be a pair of buffers will bite as well as bark—these will make sure of two rogues at cast. It would be a shame to strike without firing a shot.—Take care your honour, they are double-shotted."

"Ay, John Davies, I will take care of them," throwing the pistols into a tub of water beside him; "and I wish I could render the whole generation of them useless at the same moment."

A deep shade of displeasure passed over John Davies's weatherbeaten countenance. "Belike your honour is going to take the command yourself then?" he said, after a pause. "Why, I can be of little use now; and since your worship, or your honour, or whatever you are, means to strike quietly, I believe you will do it better without me than with me, for I am like enough to make mischief, I admit; but I'll never leave my post without orders."

"Then you have *mine, John Davies, to go to Mount Sharon directly, and take the boy Phil with you. Where is he?*"

"He is on the outlook for these scums of the earth," answered Davies; "but it is to no purpose to know when they come, if we are not to stand to our weapons."

"We will use none but those of sense and reason, John."

"And you may just as well cast chaff against the wind, as speak sense and reason to the like of them."

"Well, well, be it so," said Joshua; "and now, John Davies, I know thou art what the world calls a brave fellow, and I have ever found thee an honest one. And now I command you to go to Mount Sharon, and let Phil lie on the bank-side—see the poor boy hath a sea-cloak, though—and watch what happens here, and let him bring you the news; and if any violence shall be offered to the property there, I trust to your fidelity to carry my sister to Dumfries, to the house of our friends the Corsacks, and inform the civil authorities of what mischief hath befallen."

The old seaman paused a moment. "It is hard lines for me," he said, "to leave your honour in tribulation; and yet, staying here, I am only like to make bad worse; and your honour's sister, Miss Rachel, must be looked to, that's certain; for if the rogues once get their hand to mischief, they will come to Mount Sharon after they have wasted and destroyed this here snug little roadstead, where I thought to ride at anchor for life."

"Right, right, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes; "and best call the dogs with you."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the veteran, "for they are something of my mind, and would not keep quiet if they saw mischief doing; so maybe they might come to mischief, poor dumb creatures. So God bless your honour—I mean your worship—I cannot bring my mouth to say fare you well.—Here, Neptune, Thetis! come, dogs, come."

So saying, and with a very crestfallen countenance, John Davies left the hut.

"Now there goes one of the best and most faithful creatures that ever was born," said Mr. Geddes, as the superintendent shut the door of the cottage. "Nature made him with a heart that would not have suffered him to harm a fly; but thou seest, friend Latimer, that as men arm their bull-dogs with spiked collars, and their game-cocks with steel spurs, to aid them in fight, so they corrupt, by education, the best and mildest natures, until fortitude and spirit become stubbornness and ferocity. Believe me, friend Latimer, I would as soon expose my faithful household dog to a vain combat with a herd of wolves, as yon trusty creature to the violence of the enraged multitude. But I need say little on this subject to thee, friend Latimer, who, I doubt not, art trained to believe that courage is displayed and honour attained, not by doing and suffering, as becomes a man, that which fate calls us to suffer, and justice commands us to do, but because thou art ready to retort violence for violence, and considerest the lightest insult as a sufficient cause for the spilling of blood, nay, the taking of life.—But, leaving these points of controversy to a more fit season, let us see what our basket of provision contains; for in truth, friend Latimer, I am one of those whom neither fear nor anxiety deprive of their ordinary appetite."

We found the means of good cheer accordingly which Mr. Geddes seemed to enjoy as much as if it had been eaten in a situation of perfect safety; nay, his conversation appeared to be rather more gay than on ordinary occasions. After eating our supper we left the hut together, and walked for a few minutes on the banks of the sea. It was high water, and the ebb had not yet commenced. The moon shone broad and bright upon the placid face of the Solway Frith, and showed a slight ripple upon the stakes, the tops of which were just visible above the waves, and on the dark-coloured buoys which marked the upper edge of the enclosure of nets. At a much greater distance,—for the estuary is here very wide,—the line of the English coast was seen on the verge of the water, resembling one of those fog-banks on which mariners are said to gaze, uncertain whether it be land or atmospherical delusion.

"We shall be undisturbed for some hours," said

Mr. Geddes; "they will not come down upon us till the state of the tide permits them to destroy the tide-nets. Is it not strange to think that human passions will so soon transform such a tranquil scene as this, into one of devastation and confusion?"

It was indeed a scene of exquisite stillness; so much so, that the restless waves of the Solway seemed, if not absolutely to sleep, at least to slumber;—on the shore no night-bird was heard—the cock had not sung his first matins, and we ourselves walked more lightly than by day, as if to suit the sound of our own paces to the serene tranquillity around us. At length, the plaintive cry of a dog broke the silence, and on our return to the cottage, we found that the younger of the three animals which had gone along with John Davies, unaccustomed, perhaps, to distant journeys, and the duty of following to heel, had strayed from the party, and, unable to rejoin them, had wandered back to the place of its birth.

"Another feeble addition to our feeble garrison," said Mr. Geddes, as he caressed the dog, and admitted it into the cottage. "Poor thing! as thou art incapable of doing any mischief, I hope thou wilt sustain none. At least thou mayst do us the good service of a sentinel, and permit us to enjoy a quiet repose, under the certainty that thou wilt alarm us when the enemy is at hand."

There were two beds in the superintendent's room, upon which we threw ourselves. Mr. Geddes, with his happy equanimity of temper, was asleep in the first five minutes. I lay for some time in doubtful and anxious thoughts, watching the fire and the motions of the restless dog, which, disturbed probably at the absence of John Davies, wandered from the hearth to the door and back again, then came to the bedside, and licked my hands and face, and at length, experiencing no repulse to its advances, established itself at my feet, and went to sleep, an example which I soon afterwards followed.

The rage of narration, my dear Alan—for I will never relinquish the hope that what I am writing may one day reach your hands—has not forsaken me even in my confinement, and the extensive though unimportant details into which I have been hurried, render it necessary that I commence another sheet. Fortunately, my pigmy characters comprehend a great many words within a small space of paper.

CHAPTER IV.

DARSIE LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THE morning was dawning, and Mr. Geddes and I myself were still sleeping soundly, when the alarm was given by my canine bedfellow, who first growled deeply at intervals, and at length bore more decided testimony to the approach of some enemy. I opened the door of the cottage, and perceived, at the distance of about two hundred yards, a small but close column of men, which I would have taken for a dark hedge, but that I could perceive it was advancing rapidly and in silence.

The dog flew towards them, but instantly ran howling back to me, having probably been chastised by a stick or a stone. Uncertain as to the plan of tactics or of treaty which Mr. Geddes might think proper to adopt, I was about to retire into the cottage, when he suddenly joined me at the door, and, slipping his arm through mine, said, "Let us go to meet them manfully; we have done nothing to be ashamed of.—Friends," he said, raising his voice as we approached them, "who and what are you, and with what purpose are you here on my property?"

A loud cheer was the answer returned, and a brace of fiddlers who occupied the front of the march immediately struck up the insulting air, the words of which begin,

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker."

Even at that moment of alarm, I think I recognised the tones of the blind fiddler, known by the name of Wandering Willie, from his itinerant habits. They continued to advance swiftly and in great order, in their front

"The fiery fiddlers playing martial airs;"

when, coming close up, they surrounded us by a single movement, and there was a universal cry, "Whoop, Quaker—whoop, Quaker! Here have we them both, the wet Quaker and the dry one."

"Hang up the wet Quaker to dry, and wet the dry one with a ducking," answered another voice.

"Where is the sea-otter, John Davies, that destroyed more fish than any sealch upon Ailsay Craig?" exclaimed a third voice. "I have an old crow to pluck with him, and a pock to put the feathers in."

We stood perfectly passive; for, to have attempted resistance against more than a hundred men, armed with guns, fish-spears, iron-crows, spades, and bludgeons, would have been an act of utter insanity. Mr. Geddes, with his strong sonorous voice, answered the question about the superintendent in a manner, the manly indifference of which compelled them to attend to him.

"John Davies," he said, "will, I trust, soon be at Dumfries"——

"To fetch down redcoats and dragoons against us, you canting old villain?"

A blow was, at the same time, levelled at my friend, which I parried by interposing the stick I had in my hand. I was instantly struck down, and have a faint recollection of hearing some crying, "Kill the young spy!" and others, as I thought, interposing on my behalf. But a second blow on the head, received in the scuffle, soon deprived me of sense and consciousness, and threw me into a state of insensibility, from which I did not recover immediately. When I did come to myself, I was lying on the bed from which I had just risen before the fray, and my poor companion, the Newfoundland puppy, its courage entirely cowed by the tumult of the riot, had crept as close to me as it could, and lay trembling and whining, as if under the most dreadful terror. I doubted at first whether I had not dreamed of the tumult, until, as I attempted to rise, a feeling of pain and dizziness assured me that the injury I had sustained was but too real. I gathered together my senses—listened—and heard at a distance the shouts of the rioters, busy, doubtless, in their work of devastation. I made a second effort to rise, or at least to turn myself, for I lay with my face to the wall of the cottage, but I found that my limbs were secured, and my motions effectually prevented—not indeed by cords, but by linen or cloth bandages swathed around my ankles, and securing my hands to my sides. Aware of my utterly captive condition, I groaned betwixt bodily pain and mental distress.

A voice by my bedside whispered, in a whining tone, "Whisht a-ye, hunnie—whisht, a-ye; haud your tongue, like a good bairn—ye have cost us dear eneugh already. My hinnie's clean gane now."

Knowing, as I thought, the phraseology of the wife of the itinerant musician, I asked her where her husband was, and whether he had been hurt.

"Broken," answered the dame, "all broken to pieces; fit for naught but to be made spunks of—the best blood that was in Scotland."

"Broken?—blood?—is your husband wounded; has there been bloodshed—broken limbs?"

"Broken limbs?—I wish," answered the beldam, "that my hinnie had broken the best bane in his body, before he had broken his fiddle, that was the best blood in Scotland—it was a cremony, for aught that I ken."

"Pshaw—only his fiddle?" said I.

"I dinna ken what waur your honour could have wished him to do, unless he had broken his neck; and this is muckle the same to my hinnie Willie and me. Chaw, indeed! It is easy to say *chaw*, but wha is to gie us ony thing to chaw?—the bread-winner's gane, and we may e'en sit down and starve."

"No, no," I said, "I will pay you for twenty such fiddles."

"Twenty such! is that a' ye ken about it? the country hadna the like o't. But if your honour were

to pay us, as nae doubt would be to your credit here and hereafter, where are ye to get the siller?"

"I have enough of money," said I, attempting to reach my hand towards my side-pocket; "unloose these bandages, and I will pay you on the spot."

This hint appeared to move her, and she was approaching the bedside, as I hoped, to liberate me from my bonds, when a nearer and more desperate shout was heard, as if the rioters were close by the hut.

"I daurna—I daurna," said the poor woman, "they would murder me and my hinnie Willie baith, and they have misguided us aneugh already;—but if there is any thing worldly I could do for your honour, leave out loosing ye?"

What she said recalled me to my bodily suffering. Agitation, and the effects of the usage I had received, had produced a burning thirst. I asked for a drink of water.

"Heaven Almighty forbid that Epps Ainslie should gie ony sick gentleman cauld well-water, and him in a fever. Na, na, hinnie, let me alane, I'll do better for ye than the like of that."

"Give me what you will," I replied; "let it but be liquid and cool."

The woman gave me a large horn accordingly, filled with spirits and water, which, without minute inquiry concerning the nature of its contents, I drained at a draught. Either the spirits taken in such a manner, acted more suddenly than usual on my brain, or else there was some drug mixed with the beverage. I remember little after drinking it off, only that the appearance of things around me became indistinct; that the woman's form seemed to multiply itself, and to flit in various figures around me, bearing the same lineaments as she herself did. I remember also that the discordant noises and cries of those without the cottage seemed to die away in a hum like that with which a nurse hushes her babe. At length I fell into a deep sound sleep, or rather, a state of absolute insensibility.

I have reason to think this species of trance lasted for many hours; indeed, for the whole subsequent day and part of the night. It was not uniformly so profound, for my recollection of it is chequered with many dreams, all of a painful nature, but too faint and too indistinct to be remembered. At length the moment of waking came, and my sensations were horrible.

A deep sound, which, in the confusion of my senses, I identified with the cries of the rioters, was the first thing of which I was sensible; next, I became conscious that I was carried violently forward in some conveyance, with an unequal motion, which gave me much pain. My position was horizontal, and when I attempted to stretch my hands in order to find some mode of securing myself against this species of suffering, I found I was bound as before, and the horrible reality rushed on my mind, that I was in the hands of those who had lately committed a great outrage on property, and were now about to kidnap, if not to murder me. I opened my eyes, it was to no purpose—all around me was dark, for a day had passed over during my captivity. A dispiriting sickness oppressed my head—my heart seemed on fire, while my feet and hands were chilled and benumbed with want of circulation. It was with the utmost difficulty that I at length, and gradually, recovered in a sufficient degree the power of observing external sounds and circumstances; and when I did so, they presented nothing consolatory.

Groping with my hands, as far as the bandages would permit, and receiving the assistance of some occasional glances of the moonlight, I became aware that the carriage in which I was transported was one of the light carts of the country, called *tumblers*, and that a little attention had been paid to my accommodation, as I was laid upon some sacks covered with matting, and filled with straw. Without these, my condition would have been still more intolerable, for the vehicle, sinking now on one side, and now on the other, sometimes sticking absolutely fast, and requiring the utmost exertions of the animal which drew it to *put it once more in motion, was subjected to jolts in all directions, which were very severe. At other times it rolled silently and smoothly* over what seemed to be wet sand; and, as I heard the distant roar of the tide, I had little doubt that we were engaged in passing the formidable estuary which divides the two kingdoms.

There seemed to be at least five or six people about the cart, some on foot, others on horseback; the former lent assistance whenever it was in danger of upsetting, or sticking fast in the quicksand; the others rode before and acted as guides, often changing the direction of the vehicle as the precarious state of the passage required.

I addressed myself to the men around the cart, and endeavoured to move their compassion. I had harmed, I said, no one, and for no action in my life had deserved such cruel treatment. I had no concern whatever in the fishing station which had incurred their displeasure, and my acquaintance with Mr. Geddes was of a very late date. Lastly, and as my strongest argument, I endeavoured to excite their fears, by informing them that my rank in life would not permit me to be either murdered or secreted with impunity; and to interest their avarice, by the promises I made them of reward, if they would effect my deliverance. I only received a scornful laugh in reply to my threats; my promises might have done more, for the fellows were whispering together as if in hesitation, and I began to reiterate and increase my offers, when the voice of one of the horsemen, who had suddenly come up, enjoined silence to the men on foot, and, approaching the side of the cart, said to me, with a strong and determined voice, "Young man, there is no personal harm designed to you. If you remain silent and quiet, you may reckon on good treatment; but if you endeavour to tamper with these men in the execution of their duty, I will take such measures for silencing you, as you shall remember the longest day you have to live."

I thought I knew the voice which uttered these threats; but, in such a situation, my perceptions could not be supposed to be perfectly accurate. I was contented to reply, "Whoever you are that speak to me, I entreat the benefit of the meanest prisoner, who is not to be subjected legally to greater hardship than is necessary for the restraint of his person. I entreat that these bonds, which hurt me so cruelly, may be slackened at least, if not removed altogether."

"I will slacken the belts," said the former speaker; "nay, I will altogether remove them, and allow you to pursue your journey in a more convenient manner, provided you will give me your word of honour that you will not attempt an escape."

"*Never!*" I answered, with an energy of which despair alone could have rendered me capable—"I will *never* submit to loss of freedom a moment longer than I am subjected to it by force."

"Enough," he replied; "the sentiment is natural; but do not on your side complain that I, who am carrying on an important undertaking, use the only means in my power for ensuring its success."

I entreated to know what it was designed to do with me; but my conductor, in a voice of menacing authority, desired me to be silent on my peril; and my strength and spirits were too much exhausted to permit my continuing a dialogue so singular, even if I could have promised myself any good result by doing so.

It is proper here to add, that, from my recollections at the time, and from what has since taken place, I have the strongest possible belief that the man with whom I held this expostulation, was the singular person residing at Brokenburn, in Dumfries-shire, and called by the fishers of that hamlet, the Laird of the Solway Lochs. The cause for his inveterate persecution I cannot pretend even to guess at.

In the mean time, the cart was dragged heavily and wearily on, until the nearer roar of the advancing tide excited the apprehension of another danger. I could not mistake the sound, which I had heard upon another occasion, when it was only the speed of a fleet horse which saved me from perishing in the quicksands. Thou, my dear Alan, canst not but remember the former circumstances; and now, wonderful contrast! the very man, to the best of my belief, who then saved me from peril, was the leader of the lawless

sand who had deprived me of my liberty. I conjectured that the danger grew imminent; for I heard some words and circumstances which made me aware that a rider hastily fastened his own horse to the shafts of the cart, in order to assist the exhausted animal which drew it, and the vehicle was now pulled forward at a faster pace, which the horses were urged to maintain by blows and curses. The men, however, were inhabitants of the neighbourhood; and I had strong personal reason to believe, that one of them, at least, was intimately acquainted with all the depths and shallows of the perilous paths in which we were engaged. But they were in imminent danger themselves; and if so, as from the whispering and exertions to push on with the cart, was much to be apprehended, there was little doubt that I should be left behind as a useless encumbrance, and that while I was in a condition which rendered every chance of escape impracticable. These were awful apprehensions; but it pleased Providence to increase them to a point which my brain was scarcely able to endure.

As we approached very near to a black line, which, dimly visible as it was, I could make out to be the shore, we heard two or three sounds, which appeared to be the report of fire-arms. Immediately all was bustle among our party to get forward. Presently a fellow galloped up to us, crying out, "Ware hawk! ware hawk! the land-sharks are out from Burgh, and Allonby Tom will lose his cargo if you do not bear a hand."

Most of my company seemed to make hastily for the shore on receiving this intelligence. A driver was left with the cart; but at length, when, after repeated and hair-breadth escapes, it actually stuck fast in a slough or quicksand, the fellow with an oath cut the harness, and, as I presume, departed with the horses, whose feet I heard splashing over the wet sand, and through the shallows, as he galloped off.

The dropping sound of fire-arms was still continued, but lost almost entirely in the thunder of the advancing surge. By a desperate effort I raised myself in the cart, and attained a sitting posture which served only to show me the extent of my danger. There lay my native land—my own England—the land where I was born, and to which my wishes, since my earliest age, had turned with all the prejudices of national feeling—there it lay, within a furlong of the place where I yet was; that furlong which an infant would have raced over in a minute, was yet a barrier effectual to divide me for ever from England and from life. I soon not only heard the roar of this dreadful torrent, but saw, by the fitful moonlight, the foamy crests of the devouring waves, as they advanced with the speed and fury of a pack of hungry wolves.

The consciousness that the slightest ray of hope or power of struggling, was not left me, quite overcame the constancy which I had hitherto maintained. My eyes began to swim—my head grew giddy and mad with fear—I chattered and howled to the howling and roaring sea. One or two great waves already reached the cart, when the conductor of the party whom I have mentioned so often, was, as if by magic, at my side. He sprang from his horse into the vehicle, cut the ligatures which restrained me, and bade me get up and mount in the fiend's name.

Seeing I was incapable of obeying, he seized me, as if I had been a child of six months old, threw me across the horse, sprung on behind, supporting with one hand, while he directed the animal with the other. In my helpless and painful posture, I was unconscious of the degree of danger which we incurred; but I believe at one time the horse was swimming, or nearly so; and that it was with difficulty, that my stern and powerful assistant kept my head above water. I remember particularly the shock which I felt when the animal, endeavouring to gain the bank, reared, and very nearly fell back on his burden. The time during which I continued in this dreadful condition did not probably exceed two or three minutes, yet so strongly were they marked with horror and agony, that they seem to my recollection a much more considerable space of time.

When I had been thus snatched from destruction, I had only power to say to my protector,—or oppressor,—for he merited either name at my hand, "You do not, then, design to murder me?"

He laughed as he replied, but it was a sort of laughter which I scarce desire to hear again.—"Else you think I had let the waves do their work? But remember, the shepherd saves his sheep from the torrent—is it to preserve its life?—Be silent, however, with questions or entreaties. What I mean to do, thou canst no more discover or prevent, than a man, with his bare palm, can scoop dry the Solway.'

I was too much exhausted to continue the argument; and, still numbed and torpid in all my limbs, permitted myself without reluctance to be placed on a horse brought for the purpose. My formidable conductor rode on the one side, and another person on the other, keeping me upright in the saddle. In this manner we travelled forward at a considerable rate and by by-roads, with which my attendant seemed as familiar as with the perilous passages of the Solway.

At length, after stumbling through a labyrinth of dark and deep lanes, and crossing more than one rough and barren heath, we found ourselves on the edge of a high-road, where a chaise and four awaited, as it appeared, our arrival. To my great relief, we now changed our mode of conveyance: for my dizziness and headache had returned in so strong a degree, that I should otherwise have been totally unable to keep my seat on horseback, even with the support which I received.

My doubted and dangerous companion signed to me to enter the carriage—the man who had ridden on the left side of my horse stepped in after me, and, drawing up the blinds of the vehicle, gave the signal for instant departure.

I had obtained a glimpse of the countenance of my new companion, as by the aid of a dark lantern the drivers opened the carriage door, and I was well nigh persuaded that I recognised in him the domestic of the leader of this party, whom I had seen at his house in Brokenburn on a former occasion. To ascertain the truth of my suspicion, I asked him whether his name was not Cristal Nixon.

"What is other folk's names to you," he replied, gruffly, "who cannot tell your own father and mother?"

"You know them, perhaps?" I exclaimed eagerly. "You know them! and with that secret is connected the treatment which I am now receiving? It must be so, for in my life have I never injured any one. Tell me the cause of my misfortunes, or rather, help me to my liberty, and I will reward you richly."

"Ay, ay," replied my keeper; "but what use to give you liberty, who know nothing how to use it like a gentleman, but spend your time with Quakers and fiddlers, and such-like raff? If I was your—hem, hem, hem!"

Here Cristal stopped short, just on the point, as it appeared, when some information was likely to escape him. I urged him once more to be my friend, and promised him all the stock of money which I had about me, and it was not inconsiderable, if he would assist in my escape.

He listened, as if to a proposition which had some interest, and replied, but in a voice rather softer than before, "Ay, but men do not catch old birds with chaff, my master. Where have you got the rhino you are so flush of?"

"I will give you earnest directly, and that in bank-notes," said I: but, thrusting my hand into my side-pocket, I found my pocketbook was gone. I would have persuaded myself that it was only the numbness of my hands which prevented my finding it; but Cristal Nixon, who bears in his countenance that cynicism which is especially entertained with human misery, no longer suppressed his laughter.

"Oh, ho! my young master," he said; "we have taken good enough care you have not kept the means of bribing poor folk's fidelity. What, man, they have souls as well as other people, and to make them break trust is a deadly sin. And as for me, young gentleman, if you would fill Saint Mary's Kirk with gold, Cristal Nixon would mind it no more than so many chucky-stones."

I would have persisted, were it but in hopes of his

drop that at which it concerned me to know, ut off further communication, by desiring me back in the corner and go to sleep. u art cockbrained enough already," he added, e shall have thy young pate addled entirely, if not take some natural rest."

indeed require repose, if not slumber; the which I had taken continued to operate, and in my own mind that no attempt on my life signed, the fear of instant death no longer d the torpor which crept over me—I slept, t soundly, but still without refreshment.

I awoke, I found myself extremely indis- images of the past, and anticipations of the loated confusedly through my brain. I per- however, that my situation was changed, for the better. I was in a good bed, with the drawn round it; I heard the lowered voice tious step of attendants, who seemed to re- repose; it appeared as if I was in the hands friends, or of such as meant me no personal

give but an indistinct account of two or three and feverish days which succeeded, but if re chequered with dreams and visions of ter- and more agreeable objects were also some- esented. Alan Fairford will understand me say, I am convinced I saw G. M. during this of oblivion. I had medical attendance, and d more than once. I also remember a pain- ation performed on my head, where I had a severe blow on the night of the riot. My s cut short, and the bone of the skull ex- to discover if the cranium had received any

sing the physician, it would have been natural appealed to him on the subject of my confine- nd I remember more than once attempting to But the fever lay like a spell upon my tongue, en I would have implored the doctor's assist- ambled from the subject, and spoke I know t—nonsense. Some power, which I was un- resist, seemed to impel me into a different f conversation from what I intended, and conscious, in some degree, of the failure, I t mend it; and resolved, therefore, to be pa- til my capacity of steady thought and expres- restored to me with my ordinary health, ad sustained a severe shock from the vicissi which I had been exposed.*

CHAPTER V.

E LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

r three days, perhaps more, perhaps less, had nt in bed, where I was carefully attended, ted, I believe, with as much judgment as the ired, and I was at length allowed to quit my ugh not the chamber. I was now more able some observation on the place of my con- t.

The room, in appearance and furniture, resembled the best apartment in a farmer's house; and the window, two stories high, looked into a back-yard, or court, filled with poultry. There were the usual domestic offices about this yard. I could distinguish the brewhouse and the barn, and I heard from a more remote building, the lowing of the cattle and other rural sounds, announcing a large and well-stocked farm. These were sights and sounds qualified to dispel any apprehension of immediate violence. Yet the building seemed ancient and strong, a part of the roof was battlemented, and the walls were of great thickness; lastly, I observed with some unpleasant sensations, that the windows of my chamber had been lately secured with iron stanchions, and that the servants who brought me victuals, or visited my apartment to render other menial offices, always locked the door when they retired.

The comfort and cleanliness of my chamber were of true English growth, and such as I had rarely seen on the other side of the Tweed; the very old wainscot, which composed the floor and the panelling of the room, was scrubbed with a degree of labour which the Scottish housewife rarely bestows on her most costly furniture.

The whole apartments appropriated to my use consisted of the bedroom, a small parlour adjacent, within which was a still smaller closet, having a narrow window, which seemed anciently to have been used as a shot-hole, admitting, indeed, a very moderate portion of light and air, but without its being possible to see any thing from it except the blue sky, and that only by mounting on a chair. There were appearances of a separate entrance into this cabinet, besides that which communicated with the parlour, but it had been recently built up, as I discovered, by removing a piece of tapestry which covered the fresh mason-work. I found some of my clothes here, with linen and other articles, as well as my writing case, containing pen, ink, and paper, which enables me, at my leisure, (which, God knows, is undisturbed enough,) to make this record of my confinement. It may be well believed, however, that I do not trust to the security of the bureau, but carry the written sheets about my person, so that I can only be deprived of them by actual violence. I also am cautious to write in the little cabinet only, so that I can hear any person approach me through the other apartments, and have time enough to put aside my journal before they come upon me.

The servants, a stout country fellow, and a very pretty milkmaid-looking lass, by whom I am attended, seem of the true Joan and Hodge school, thinking of little, and desiring nothing, beyond the very limited sphere of their own duties and enjoyments, and having no curiosity whatever about the affairs of others. Their behaviour to me, in particular, is, at the same time, very kind and very provoking. My table is abundantly supplied, and they seem anxious to comply with my taste in that department. But whenever I make inquiries beyond "what's for dinner," the brute of a lad baffles me by his *anan*, and his *dunna knaw*, and, if hard pressed, turns his back on me composedly, and leaves the room. The girl, too, pretends to be as simple as he; but an arch grin, which she cannot always suppress, seems to acknowledge that she understands perfectly well the game which she is playing, and is determined to keep me in ignorance. Both of them, and the wench in particular, treat me as they would do a spoilt child, and never directly refuse me any thing which I ask, taking care, at the same time, not to make their words good by effectually granting my request. Thus, if I desire to go out, I am promised by Dorcas that I shall walk in the park at night and see the cows milked, just as she would propose such an amusement to a child. But she takes care never to keep her word, if it is in her power to do so.

In the mean time, there has stolen on me insensibly an indifference to my freedom—a carelessness about my situation, for which I am unable to account, unless it be the consequence of weakness and loss of blood. I have read of men who, immured [illegible] I am have surprised the world by the address with which

* be here mentioned, that a violent and popular attack t the country people of this district considered as an of their fishing right, is by no means an improbable hortly after the close of the American war, Sir James f Netherby constructed a dam-dike or cauld, across it a place where it flowed through his estate, though rigin, and the principal part of its course, in Scotland. barrier at Netherby was considered as an encroach- culated to prevent the salmon from ascending into and the right of erecting it being an international f law betwixt the sister kingdoms, there was no court ompetent to its decision. In this dilemma, the Scots embled in numbers by signal of rocket lights, and, ned with fowlingpieces, fishspears, and such rustic marched to the banks of the river for the purpose of wn the dam-dike objected to. Sir James Graham by of his own people to protect his property, and had tary from Carlisle for the same purpose. A renewal rder wars had nearly taken place in the eighteenth when prudence and moderation on both sides saved ult, and perhaps some bloodshed. The English pro- nsented that a breach should be made in his dam- cient for the passage of the fish, and thus removed the *grievance. I believe the river has since that time matter into its own disposal, and entirely swept away w in question.*

they have successfully overcome the most formidable obstacles to their escape; and when I have heard such anecdotes, I have said to myself, that no one who is possessed only of a fragment of freestone, or a rusty nail, to grind down rivets and to pick locks, having his full leisure to employ in the task, need continue the inhabitant of a prison. Here, however, I sit, day after day, without a single effort to effect my liberation.

Yet my inactivity, is not the result of despondency, but arises, in part at least, from feelings of a very different cast. My story, long a mysterious one, seems now upon the verge of some strange development; and I feel a solemn impression that I ought to wait the course of events, to struggle against which is opposing my feeble efforts to the high will of fate. Thou, my Alan, wilt treat as timidity this passive acquiescence, which has sunk down on me like a benumbing torpor; but if thou hast remembered by what visions my couch was haunted, and dost but think of the probability that I am in the vicinity, perhaps under the same roof with G. M., thou wilt acknowledge that other feelings than pusillanimity have tended in some degree to reconcile me to my fate.

Still I own it is unmanly to submit with patience to this oppressive confinement. My heart rises against it, especially when I sit down to record my sufferings in this Journal; and I am determined, as the first step to my deliverance, to have my letters sent to the post-house.

I am disappointed. When the girl Dorcas, upon whom I had fixed for a messenger, heard me talk of sending a letter, she willingly offered her services, and received the crown which I gave her, (for my purse had not taken flight with the more valuable contents of my pocketbook,) with a smile which showed her whole set of white teeth.

But when, with the purpose of gaining some intelligence respecting my present place of abode, I asked, to which post-town she was to send or carry the letter, a stolid "*Anan*" showed me she was either ignorant of the nature of a post-office, or that, for the present, she chose to seem so.—"Simpleton!" I said, with some sharpness.

"O Lord, sir!" answered the girl, turning pale, which they always do when I show any sparks of anger,—"Don't put yourself in a passion!—I'll put the letter in the post."

"What! and not know the name of the post-town?" said I, out of patience. "How on earth do you propose to manage that?"

"La you there, good master. What need you frighten a poor girl that is no schollard, buting what she learned at the Charity-School, of Saint Bees?"

"Is Saint Bees far from this place, Dorcas?—Do you send your letters there?" said I, in a manner as insinuating, and yet careless, as I could assume.

"Saint Bees!—La, who but a madman—begging your honour's pardon—it's a matter of twenty years since fader lived at Saint Bees, which is twenty, or forty, or I dunna know not how many miles from this part, to the West, on the coast-side; and I would not have left Saint Bees, but that fader"——

"Oh, the devil take your father!" replied I.

To which she answered, "Nay, but thof your honour be a little how-come-so, you shouldn't damn folk's faders; and I won't stand to it, for one."

"Oh, I beg you a thousand pardons—I wish your father no ill in the world—he was a very honest man in his way."

"*Was* an honest man!" she exclaimed; for the Cumbrians are, it would seem, like their neighbours the Scotch, ticklish on the point of ancestry,—"He *is* a very honest man, as ever led nag with halter on head to Stanoshaw-Bank Fair—Honest!—He is a horse-couper."

"Right, Right," I replied; "I know it—I have heard of your father—as honest as any horse-couper of them all. Why, Dorcas, I mean to buy a horse of *him*."

"*Ah, your honour,*" *sighed Dorcas,* "*he is the man to serve your honour well—if ever you should get* round again—or, thof you were a bit off the hooks, he would no more cheat you than"——

"Well, well, we will deal, my girl, you may depend on't. But tell me now, were I to give you a letter, what would you do to get it forward?"

"Why, put it into Squire's own bag that hangs in hall," answered poor Dorcas. "What else could I do? He sends it to Brampton, or to Carlisle, or where it pleases him, once a-week, and that gate."

"Ah!" said I; "and I suppose your sweet-heart John carries it?"

"Noa—disn't now—and Jan is no sweetheart of mine, ever since he danced at his mother's feast with Kitty Rutledge, and let me sit still; that a did."

"It was most abominable in Jan, and what I could never have thought of him," I replied.

"O, but a did though—a let me sit still on my seat, a did."

"Well, well, my pretty May, you will get a handsomer fellow than Jan—Jan's not the fellow for you, I see that."

"Noa, noa," answered the damsel; "but he is weel aneugh for a' that, mon. But I carena a button for him; for there is the miller's son, that suitored me last Appleby Fair, when I went wi' oncle, is a gway canny lad as you will see in the sunshine."

"Ay, a fine stout fellow—Do you think he would carry my letter to Carlisle?"

"To Carlisle! 'Twould be all his life is worth; he maun wait on clap and hopper, as they say. Odd, his father would brain him if he went to Carlisle, bating to wrestling for the belt, or sic loike. But I ha' more bachelors than him; there is the schoolmaster can write almaist as well as tou canst, mon."

"Then he is the very man to take charge of a letter; he knows the trouble of writing one."

"Ay, marry does he, an tou comest to that, mon; only it takes him four hours to write as mony lines. Tan, it is a great round hand loike, that one can read easily, and not loike your honour's, that are loike midge's taes. But for ganging to Carloisle, he's dead foundered, man, as cripple as Eckie's mear."

"In the name of God," said I, "how is it that you propose to get my letter to the post?"

"Why, just to put it into Squire's bag loike," reiterated Dorcas; "He sends it by Cristel Nixon to post, as you call it, when such is his pleasure."

Here I was then, not much edified by having obtained a list of Dorcas's bachelors; and by finding myself with respect to any information which I desired, just exactly at the point where I set out. It was of consequence to me, however, to accustom the girl to converse with me familiarly. If she did so, she could not always be on her guard, and something, I thought, might drop from her which I could turn to advantage.

"Does not the Squire usually look into his letter-bag, Dorcas?" said I, with as much indifference as I could assume.

"That a does," said Dorcas; "and a threw out a letter of mine to Raff Miller, because a said"——

"Well, well, I won't trouble him with mine," said I, "Dorcas; but, instead, I will write to himself, Dorcas. But how shall I address him?"

"Anan?" was again Dorcas's resource.

"I mean how is he called?—What is his name?"

"Sure your honour should know best," said Dorcas.

"I know?—The devil!—You drive me beyond patience."

"Noa, noa! donna your honour go beyond patience—donna ye now," implored the wench. "And for his neame, they say he has mair nor ane in Westmoreland and on the Scottish side. But he is but seldom wi' us, excepting in the cocking season; and then we just call him Squoire loike; and so do my measter and dame."

"And is he here at present?" said I.

"Not he, not he; he is a buck-hoonting, as they teli me, somewhere up the Patterdale way; but he comes and gangs like a flap of a whirlwind, or sic loike."

I broke off the conversation, after having on Dor-

ıe silver to buy ribands, with which she was delighted, that she exclaimed, "God! Cristal ıay say his worst on thee; but thou art a civil ın for all him; and a quoit man wi' woman ".

is no sense in being too quiet with women I added a kiss with my crown piece; and I ıelp thinking, that I have secured a partisan s. At least she blushed, and pocketed her little ent with one hand, while, with the other, she ner cherry-coloured ribands, a little disor- the struggle it cost me to attain the honour ıte.

unlocked the door to leave the apartment, d back, and looking on me with a strong ex- of compassion, added the remarkable words, 'st mad or no, thou'se a mettled lad, after

was something very ominous in the sound farewell words, which seemed to afford me a the pretext under which I was detained in ıent. My demeanour was probably insane while I was agitated at once by the frenzy to the fever, and the anxiety arising from my nary situation. But is it possible they can blish any cause for confining me, arising out ate of my mind?

be really the pretext under which I am re- from my liberty, nothing but the sedate cor- of my conduct can remove the prejudices ıese circumstances may have excited in the all who have approached me during my I have heard—dreadful thought!—of men various reasons, have been trepanned into dy of the keepers of private madhouses, and ain, after years of misery, became at length , through irresistible sympathy with the beings among whom they were classed. ll not be my case, if, by strong internal reso- is in human nature to avoid the action of ex- l contagious sympathies.

ime I sat down to compose and arrange my for my purposed appeal to my jailer—so I him—whom I addressed in the following having at length, and after making several und language to qualify the sense of resent- ich burned in the first draughts of my letter, avoured to assume a tone more conciliating. ıed the two occasions on which he had cer- ıed my life, when at the utmost peril; and I at whatever was the purpose of the restraint tised on me, as I was given to understand, ıthority, it could not certainly be with any ultimately injuring me. He might, I said, taken me for some other person; and I gave t account I could of my situation and edu- correct such an error. I supposed it next that he might think me too weak for tra- ınd not capable of taking care of myself; gged to assure him that I was restored to ealth, and quite able to endure the fatigue of r. Lastly, I reminded him in firm though terms, that the restraint which I sustained egal one, and highly punishable by the laws otect the liberties of the subject. I ended by ıg, that he would take me before a magis- at least, that he would favour me with a interview, and explain his meaning with re- ıe.

s this letter was expressed in a tone too or the situation of an injured man, and I am to think so when I again recapitulate its lut what could I do? I was in the power of ıe passions seem as violent as his means of ; them appear unbounded. I had reason, too, [this to thee, Alan] that all his family did ove of the violence of his conduct towards bject, in fine, was freedom, and who would ice much to attain it?

ıo means of addressing my letter excepting, Squire's own hand." He could be at no ance, *for in the course of twenty-four hours an answer. It was addressed to Darsie nd contained these words:*—"You have demanded an interview with me. You have required to be carried before a magistrate. Your first wish shall be granted—perhaps the second also. Mean while, be assured that you are a prisoner for the time, by competent authority, and that such authority is supported by adequate power. Beware, therefore, of struggling with a force sufficient to crush you, but abandon yourself to that train of events by which we are both swept along, and which it is impossible that either of us can resist."

These mysterious words were without signature of any kind, and left me nothing more important to do than to prepare myself for the meeting which they promised. For that purpose I must now break off, and make sure of the manuscript,—so far as I can, in my present condition, be sure of any thing,—by concealing it within the lining of my coat, so as not to be found without strict search.

CHAPTER VI.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

The important interview expected at the conclusion of my last took place sooner than I had calculated; for the very day I received the letter, and just when my dinner was finished, the Squire, or whatever he is called, entered the room so suddenly, that I almost thought I beheld an apparition. The figure of this man is peculiarly noble and stately, and his voice has that deep fulness of accent which implies unresisted authority. I had risen involuntarily as he entered; we gazed on each other for a moment in silence, which was at length broken by my visiter.

"You have desired to see me," he said. "I am here; if you have aught to say, let me hear it; my time is too brief to be consumed in childish dumb-show."

"I would ask of you," said I, "by what authority I am detained in this place of confinement, and for what purpose?"

"I have told you already," said he, "that my authority is sufficient, and my power equal to it; this is all which it is necessary for you at present to know."

"Every British subject has a right to know why he suffers restraint," I replied; "nor can he be deprived of liberty without a legal warrant—Show me that by which you confine me thus."

"You shall see more," he said; "you shall see the magistrate by whom it is granted, and that without a moment's delay."

This sudden proposal fluttered and alarmed me; I felt, nevertheless, that I had the right cause, and resolved to plead it boldly, although I could well have desired a little further time for preparation. He turned, however, threw open the door of the apartment, and commanded me to follow him. I felt some inclination, when I crossed the threshold of my prison-chamber, to have turned and run for it; but I knew not where to find the stairs—had reason to think the outer-doors would be secured—and, to conclude, so soon as I had quitted the room to follow the proud step of my conductor, I observed that I was dogged by Cristal Nixon, who suddenly appeared within two paces of me, and with whose great personal strength, independent of the assistance he might have received from his master, I saw no chance of contending. I therefore followed, unresistingly, and in silence, along one or two passages of much greater length than consisted with the ideas I had previously entertained of the size of the house. At length a door was flung open, and we entered a large, old-fashioned parlour, having coloured glass in the windows, oaken panelling on the wall, a huge grate, in which a large fagot or two smoked under an arched chimney-piece of stone, which bore some armorial device, whilst the walls were adorned with the usual number of heroes in armour, with large wigs instead of helmets, and ladies in sacques, smelling to nosegays.

Behind a long table, on which were several books, sat a smart underbred-looking man, wearing his own hair tied in a club, and who, from the quire of paper laid before him, and the pen which he handled

my entrance, seemed prepared to officiate as clerk. As I wish to describe these persons as accurately as possible, I may add, he wore a dark-coloured coat, corduroy breeches, and spatterdashes. At the upper end of the same table, in an ample easy-chair, covered with black leather, reposed a fat personage, about fifty years old, who either was actually a country justice, or was well selected to represent such a character. His leathern breeches were faultless in make, his jockey boots spotless in the varnish, and a handsome and flourishing pair of boot-garters, as they are called, united the one part of his garments to the other; in fine, a richly-laced scarlet waistcoat, and a purple coat, set off the neat though corpulent figure of the little man, and threw an additional bloom upon his plethoric aspect. I suppose he had dined, for it was two hours past noon, and he was amusing himself, and aiding digestion, with a pipe of tobacco. There was an air of importance in his manner which corresponded to the rural dignity of his exterior, and a habit which he had of throwing out a number of interjectional sounds, uttered with a strange variety of intonation, running from bass up to treble in a very extraordinary manner, or breaking off his sentences with a whiff of his pipe, seemed adopted to give an air of thought and mature deliberation to his opinions and decisions. Notwithstanding all this, Alan, it might be *dooted*, as our old Professor used to say, whether the Justice was any thing more than an ass. Certainly, besides a great deference for the legal opinion of his clerk, which might be quite according to the order of things, he seemed to be wonderfully under the command of his brother Squire, if squire either of them were, and indeed much more than was consistent with so much assumed consequence of his own.

"Ho—ha—ay—so—so—Hum—humph—this is the young man, I suppose—Hum—ay—seems sickly—Young gentleman, you may sit down."

I used the permission given, for I had been much more reduced by my illness than I was aware of, and felt myself really fatigued, even by the few paces I had walked, joined to the agitation I suffered.

"And your name, young man, is—humph—ay—ha—what is it?"

"Darsie Latimer."

"Right—ay—humph—very right. Darsie Latimer is the very thing—ha—ay—where do you come from?"

"From Scotland, sir," I replied.

"A native of Scotland—a—humph—eh—how is it?"

"I am an Englishman by birth, sir."

"Right—ay—yes, you are so. But pray, Mr. Darsie Latimer, have you always been called by that name, or have you any other?—Nick, write down his answers, Nick."

"As far as I remember, I never bore any other," was my answer.

"How, no?—well I should not have thought so—Hey, neighbour, would you?"

Here he looked towards the other Squire, who had thrown himself into a chair; and, with his legs stretched out before him, and his arms folded on his bosom, seemed carelessly attending to what was going forward. He answered the appeal of the Justice by saying, that perhaps the young man's memory did not go back to a very early period.

"Ah—eh—ha—you hear the gentleman—Pray, how far may your memory be pleased to run back to?—umph?"

"Perhaps, sir, to the age of three years, or a little farther."

"And will you presume to say, sir," said the Squire, drawing himself suddenly erect in his seat, and exerting the strength of his powerful voice, "that you *then* bore your present name?"

I was startled at the confidence with which this question was put, and in vain rummaged my memory for the means of replying. "At least," I said, "I always remember being called Darsie; children, at that early age, seldom get more than their Christian name."

"*O, I thought so,*" *he replied, and again stretched himself on his seat, in the same lounging posture as before.*

"So you were called Darsie in your infancy," said the Justice; "and hum—ay—when did you first take the name of Latimer?"

"I did not take it, sir; it was given to me."

"I ask you," said the lord of the mansion, but with less severity in his voice than formerly, "whether you can remember that you were ever called Latimer, until you had that name given you in Scotland?"

"I will be candid; I cannot recollect an instance that I was so called when in England, but neither can I recollect when the name was first given me; and if any thing is to be founded on these queries and my answers, I desire my early childhood may be taken into consideration."

"Hum—ay—yes," said the Justice; "all that requires consideration shall be duly considered. Young man—eh—I beg to know the name of your father and mother?"

This was galling a wound that has festered for years, and I did not endure the question so patiently as those which preceded it; but replied, "I demand, in my turn, to know if I am before an English Justice of the Peace?"

"His worship Squire Foxley, of Foxley Hall, has been of the quorum these twenty years," said Master Nicholas.

"Then he ought to know, or you, sir, as his clerk, should inform him," said I, "that I am the complainer in this case, and that my complaint ought to be heard before I am subjected to cross-examination."

"Humph—hoy—what, ay—there is something in that, neighbour," said the poor Justice, who, blown about by every wind of doctrine, seemed desirous to attain the sanction of his brother Squire.

"I wonder at you, Foxley," said his firm-minded acquaintance; "how can you render the young man justice unless you know who he is?"

"Ha—yes—egad that's true," said Mr. Justice Foxley; "and now—looking into the matter more closely—there is, eh, upon the whole—nothing at all in what he says—so, sir, you must tell your father's name, and surname."

"It is out of my power, sir; they are not known to me, since you must needs know so much of my private affairs."

The Justice collected a great *afflatus* in his cheeks, which puffed them up like those of a Dutch cherub, while his eyes seemed flying out of his head, from the effort with which he retained his breath. He then blew it forth with,—"Whew!—Hoom—poof—ha!—not know your parents, youngster?—Then I must commit you for a vagrant, I warrant you. *Omne ignotum pro terribili*, as we used to say at Appleby school; that is, every one that is not known to the Justice, is a rogue and a vagabond. Ha!—ay, you may sneer, sir; but I question if you would have known the meaning of that Latin unless I had told you."

I acknowledged myself obliged for a new edition of the adage, and an interpretation which I could never have reached alone and unassisted. I then proceeded to state my case with greater confidence. The Justice was an ass, that was clear; but it was scarcely possible he could be so utterly ignorant as not to know what was necessary in so plain a case as mine. I therefore informed him of the riot which had been committed on the Scottish side of the Solway Frith; explained how I came to be placed in my present situation; and requested of his worship to set me at liberty. I pleaded my cause with as much earnestness as I could, casting an eye from time to time upon the opposite party, who seemed entirely indifferent to all the animation with which I accused him.

As for the Justice, when at length I had ceased, as really not knowing what more to say in a case so very plain, he replied, "Ho—ay—ay—yes—wonderful! and so this is all the gratitude you show to this good gentleman for the great charge and trouble he hath had with respect to and concerning of you?"

"He saved my life, sir, I acknowledge, on one occasion certainly, and most probably on two; but his having done so gives him no right over my person. I am not, however, seeking any punishment or revenge; on the contrary, I am content to part friends with the gentleman, whose motives I am unwilling

) suppose are bad, though his actions have been, rwards me, unauthorized and violent."

This moderation, Alan thou wilt comprehend, was ot entirely dictated by my feelings towards the in-ividual of whom I complained; there were other easons, in which regard for him had little share. t seemed, however, as if the mildness with which I leaded my cause had more effect upon him than any ning I had yet said. He was moved to the point of eing almost out of countenance; and took snuff peatedly, as if to gain time to stifle some degree of motion.

But on Justice Foxley, on whom my eloquence was articularly designed to make impression, the result ras much less favourable. He consulted in a whis-er with Mr. Nicholas his clerk—pshawed, hemmed, nd elevated his eyebrows, as if in scorn of my suppli-ation. At length, having apparently made up his ind, he leaned back in his chair, and smoked his ipe with great energy, with a look of defiance, de-igned to make me aware that all my reasoning was ost on him.

At length, when I stopped, more from lack of breath an want of argument, he opened his oracular jaws, nd made the following reply, interrupted by his usual nterjectional ejaculations, and by long volumes of moke:—"Hem—ay—eh—poof—And, youngster, do ou think Matthew Foxley, who has been one of the oorum for these twenty years, is to be come over with uch trash as would hardly cheat an apple-woman?—oof—poof—eh! Why, man—eh—dost thou not know ne charge is not a bailable matter—and that—hum—y—the greatest man—poof—the Baron of Graystock imself, must stand committed? and yet you pretend o have been kidnapped by this gentleman, and rob-ed of property, and what not; and—eh—poof—you ould persuade me all you want is to get away from im?—I do believe—eh—that it *is* all you want. herefore, as you are a sort of a slip-string gentle-an, and—ay—hum—a kind of idle apprentice, and omething cockbrained withal, as the honest folk of ne house tell me—why, you must e'en remain under ustody of your guardian, till your coming of age, r my Lord Chancellor's warrant shall give you the anagement of your own affairs, which, if you can ather your brains again, you will even then not be—y—hem—poof—in particular haste to assume."

The time occupied by his worship's hums, and aws, and puffs of tobacco smoke, together with the low and pompous manner in which he spoke, gave ne a minute's space to collect my ideas, dispersed as ney were by the extraordinary purport of this an-unciation.

"I cannot conceive, sir," I replied, "by what ingular tenure this person claims my obedience as a uardian; it is a barefaced imposture—I never in my fe saw him, until I came unhappily to this country, bout four weeks since."

"Ay, sir—we—eh—know, and are aware—that—oof—you do not like to hear some folk's names; nd that—eh—you understand me—there are things, nd sounds and matters, conversation about names, nd such like, which puts you off the hooks—which I ave no humour to witness. Nevertheless, Mr. Darsie—or—poof—Mr. Darsie Latimer—or—poof, poof -eh—ay, Mr. Darsie without the Latimer—you have cknowledged as much to-day as assures me you vill best be disposed of under the honourable care of ny friend here—all your confessions—besides that—oof—eh—I know him to be a most responsible per-on—a—hay—ay—most responsible and honourable erson—Can you deny this?"

"I know nothing of him," I repeated; "not even is name; and I have not, as I told you, seen him in he course of my whole life, till a few weeks since."

"Will you swear to that?" said the singular man, who seemed to await the result of this debate, secure s a rattlesnake is of the prey which has once felt its ascination. And while he said these words in a deep under-tone, he withdrew his chair a little be-hind that of the Justice, so as to be unseen by him r his clerk, *who sat upon the same side*; while he *ent on me a frown so portentous, that no one who as witnessed the look can forget it during the whole* of his life. The furrows of the brow above the eyes became livid and almost black, and were bent into a semicircular, or rather elliptical form, above the junction of the eyebrows. I had heard such a look described in an old tale of *diablerie*, which it was my chance to be entertained with not long since; when this deep and gloomy contortion of the frontal muscles was not unaptly described, as forming the representation of a small horseshoe.

The tale, when told, awakened a dreadful vision of infancy, which the withering and blighting look now fixed on me again forced on my recollection, but with much more vivacity. Indeed I was so much surprised, and, I must add, terrified, at the vague ideas which were awakened in my mind by this fearful sign, that I kept my eyes fixed on the face in which it was exhibited as on a frightful vision; until passing his handkerchief a moment across his countenance, this mysterious man relaxed at once the look which had for me something so appalling. "The young man will no longer deny that he has seen me before," said he to the Justice, in a tone of complacency; "and I trust he will now be reconciled to my temporary guardianship, which may end better for him than he expects."

"Whatever I expect," I replied, summoning my scattered recollections together "I see I am neither to expect justice nor protection from this gentleman, whose office it is to render both to the lieges. For you, sir, how strangely you have wrought yourself into the fate of an unhappy young man, or what interest you can pretend in me, you yourself only can explain. That I have seen you before, is certain: for none can forget the look with which you seem to have the power of blighting those upon whom you cast it."

The Justice seemed not very easy under this hint. "Ho!—ay," he said; "it is time to be going, neighbour. I have a many miles to ride, and I care not to ride darkling in these parts.—You and I, Mr. Nicholas, must be jogging."

The Justice fumbled with his gloves, in endeavouring to draw them on hastily, and Mr. Nicholas bustled to get his great-coat and whip. Their landlord endeavoured to detain them, and spoke of supper and beds. Both pouring forth many thanks for his invitation, seemed as if they would much rather not; and Mr. Justice Foxley was making a score of apologies, with at least a hundred cautionary hems and eh-ehs, when the girl Dorcas burst into the room, and announced a gentleman on justice business.

"What gentleman?—and whom does he want?"

"He is cuome post on his ten toes," said the wench; "and on justice business to his worship loike. I'se uphald him a gentleman, for he speaks as good Latin as the schulemeaster; but, lack-a-day! he has got ten a queer mop of a wig."

The gentleman, thus announced and described, bounced into the room. But I have already written as much as fills a sheet of my paper, and my singular embarrassments press so hard on me, that I have matter to fill another from what followed the intrusion of—my dear Alan—your crazy client—Poor Peter Peebles!

CHAPTER VII.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

Sheet 2.

I HAVE rarely in my life, till the last alarming days known what it was to sustain a moment's real sorrow. What I called such, was, I am now well convinced, only the weariness of mind, which, having nothing actually present to complain of, turns upon itself, and becomes anxious about the past and the future; those periods with which human life has so little connexion, that Scripture itself hath said, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

If, therefore, I have sometimes abused prosperity, by murmuring at my unknown birth and uncertain rank in society, I will make amends by bearing my present real adversity with patience and courage, and, if I can, even with gayety. What can they—dare they, do to me?—Foxley, I am persuaded, is a real Justice of Peace, and country gentleman of estate

though, (wonderful to tell!) he is an ass notwithstanding; and his functionary in the drab coat must have a shrewd guess at the consequences of being accessary to an act of murder or kidnapping. Men invite not such witnesses to deeds of darkness. I have also—Alan, I *hare* hopes, arising out of the family of the oppressor himself. I am encouraged to believe that G. M. is likely again to enter on the field. More I dare not here say; nor must I drop a hint which another eye than thine might be able to construe. Enough, my feelings are lighter than they have been; and though fear and wonder are still around me, they are unable entirely to overcloud the horizon.

Even when I saw the spectral form of the old scarecrow of the Parliament-House rush into the apartment where I had undergone so singular an examination, I thought of thy connexion with him, and could almost have parodied Lear—

> "Death!—nothing could have thus subdued nature
> To such a lowness, but his 'learned lawyers.'"

He was e'en as we have seen him of yore, Alan, when, rather to keep thee company than to follow my own bent, I formerly frequented the halls of justice. The only addition to his dress, in the capacity of a traveller, was a pair of boots, that seemed as if they might have seen the field of Sheriff-moor; so large and heavy, that, tied as they were to the creature's wearied hams with large bunches of worsted tape of various colours, they looked as if he had been dragging them along, either for a wager, or by way of penance.

Regardless of the surprised looks of the party on whom he thus intruded himself, Peter blundered into the middle of the apartment, with his head charged like a ram's in the act of butting, and saluted them thus:—

"Gude day to ye, gude day to your honours—Is't here they sell the fugie warrants?"

I observed that, on his entrance, my friend—or enemy—drew himself back, and placed himself as if he would rather avoid attracting the observation of the new comer. I did the same myself, as far as I was able; for I thought it likely that Mr. Peebles might recognise me, as indeed I was too frequently among the group of young juridicial aspirants who used to amuse themselves by putting cases for Peter's solution, and playing him worse tricks; yet I was uncertain whether I had better avail myself of our acquaintance to have the advantage, such as it might be, of his evidence before the magistrate, or whether to make him, if possible, bearer of a letter which might procure me more effectual assistance. I resolved, therefore, to be guided by circumstances, and to watch carefully that nothing might escape me. I drew back as far as I could, and even reconnoitred the door and passage, to consider whether absolute escape might not be practicable. But there paraded Cristal Nixon, whose little black eyes, sharp as those of a basilisk, seemed, the instant when they encountered mine, to penetrate my purpose.

I sat down, as much out of sight of all parties as I could, and listened to the dialogue which followed—a dialogue how much more interesting to me than any I could have conceived, in which Peter Peebles was to be one of the *Dramatis Personæ!*

"Is it here where ye sell the warrants?—the fugies, ye ken?" said Peter.

"Hey—eh—what!" said Justice Foxley; "what the devil does the fellow mean?—What would you have a warrant for?"

"It is to apprehend a young lawyer that is *in meditatione fugæ;* for he has ta'en my memorial and pleaded my cause, and a good fee I gave him, and as muckle brandy as he could drink that day at his father's house—he loes the brandy ower weel for sae youthful a creature."

"And what has this drunken young dog of a lawyer done to you, that you are come to me—eh—ha? Has he robbed you? Not unlikely, if he be a lawyer—eh—Nick—ha?" said Justice Foxley.

"He has robbed me of himself, sir," answered Peter; "*of his help, comfort, aid, maintenance, and assistance, whilk, as a counsel to a client,* he is bound *to yield me ratione officii—that is it, ye see.* He has pouched my fee, and drucken a mutchkin of brandy, and now he's ower the march, and left my cause, half won half lost—as dead a heat as e'er was run ower the back-sands. Now, I was advised by some cunning laddies that are used to crack a bit law wi' me in the House, that the best thing I could do was to take heart o' grace and set out after him; so I have taken post on my ain shanks, forby a cast in a cart, or the like. I got wind of him in Dumfries, and now I have run him ower to the English side, and I want a fugie warrant against him."

How did my heart throb at this information, dearest Alan! Thou art near me then, and I well know with what kind purpose; thou hast abandoned all to fly to my assistance; and no wonder that, knowing thy friendship and faith, thy sound sagacity and persevering disposition, "my bosom's lord should now sit lightly on his throne;" that gayety should almost involuntarily hover on my pen; and that my heart should beat like that of a general, responsive to the drums of his advancing ally, without whose help the battle must have been lost.

I did not suffer myself to be startled by this joyous surprise, but continued to bend my strictest attention to what followed among this singular party. That Poor Peter Peebles had been put upon this wildgoose chase, by some of his juvenile advisers in the Parliament House, he himself had intimated; but he spoke with much confidence, and the Justice, who seemed to have some secret apprehension of being put to trouble in the matter, and, as sometimes occurs on the English frontier, a jealousy lest the superior acuteness of their northern neighbours might overreach their own simplicity, turned to his clerk with a perplexed countenance.

"Eh—oh—Nick—d—n thee—Hast thou got nothing to say? This is more Scots law, I take it, and more Scotsmen." (Here he cast a side glance at the owner of the mansion, and winked to his clerk.) "I would Solway were as deep as it is wide, and we had then some chance of keeping of them out."

Nicholas conversed an instant aside with the supplicant, and then reported;—

"The man wants a border-warrant, I think; but they are only granted for debt—now he wants one to catch a lawyer."

"And what for no?" answered Peter Peebles, doggedly; "what for no, I would be glad to ken? If a day-labourer refuses to work, ye'll grant a warrant to gar him do out his daurg—if a wench quean rin away from her hairst, ye'll send her back to her heuk again—if sae mickle as a collier or a salter make a moonlight flitting, ye will cleek him by the back-spaul in a minute of time,—and yet the damage canna amount to mair than a creelfu' of coals, and a forpit or twa of saut; and here is a chield taks leg from his engagement, and damages me to the tune of sax thousand punds sterling; that is, three thousand that I should win, and three thousand mair that I am like to lose; and you that ca' yoursell a justice canna help a poor man to catch the rinaway? A bonny like justice I am like to get amang ye!"

"The fellow must be drunk," said the clerk.

"Black-fasting from all but sin," replied the supplicant; "I havena had mair than a mouthful of cauld water since I passed the Border, and deil a ane of ye is like to say to me, 'Dog, will ye drink?'"

The Justice seemed moved by this appeal. "Hem—tush man," replied he; "thou speak'st to us as if thou wert in presence of one of thine own beggarly justices—get down stairs—get something to eat, man, (with permission of my friend to make so free in his house,) and a mouthful to drink, and I will warrant we get ye such justice as will please ye."

"I winna refuse your neighbourly offer," said Poor Peter Peebles, making his bow; "muckle grace be wi' your honour, and wisdom to guide ye in this extraordinary cause."

When I saw Peter Peebles about to retire from the room, I could not forbear an effort to obtain from him such evidence as might give me some credit with the Justice. I stepped forward, therefore, and, saluting him, asked him if he remembered me?"

"After a stare or two, and a long pinch of snuff, recollection seemed suddenly to dawn on Peter Peebles. Recollect ye!" he said; "by my troth do I.—Haud him a grip, gentlemen!—constables, keep him fast! There that ill-deedy hempy is, ye are sure that Alan Fairford is not far off.—Haud him fast, Master Constable; I charge ye wi' him, for I am mista'en if he is no at the bottom of this rinaway business. He was ye getting the silly callant Alan awa wi' gigs, and curse, and the like of that, to Roslin, and Prestonpans, and a' the idle gates he could think of. He's a rinaway apprentice, that ane."

"Mr. Peebles," I said, "do not do me wrong. I am sure you can say no harm of me justly, but can satisfy these gentlemen, if you will, that I am a student of law in Edinburgh—Darsie Latimer by name."

"Me satisfy! how can I satisfy the gentlemen," answered Peter, "that am sae far from being satisfied myself? I ken naething about your name, and can only testify, *nihil novit in causa*."

"A pretty witness you have brought forward in your favour," said Mr. Foxley. "But—ha—ay—I'll ask him a question or two.—Pray, friend, will you take your oath to this youth being a runaway apprentice?"

"Sir," said Peter, "I will make oath to ony thing in reason; when a case comes to my oath it's a won cause: But I am in some haste to prie your worship's good cheer;" for Peter had become much more respectful in his demeanour towards the Justice, since he had heard some intimation of dinner.

"You shall have—ch—hum—ay—a bellyful, if it be possible to fill it. First let me know if this young man be really what he pretends.—Nick, make his affidavit."

"Ou, he is just a wud harum-scarum creature, that had never take to his studies; daft, sir, clean daft."

"Deft!" said the Justice; "what d'ye mean by deft—eh?"

"Just Fifish," replied Peter; "wowf—a wee bit by the East-Nook or sae; it's a common case—the tae half of the warld thinks the tither daft. I have met with folk in my day, that thought I was daft myself; and, for my part, I think our Court of Session clean daft, that have had the great cause of Peebles against Plainstanes before them for this score of years, and have never been able to ding the bottom out of it yet."

"I cannot make out a word of his cursed brogue," said the Cumbrian justice; "can you, neighbour—eh? What can he mean by *deft?*"

"He means *mad*," said the party appealed to, drawn off his guard by impatience of this protracted discussion.

"Ye have it—ye have it," said Peter; "that is, not clean skivie, but"——

Here he stopped, and fixed his eye on the person he addressed with an air of joyful recognition. "Ay, ay, Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, is this your ainsell in flood and bane? I thought ye had been hanged at Pennington Common, or Hairibie, or some of these places, after the bonny ploy ye made in the forty-five."

"I believe you are mistaken, friend," said Herries, sternly, with whose name and designation I was thus made unexpectedly acquainted.

"The deil a bit," answered the undaunted Peter Peebles; "I mind ye weel, for ye lodged in my house the great year of forty-five, for a great year it was; the Grand Rebellion broke out, and my cause—the great cause—Peebles against Plainstanes, *et per contra*—was called in the beginning of the winter Session, and would have been heard, but that there was a succease of justice, with your plaids, and your piping, and your nonsense."

"I tell you, fellow," said Herries, yet more fiercely, "you have confused me with some of the other furniture of your crazy pate."

"Speak like a gentleman, sir," answered Peebles; "these are not legal phrases, Mr. Herries of Birrenswork. Speak in form of law, or I shall bid ye gudelay, sir. I have nae pleasure in speaking to proud folk, though I *am willing to answer ony thing* in a *legal way; so if you are for a crack about auld lang-syne, and the splores that you and Captain Red-*gimlet used to breed in my house, and the girded cask of brandy that ye drank and ne'er thought of paying for it, (not that I minded it muckle in thae days, though I have felt a lack of it sinsyne,) why I will waste an hour on ye at ony time.—And where is Captain Redgimlet now? he was a wild chap, like yourself, though they are nae sae keen after you poor bodies for these some years bygane; the heading and hanging is weel ower now—awful job—awful job—will ye try my sneeshing?"

He concluded his desultory speech by thrusting out his large bony paw, filled with a Scottish mull of huge dimensions, which Herries, who had been standing like one petrified by the assurance of this unexpected address, rejected with a contemptuous motion of his hand, which spilled some of the contents of the box.

"Aweel, aweel," said Peter Peebles, totally unabashed by the repulse, "e'en as ye like, a wilful man maun hae his way; but," he added, stooping down, and endeavouring to gather the spilt snuff from the polished floor, "I canna afford to lose my sneeshing for a' that ye are gumple-foisted wi' me."

My attention had been keenly awakened, during this extraordinary and unexpected scene. I watched, with as much attention as my own agitation permitted me to command, the effect produced on the parties concerned. It was evident that our friend, Peter Peebles, had unwarily let out something which altered the sentiments of Justice Foxley and his clerk towards Mr. Herries, with whom, until he was known and acknowledged under that name, they had appeared to be so intimate. They talked with each other aside, looked at a paper or two which the clerk selected from the contents of a huge black pocketbook and seemed under the influence of fear and uncertainty, totally at a loss what line of conduct to adopt.

Herries made a different and a far more interesting figure. However little Peter Peebles might resemble the angel Ithuriel, the appearance of Herries, his high and scornful demeanour, vexed at what seemed detection, yet fearless of the consequences, and regarding the whispering magistrate and his clerk with looks in which contempt predominated over anger or anxiety, bore, in my opinion, no slight resemblance to

> ——"the regal port
> And faded splendour was"

with which the poet has invested the detected King of the Powers of the Air.

As he glanced round, with a look which he had endeavoured to compose to haughty indifference, his eye encountered mine, and, I thought, at the first glance sunk beneath it. But he instantly rallied his natural spirit, and returned me one of those extraordinary looks, by which he could contort so strangely the wrinkles on his forehead. I started; but, angry at myself for my pusillanimity, I answered him by a look of the same kind, and, catching the reflection of my countenance in a large antique mirror which stood before me, I started again at the real or imaginary resemblance which my countenance, at that moment, bore to that of Herries. Surely my fate is somehow strangely interwoven with that of this mysterious individual. I had no time at present to speculate upon the subject, for the subsequent conversation demanded all my attention.

The Justice addressed Herries, after a pause of about five minutes, in which all parties seemed at some loss how to proceed. He spoke with embarrassment, and his faltering voice, and the long intervals which divided his sentences, seemed to indicate fear of him whom he addressed.

"Neighbour," he said, "I could not have thought this; or, if *I*—eh—*did* think—in a corner of my own mind as it were—that you, I say—that you might have unluckily engaged in—eh—the matter of the forty-five—there was still time to have forgot all that."

"And is it so singular that a man should have been out in the forty-five?" said Herries, with contemptuous composure;—"your father, I think, Mr. Foxley was out with Derwentwater in the fifteen."

"And lost half of his estate," answered Foxley, with more rapidity than usual; "and was very near —hem—being hanged into the boot. But this is—another guess job—for—eh—fifteen is not forty-five; and my father had a remission, and you, I take it, have not."

"Perhaps I have," said Herries, indifferently; "or, if I have not, I am but in the case of half a dozen others whom government do not think worth looking after at this time of day, so they give no offence or disturbance."

"But you have given both, sir," said Nicholas Faggot, the clerk, who, having some petty provincial situation, as I have since understood, deemed himself bound to be zealous for government. "Mr. Justice Foxley cannot be answerable for letting you pass free, now your name and surname have been spoken plainly out. There are warrants out against you from the Secretary of State's office."

"A proper allegation, Mr. Attorney! that, at the distance of so many years, the Secretary of State should trouble himself about the unfortunate relics of a ruined cause!" answered Mr. Herries.

"But if it be so," said the clerk, who seemed to assume more confidence upon the composure of Herries's demeanour; "and if cause has been given by the conduct of a gentleman himself, who hath been, it is alleged, raking up old matters, and mixing them with new subjects of disaffection—I say, if it be so, I should advise the party, in his wisdom, to surrender himself quietly into the lawful custody of the next Justice of Peace—Mr. Foxley, suppose—where, and by whom, the matter should be regularly inquired into. I am only putting a case," he added, watching with apprehension the effect which his words were likely to produce upon the party to whom they were addressed.

"And were I to receive such advice," said Herries, with the same composure as before—"putting the case, as you say, Mr. Faggot—I should request to see the warrant which countenanced such a scandalous proceeding."

Mr. Nicholas, by way of answer, placed in his hand a paper, and seemed anxiously to expect the consequences which were to ensue. Mr. Herries looked it over with the same equanimity as before, and then continued, "And were such a scrawl as this presented to me in my own house, I would throw it into the chimney, and Mr. Faggot upon the top of it."

Accordingly, seconding the word with the action, he flung the warrant into the fire with one hand, and fixed the other, with a stern and irresistible gripe, on the breast of the attorney, who, totally unable to contend with him, in either personal strength or mental energy, trembled like a chicken in the raven's clutch. He got off, however, for the fright; for Herries, having probably made him fully sensible of the strength of his grasp, released him with a scornful laugh.

"Deforcement—sculzie—stouthrief—masterful rescue!" exclaimed Peter Peebles, scandalized at the resistance offered to the law in the person of Nicholas Faggot. But his shrill exclamations were drowned in the thundering voice of Herries, who, calling upon Cristal Nixon, ordered him to take the bawling fool down stairs, fill his belly, and then give him a guinea, and thrust him out of doors. Under such injunctions, Peter easily suffered himself to be withdrawn from the scene.

Herries then turned to the Justice, whose visage, wholly abandoned by the rubicund hue which so lately beamed upon it, hung out the same pale livery as that of his dismayed clerk. "Old friend and acquaintance," he said, "you came here at my request, on a friendly errand, to convince this silly young man of the right which I have over his person for the present. I trust you do not intend to make your visit the pretext of disquieting me about other matters? All the world knows that I have been living at large, in these northern counties, for some months, not to say years, and might have been apprehended at any time, had the necessities of the state required, or my own behaviour deserved it. But no English magistrate has been ungenerous enough to trouble a gentleman under misfortune, on account of political opinions and disputes, which have been long ended by the success of the reigning powers. I trust, my good friend, you will not endanger yourself, by taking any other view of the subject than you have done ever since we were acquainted?"

The Justice answered with more readiness, as well as more spirit than usual, "Neighbour Ingoldsby—what you say—is—eh—in some sort true; and when you were coming and going at markets, horse-races, and cock-fights, fairs, hunts, and such like—it was—eh—neither my business nor my wish to dispel—I say—to inquire into and dispel the mysteries which hung about you; for while you were a good companion in the field, and over a bottle now and then—I did not—eh—think it necessary to ask—into your private affairs. And if I thought you were—ahem—somewhat unfortunate in former undertakings, and enterprises, and connexions, which might cause you to live unsettledly and more private, I could have—eh—very little pleasure—to aggravate your case by interfering, or requiring explanations, which are often more easily asked than given. But when there are warrants and witnesses to names—and those names, christian and surname, belong to—eh—an attainted person—charged—I trust falsely—with—ahem—taking advantage of modern broils and heart-burnings to renew our civil disturbances, the case is altered; and I must—ahem—do my duty."

The Justice got on his feet as he concluded this speech, and looked as bold as he could. I drew close beside him and his clerk, Mr. Faggot, thinking the moment favourable for my own liberation, and intimated to Mr. Foxley my determination to stand by him. But Mr. Herries only laughed at the menacing posture which we assumed. "My good neighbour," said he, "you talk of a witness—Is yon crazy beggar a fit witness in an affair of this nature?"

"But you do not deny that you are Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, mentioned in the Secretary of State's warrant?" said Mr. Foxley.

"How can I deny or own any thing about it?" said Herries, with a sneer. "There is no such warrant in existence now; its ashes, like the poor traitor whose doom it threatened, have been dispersed to the four winds of heaven. There is now no warrant in the world."

"But you will not deny," said the Justice, "that you were the person named in it; and that—eh—your own act destroyed it?"

"I will neither deny my name nor my actions Justice," replied Mr. Herries, "when called upon by competent authority to avow or defend them. But I will resist all impertinent attempts either to intrude into my private motives, or to control my person. I am quite well prepared to do so; and I trust that you my good neighbour and brother sportsman, in your expostulation, and my friend Mr. Nicholas Faggot here, in his humble advice and petition that I should surrender myself, will consider yourselves as having amply discharged your duty to King George and Government."

The cold and ironical tone in which he made this declaration; the look and attitude, so nobly expressive of absolute confidence in his own superior strength and energy, seemed to complete the indecision which had already shown itself on the side of those whom he addressed.

The Justice looked to the Clerk—the Clerk to the Justice; the former *ha'd, eh'd*, without bringing forth an articulate syllable; the latter only said, "As the warrant is destroyed, Mr. Justice, I presume you do not mean to proceed with the arrest?"

"Hum—ay—why no—Nicholas—it would not be quite advisable—and as the Forty-five was an old affair—and—hem—as my friend here will, I hope, see his error—that is, if he has not seen it already—and renounce the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender—I mean no harm, neighbour—I think we—as we have no *posse*, or constables, or the like—should order our horses—and, in one word, look the matter over."

"Judiciously resolved," said the person whom the

decision affected; "but before you go, I trust you will drink and be friends?"

"Why," said the Justice, rubbing his brow, "our business has been—hem—rather a thirsty one."

"Cristal Nixon," said Mr. Herries, "let us have a cool tankard instantly, large enough to quench the thirst of the whole commission."

While Cristal was absent on this genial errand, there was a pause, of which I endeavoured to avail myself, by bringing back the discourse to my own concerns. "Sir," I said to Justice Foxley, "I have no direct business with your late discussion with Mr. Herries, only just thus far—You leave me, a loyal subject of King George, an unwilling prisoner in the hands of a person whom you have reason to believe unfriendly to the King's cause. I humbly submit that this is contrary to your duty as a magistrate, and that you ought to make Mr. Herries aware of the illegality of his proceedings, and take steps for my rescue, either upon the spot, or, at least, as soon as possible after you have left this case"——

"Young man," said Mr. Justice Foxley, "I would have you remember you are under the power, the lawful power—ahem—of your guardian."

"He calls himself so, indeed," I replied; "but he has shown no evidence to establish so absurd a claim; and if he had, his circumstances, as an attainted traitor excepted from pardon, would void such a right, if it existed. I do therefore desire you, Mr. Justice, and you, his clerk, to consider my situation, and afford me relief at your peril."

"Here is a young fellow now," said the Justice, with much embarrassed looks, "thinks that I carry the whole statute law of England in my head and a *posse comitatus* to execute them in my pocket! Why, what good would my interference do?—but—hum—eh—I will speak to your guardian in your favour."

He took Mr. Herries aside, and seemed indeed to urge something upon him with much earnestness; and perhaps such a species of intercession was all which, in the circumstances, I was entitled to expect from him.

They often looked at me as they spoke together; and as Cristal Nixon entered with a huge four-pottle tankard, filled with the beverage his master had demanded, Herries turned away from Mr. Foxley somewhat impatiently, saying with emphasis, "I give you my word of honour, that you have not the slightest reason to apprehend any thing on his account." He then took up the tankard, and saying aloud in Gaelic, "*Slaint an Rey*,"* just tasted the liquor, and handed the tankard to Justice Foxley, who, to avoid the dilemma of pledging him to what might be the Pretender's health, drank to Mr. Herries' own, with much pointed solemnity, but in a draught far less moderate.

The clerk imitated the example of his principal, and I was fain to follow their example, for anxiety and fear are at least as thirsty as sorrow is said to be. In a word, we exhausted the composition of ale, sherry, lemon juice, nutmeg, and other good things, stranded upon the silver bottom of the tankard, the huge toast, as well as the roasted orange, which had whilome floated jollily upon the brim, and rendered legible Dr. Byrom's celebrated lines engraved thereon—

"God bless the King!—God bless the Faith's defender!
God bless—No harm in blessing the Pretender.
Who that Pretender is, and who that King,—
God bless us all!—is quite another thing."

I had time enough to study this effusion of the Jacobite muse, while the Justice was engaged in the somewhat tedious ceremony of taking leave. That of Mr. Faggot was less ceremonious; but I suspect something besides empty compliment passed betwixt him and Mr. Herries; for I remarked that the latter slipped a piece of paper into the hand of the former, which might perhaps be a little atonement for the rashness with which he had burnt the warrant, and imposed no gentle hand on the respectable minion of the law by whom it was exhibited; and I observed that he made this *propitiation in such a manner* as to *be secret from the worthy clerk's principal.*

* *The King's health.*

When this was arranged, the party took leave of each other, with much formality on the part of Squire Foxley, amongst whose adieus the following phrase was chiefly remarkable:—"I presume you do not intend to stay long in these parts?"

"Not for the present, Justice, you may be sure; there are good reasons to the contrary. But I have no doubt of arranging my affairs, so that we shall speedily have sport together again.

He went to wait upon the Justice to the court-yard; and, as he did so, commanded Cristal Nixon to see that I returned into my apartment. Knowing it would be to no purpose to resist or tamper with that stubborn functionary, I obeyed in silence, and was once more a prisoner in my former quarters.

CHAPTER VIII.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL IN CONTINUATION.

I SPENT more than an hour, after returning to the apartment which I may call my prison, in reducing to writing the singular circumstances which I had just witnessed. Methought I could now form some guess at the character of Mr. Herries, upon whose name and situation the late scene had thrown considerable light;—one of those fanatical Jacobites, doubtless, whose arms, not twenty years since, had shaken the British throne, and some of whom, though their party daily diminish in numbers, energy and power, retained still an inclination to renew the attempt they had found so desperate. He was indeed perfectly different from the sort of zealous Jacobites whom it had been my luck hitherto to meet with. Old ladies of family over their hyson, and gray-haired lairds over their punch, I had often heard utter a little harmless treason; while the former remembered having led down a dance with the Chevalier, and the latter recounted the feats they had performed at Preston, Clifton, and Falkirk.

The disaffection of such persons was too unimportant to excite the attention of government. I had heard, however, that there still existed partisans of the Stewart family, of a more daring and dangerous description; men who, furnished with gold from Rome, moved secretly and in disguise, through the various classes of society, and endeavoured to keep alive the expiring zeal of their party.

I had no difficulty in assigning an important post among this class of persons, whose agency and exertion are only doubted by those who look on the surface of things, to this Mr. Herries, whose mental energies, as well as his personal strength and activity, seemed to qualify him well to act so dangerous a part; and I knew that, all along the Western Border, both in England and Scotland, there are so many Nonjurors, that such a person may reside there with absolute safety, unless it becomes, in a very especial degree, the object of the government to secure his person; and which purpose, even then, might be disappointed by early intelligence, or, as in the case of Mr. Foxley, by the unwillingness of provincial magistrates to interfere in what is now considered an invidious pursuit of the unfortunate.

There have, however, been rumours lately, as if the present state of the nation, or at least of some discontented provinces, agitated by a variety of causes, but particularly by the unpopularity of the present administration, may seem to this species of agitators a favourable period for recommencing their intrigues; while, on the other hand, government may not, at such a crisis, be inclined to look upon them with the contempt which a few years ago would have been their most appropriate punishment.

That men should be found rash enough to throw away their services and lives in a desperate cause, is nothing new in history, which abounds with instances of similar devotion—that Mr. Herries is such an enthusiast, is no less evident; but all this explains not his conduct towards *me*. Had he sought to make me a proselyte to his ruined cause, violence and compulsion were arguments very unlikely to prevail with any generous spirit. But even if such were his object, of what use to him could be the acquisition of a unwilling

reluctant partisan, who could bring only his own person to support any quarrel which he might adopt? He had claimed over me the rights of a guardian; he had more than hinted that I was in a state of mind which could not dispense with the authority of such a person. Was this man, so sternly desperate in his purpose,—he who seemed willing to take on his own shoulders the entire support of a cause which had been ruinous to thousands,—was he the person that had the power of deciding on my fate? Was it from him those dangers flowed, to secure me against which I had been educated under such circumstances of secrecy and precaution?

And if this was so, of what nature was the claim which he asserted?—Was it that of propinquity?—And did I share the blood, perhaps the features, of this singular being?—Strange as it may seem, a thrill of awe, which shot across my mind at that instant, was not unmingled with a wild and mysterious feeling of wonder, almost amounting to pleasure. I remembered the reflection of my own face in the mirror at one striking moment during the singular interview of the day, and I hastened to the outward apartment to consult a glass which hung there, whether it were possible for my countenance to be again contorted into the peculiar frown which so much resembled the terrific look of Herries. But I folded my brows in vain into a thousand complicated wrinkles, and I was obliged to conclude, either that the supposed mark on my brow was altogether imaginary, or that it could not be called forth by voluntary effort; or, in fine, what seemed most likely, that it was such a resemblance as the imagination traces in the embers of a wood fire, or among the varied veins of marble, distinct at one time, and obscure or invisible at another, according as the combination of lines strikes the eye, or impresses the fancy.

While I was moulding my visage like a mad player, the door suddenly opened, and the girl of the house entered. Angry and ashamed at being detected in my singular occupation, I turned round sharply, and, I suppose, chance produced the change on my features which I had been in vain labouring to call forth.

The girl started back, with her "Don't ye look so now—don't ye, for love's sake—you be as like the ould Squoire as—But here a comes," said she, huddling away out of the room; "and if you want a third, there is none but ould Harry, as I know of, that can match ye for a brent broo!"

As the girl muttered this exclamation, and hastened out of the room, Herries entered. He stopped on observing that I had looked again to the mirror; anxious to trace the look by which the wench had undoubtedly been terrified. He seemed to guess what was passing in my mind, for, as I turned towards him, he observed, "Doubt not that it is stamped on your forehead—the fatal mark of our race; though it is not now so apparent as it will become when age and sorrow, and the traces of stormy passions, and of bitter penitence, shall have drawn their furrows on your brow."

"Mysterious man," I replied, "I know not of what you speak; your language is as dark as your purposes."

"Sit down, then," he said, "and listen; thus far, at least, must the veil of which you complain be raised When withdrawn, it will only display guilt and sorrow—guilt, followed by strange penalty, and sorrow, which Providence has entailed upon the posterity of the mourners."

He paused a moment, and commenced his narrative, which he told with the air of one, who, remote as the events were which he recited, took still the deepest interest in them. The tone of his voice, which I have already described as rich and powerful, aided by its inflections the effects of his story, which I will endeavour to write down, as nearly as possible, in the very words which he used.

"It was not of late years that the English nation learned, that their best chance of conquering their *independent neighbours must* be by introducing *amongst them division and civil war.* You need not *be reminded of the state of thraldom* to which Scotland *was reduced by the unhappy wars* betwixt the domestic factions of Bruce and Baliol; nor how, after Scotland had been emancipated from a foreign yoke, by the conduct and valour of the immortal Bruce, the whole fruits of the triumphs of Bannockburn were lost in the dreadful defeats of Dupplin and Halidon; and Edward Baliol, the minion and feudatory of his namesake of England, seemed, for a brief season, in safe and uncontested possession of the throne, so lately occupied by the greatest general and wisest prince in Europe. But the experience of Bruce had not died with him. There were many who had shared his martial labours, and all remembered the successful efforts by which, under circumstances as disadvantageous as those of his son, he had achieved the liberation of Scotland.

"The usurper, Edward Baliol, was feasting with a few of his favourite retainers in the Castle of Annan, when he was suddenly surprised by a chosen band of insurgent patriots. Their chiefs were, Douglas, Randolph, the young Earl of Moray, and Sir Simon Fraser; and their success was so complete, that Baliol was obliged to fly for his life, scarcely clothed, and on a horse which there was no leisure to saddle. It was of importance to seize his person, if possible, and his flight was closely pursued by a valiant knight of Norman descent, whose family had been long settled in the marches of Dumfries-shire. Their Norman appellation was Fitz-Aldin, but this knight, from the great slaughter which he had made of the Southron, and the reluctance which he had shown to admit them to quarter during the former wars of that bloody period, had acquired the name of Redgauntlet, which he transmitted to his posterity"——

"Redgauntlet!" I involuntarily repeated.

"Yes, Redgauntlet," said my alleged guardian, looking at me keenly; "does that name recall any associations to your mind?"

"No," I replied, "except that I lately heard it given to the hero of a supernatural legend."

"There are many such current concerning the family," he answered; and then proceeded in his narrative.

"Alberick Redgauntlet, the first of his house so termed, was, as may be supposed from his name, of a stern and implacable disposition, which had been rendered more so by family discord. An only son, now a youth of eighteen, shared so much the haughty spirit of his father, that he became impatient of domestic control, resisted paternal authority, and finally fled from his father's house, renounced his political opinions, and awakened his mortal displeasure by joining the adherents of Baliol. It was said that his father cursed in his wrath his degenerate offspring, and swore that, if they met, he should perish by his hand. Mean time, circumstances seemed to promise atonement for this great deprivation. The lady of Alberick Redgauntlet was again, after many years, in a situation which afforded her husband the hope of a more dutiful heir.

"But the delicacy and deep interest of his wife's condition did not prevent Alberick from engaging in the undertaking of Douglas and Moray. He had been the most forward in the attack of the castle, and was now foremost in the pursuit of Baliol, eagerly engaged in dispersing or cutting down the few daring followers who endeavoured to protect the usurper in his flight.

"As these were successively routed or slain, the formidable Redgauntlet, the mortal enemy of the House of Baliol was within two lances' length of the fugitive Edward Baliol, in a narrow pass, when a youth, one of the last who attended the usurper in his flight, threw himself between them, received the shock of the pursuer, and was unhorsed and overthrown. The helmet rolled from his head, and the beams of the sun, then rising over the Solway, showed Redgauntlet the features of his disobedient son, in the livery, and wearing the cognizance, of the usurper.

"Redgauntlet beheld his son lying before his horse's feet; but he also saw Baliol, the usurper of the Scottish crown, still, as it seemed, within his grasp, and separated from him only by the prostrate body of his overthrown adherent. Without pausing to inquire

whether young Edward was wounded, he dashed his spurs into his horse, meaning to leap over him, but was unhappily frustrated in his purpose. The steed made indeed a bound forward, but was unable to clear the body of the youth, and with its hind foot struck him in the forehead, as he was in the act of rising. The blow was mortal. It is needless to add, that the pursuit was checked, and Baliol escaped.

"Redgauntlet, ferocious as he is described, was yet overwhelmed with the thoughts of the crime he had committed. When he returned to his castle, it was to encounter new domestic sorrows. His wife had been prematurely seized with the pangs of labour, upon hearing the dreadful catastrophe which had taken place. The birth of an infant boy cost her her life. Redgauntlet sat by her corpse for more than twenty-four hours without changing either feature or posture, so far as his terrified domestics could observe. The Abbot of Dundrennan preached consolation to him in vain. Douglas, who came to visit in his affliction a patriot of such distinguished zeal, was more successful in rousing his attention. He caused the trumpets to sound an English point of war in the court-yard, and Redgauntlet at once sprung to his arms, and seemed restored to the recollection, which had been lost in the extent of his misery.

"From that moment, whatever he might feel inwardly, he gave way to no outward emotion. Douglas caused his infant to be brought; but even the iron-hearted soldiers were struck with horror to observe, that, by the mysterious law of nature, the cause of his mother's death, and the evidence of his father's guilt, was stamped on the innocent face of the babe, whose brow was distinctly marked by the miniature resemblance of a horseshoe. Redgauntlet himself pointed it out to Douglas, saying, with a ghastly smile, 'It should have been bloody.'

"Moved, as he was, to compassion for his brother-in-arms, and steeled against all softer feelings by the habits of civil war, Douglas shuddered at this sight, and displayed a desire to leave the house which was doomed to be the scene of such horrors. As his parting advice, he exhorted Alberick Redgauntlet to make a pilgrimage to Saint Ninian's of Whiteherne, then esteemed a shrine of great sanctity; and departed with a precipitation, which might have aggravated, had that been possible, the forlorn state of his unhappy friend. But that seems to have been incapable of admitting any addition. Sir Alberick caused the bodies of his slaughtered son and the mother to be laid side by side in the ancient chapel of his house, after he had used the skill of a celebrated surgeon of that time to embalm them; and it was said, that for many weeks he spent some hours nightly in the vault where they reposed.

"At length he undertook the proposed pilgrimage to Whiteherne, where he confessed himself for the first time since his misfortune, and was shrived by an aged monk, who afterwards died in the odour of sanctity. It is said, that it was then foretold to the Redgauntlet, that on account of his unshaken patriotism, his family should continue to be powerful amid the changes of future times; but that, in detestation of his unrelenting cruelty to his own issue, Heaven had decreed that the valour of his race should always be fruitless, and that the cause which they espoused should never prosper.

"Submitting to such penance as was there imposed, Sir Alberick went, it is thought, on a pilgrimage either to Rome, or to the Holy Sepulchre itself. He was universally considered as dead; and it was not till thirteen years afterwards, that, in the great battle of Durham, fought between David Bruce and Queen Philippa of England, a knight, bearing a horseshoe for his crest, appeared in the van of the Scottish army, distinguished himself by his reckless and desperate valour; who being at length overpowered and slain, was finally discovered to be the brave and unhappy Sir Alberick Redgauntlet."

"And has the fatal sign," said I, when Herries had ended his narrative, "descended on all the posterity of this *unhappy house?*"

"It has been so handed down from antiquity, and is still believed," said Herries. "But perhaps there is, in the popular evidence, something of that fancy which creates what it sees. Certainly, as other families have peculiarities by which they are distinguished, this of Redgauntlet is marked in most individuals by a singular indenture of the forehead, supposed to be derived from the son of Alberick, their ancestor, and brother to the unfortunate Edward, who had perished in so piteous a manner. It is certain there seems to have been a fate upon the House of Redgauntlet, which has been on the losing side in almost all the civil broils which have divided the kingdom of Scotland, from David Bruce's days, till the late valiant and unsuccessful attempt of the Chevalier Charles Edward."

He concluded with a deep sigh, as one whom the subject had involved in a train of painful reflections.

"And am I then," I exclaimed, "descended from this unhappy race?—Do you too belong to it?—And if so, why do I sustain restraint and hard usage at the hands of a relation?"

"Inquire no farther for the present," he said. "The line of conduct which I am pursuing towards you, is dictated not by choice, but by necessity. You were withdrawn from the bosom of your family, and the care of your legal guardian, by the timidity and ignorance of a doating mother, who was incapable of estimating the arguments or feelings of those who prefer honour and principle to fortune, and even to life. The young hawk, accustomed only to the fostering care of its dam, must be tamed by darkness and sleeplessness, ere it is trusted on the wing for the purposes of the falconer."

I was appalled at this declaration, which seemed to threaten a long continuance, and a dangerous termination, of my captivity. I deemed it best, however, to show some spirit, and at the same time to mingle a tone of conciliation. "Mr. Herries," I said, "(if I call you rightly by that name,) let us speak upon this matter without the tone of mystery and fear in which you seem inclined to envelope it. I have been long, alas! deprived of the care of that affectionate mother to whom you allude—long under the charge of strangers—and compelled to form my own resolutions upon the reasoning of my own mind. Misfortune—early deprivation—has given me the privilege of acting for myself; and constraint shall not deprive me of an Englishman's best privilege."

"The true cant of the day," said Herries, in a tone of scorn. "The privilege of free action belongs to no mortal—we are tied down by the fetters of duty—our moral path is limited by the regulations of honour—our most indifferent actions are but meshes of the web of destiny by which we are all surrounded."

He paced the room rapidly, and proceeded in a tone of enthusiasm which, joined to some other parts of his conduct, seems to intimate an over-excited imagination, were it not contradicted by the general tenor of his speech and conduct.

"Nothing," he said, in an earnest yet melancholy voice—"nothing is the work of chance—nothing is the consequence of free-will—the liberty of which the Englishman boasts, gives as little real freedom to its owner, as the despotism of an Eastern Sultan permits to his slave. The usurper, William of Nassau, went forth to hunt, and thought, doubtless, that it was by an act of his own royal pleasure that the horse of his murdered victim was prepared for his kingly sport. But Heaven had other views; and before the sun was high, a stumble of that very animal over an obstacle so inconsiderable as a mole-hillock, cost the haughty rider his life and his usurped crown. Do you think an inclination of the rein could have avoided that trifling impediment?—I tell you, it crossed his way as inevitably as all the long chain of Caucasus could have done. Yes, young man, in doing and suffering, we play but the part allotted by Destiny, the manager of this strange drama, stand bound to act no more than is prescribed, to say no more than is set down for us; and yet we mouth about free-will, and freedom of thought and action, as if Richard must not die, or Richmond conquer, exactly where the Author has decreed it shall be so!"

He continued to pace the room after this speech

with folded arms and downcast looks; and the sound of his steps and tone of his voice brought to my remembrance, that I had heard this singular person, when I met him on a former occasion, uttering such soliloquies in his solitary chamber. I observed, that, like other Jacobites, in his inveteracy against the memory of King William, he had adopted the party opinion, that the monarch, on the day he had his fatal accident, rode upon a horse once the property of the unfortunate Sir John Friend, executed for High Treason in 1696.

It was not my business to aggravate, but, if possible, rather to soothe him in whose power I was so singularly placed. When I conceived that the keenness of his feelings had in some degree subsided, I answered him as follows:—"I will not—indeed I feel myself incompetent to argue a question of such metaphysical subtlety, as that which involves the limits betwixt free-will and predestination. Let us hope we may live honestly and die hopefully, without being obliged to form a decided opinion upon a point so far beyond our comprehension."

"Wisely resolved," he interrupted, with a sneer —"there came a note from some Geneva sermon."

"But," I proceeded, "I call your attention to the fact, that I, as well as you, am acted upon by impulses, the result either of my own free-will, or the consequences of the part which is assigned to me by destiny. These may be—nay, at present they are—in direct contradiction to those by which you are actuated; and how shall we decide which shall have precedence?—*You* perhaps feel yourself destined to act as my jailer. I feel myself, on the contrary, destined to attempt and effect my escape. One of us must be wrong, but who can say which errs till the event has decided betwixt us?"

"I shall feel myself destined to have recourse to severe modes of restraint," said he, in the same tone of half jest, half earnest, which I had used.

"In that case," I answered, "it will be my destiny to attempt every thing for my freedom."

"And it may be mine, young man," he replied, in a deep and stern tone, "to take care that you should rather die than attain your purpose."

This was speaking out indeed, and I did not allow him to go unanswered. "You threaten me in vain," said I; "the laws of my country will protect me; or whom they cannot protect, they will avenge."

I spoke this firmly, and he seemed for a moment silenced; and the scorn with which he at last answered me, had something of affectation in it.

"The laws!" he said; "and what, stripling, do you know of the laws of your country?—Could you learn jurisprudence under a base born blotter of parchment, such as Saunders Fairford; or from the empty pedantic coxcomb, his son, who now, forsooth, writes himself advocate?—When Scotland was herself, and had her own King and Legislature, such plebeian cubs, instead of being called to the bar of her Supreme Courts, would scarce have been admitted to the honour of bearing a sheepskin process-bag."

Alan, I could not bear this, but answered indignantly, that he knew not the worth and honour from which he was detracting.

"I know as much of these Fairfords as I do of you," he replied.

"As much," said I, "and as little; for you can neither estimate their real worth nor mine. I know you saw them when last in Edinburgh."

"Ha!" he exclaimed, and turned on me an inquisitive look.

"It is true," said I; "you cannot deny it; and having thus shown you that I know something of your motions, let me warn you I have modes of communication with which you are not acquainted. Oblige me not to use them to your prejudice."

"Prejudice *me!*" he replied. "Young man, I smile at, and forgive your folly. Nay, I will tell you that of which you are not aware, namely, that it was from letters received from these Fairfords that I first suspected, what the result of my visit to them confirmed, *that you were* the person whom I had sought for *years.*"

"*If you learned this,* said I, "from the papers which were about my person on the night when I was under the necessity of becoming your guest at Brokenburn, I do not envy your indifference to the means of acquiring information. It was dishonourable to"——

"Peace, young man," said Herries, more calmly than I might have expected; "the word dishonour must not be mentioned as in conjunction with my name. Your pocketbook was in the pocket of your coat, and did not escape the curiosity of another, though it would have been sacred from mine. My servant, Cristal Nixon, brought me the intelligence after you were gone. I was displeased with the manner in which he had acquired his information; but it was not the less my duty to ascertain its truth, and for that purpose I went to Edinburgh. I was in hopes to persuade Mr. Fairford to have entered into my views; but I found him too much prejudiced to permit me to trust him. He is a wretched, yet a timid slave of the present government, under which our unhappy country is dishonourably enthralled; and it would have been altogether unfit and unsafe to have intrusted him with the secret either of the right which I possess to direct your actions, or of the manner in which I purpose to exercise it."

I was determined to take advantage of his communicative humour, and obtain, if possible, more light upon his purpose. He seemed most accessible to being piqued on the point of honour, and I resolved to avail myself, but with caution, of his sensibility upon that topic. "You say," I replied, "that you are not friendly to indirect practices, and disapprove of the means by which your domestic obtained information of my name and quality—Is it honourable to avail yourself of that knowledge which is dishonourably obtained?"

"It is boldly asked," he replied; "but, within certain necessary limits, I dislike not boldness of expostulation. You have, in this short conference, displayed more character and energy than I was prepared to expect. You will, I trust, resemble a forest plant, which has indeed, by some accident, been brought up in the greenhouse, and thus rendered delicate and effeminate, but which regains its native firmness and tenacity, when exposed for a season to the winter air. I will answer your question plainly. In business, as in war, spies and informers are necessary evils, which all good men detest; but which yet all prudent men must use, unless they mean to fight and act blindfold. But nothing can justify the use of falsehood and treachery in our own person."

"You said to the elder Mr. Fairford," continued I, with the same boldness, which I began to find was my best game, "that I was the son of Ralph Latimer of Langcote-Hall?—How do you reconcile this with your late assertion that my name is not Latimer?"

He coloured as he replied, "The doting old fool lied; or perhaps mistook my meaning. I said, that gentleman *might* be your father. To say truth I wished you to visit England, your native country; because, when you might do so, my rights over you would revive."

This speech fully led me to understand a caution which had been often impressed upon me, that if I regarded my safety, I should not cross the southern Border; and I cursed my own folly, which kept me fluttering like a moth around the candle, until I was betrayed into the calamity with which I had dallied. "What are those rights," I said, "which you claim over me?—To what end do you propose to turn them?"

"To a weighty one, you may be certain," answered Mr. Herries; "but I do not, at present, mean to communicate to you either its nature or extent. You may judge of its importance, when, in order entirely to possess myself of your person, I condescended to mix myself with the fellows who destroyed the fishing station of yon wretched Quaker. That I held him in contempt, and was displeased at the greedy devices with which he ruined a manly sport, is true enough; but, unless as it favoured my designs on you, he might have, for me, maintained his stake-nets till Solway should cease to ebb and flow."

"Alas!" I said, "it doubles my regret to have been

the unwilling cause of misfortune to an honest and friendly man."

"Do not grieve for that," said Herries; "honest Joshua is one of those who, by dint of long prayers, can possess themselves of widows' houses—he will quickly repair his losses. When he sustains any mishap, he and the other canters set it down as a debt against Heaven, and, by way of set-off, practise rogueries without compunction, till they make the balance even, or incline it to the winning side. Enough of this for the present.—I must immediately shift my quarters; for although I do not fear the over-zeal of Mr. Justice Foxley or his clerk will lead them to any extreme measure, yet that mad scoundrel's unhappy recognition of me may make it more serious for them to connive at me, and I must not put their patience to an over severe trial. You must prepare to attend me, either as a captive or a companion; if as the latter, you must give your parole of honour to attempt no escape. Should you be so ill advised as to break your word once pledged, be assured that I will blow your brains out, without a moment's scruple."

"I am ignorant of your plans and purposes," I replied, "and cannot but hold them dangerous. I do not mean to aggravate my present situation by any unavailing resistance to the superior force which detains me; but I will not renounce the right of asserting my natural freedom should a favourable opportunity occur. I will, therefore, rather be your prisoner than your confederate."

"That is spoken fairly," he said; "and yet not without the canny caution of one brought up in the Gude Town of Edinburgh. On my part, I will impose no unnecessary hardship upon you, but, on the contrary, your journey shall be made as easy as is consistent with your being kept safely. Do you feel strong enough to ride on horseback as yet, or would you prefer a carriage? The former mode of travelling is best adapted to the country through which we are to travel, but you are at liberty to choose between them."

I said, "I felt my strength gradually returning, and that I should much prefer travelling on horseback. A carriage," I added, "is so close"——

"And so easily guarded," replied Herries, with a look as if he would have penetrated my very thoughts,—"that, doubtless, you think horseback better calculated for an escape."

"My thoughts are my own," I answered; "and though you keep my person prisoner, these are beyond your control."

"O, I can read the book," he said, "without opening the leaves. But I would recommend to you to make no rash attempt, and it will be my care to see that you have no power to make any that is likely to be effectual. Linen, and all other necessaries for one in your circumstances, are amply provided. Cristal Nixon will act as your valet,—I should rather, perhaps, say, your *femme de chambre*. Your travelling dress you may perhaps consider as singular; but it is such as the circumstances require; and, if you object to use the articles prepared for your use, your mode of journeying will be as personally unpleasant as that which conducted you hither.—Adieu—We now know each other better than we did—it will not be my fault if the consequences of farther intimacy be not a more favourable mutual opinion."

He then left me, with a civil good-night, to my own reflections, and only turned back to say, that we should proceed on our journey at daybreak next morning, at farthest; perhaps earlier, he said; but complimented me by supposing that, as I was a sportsman, I must always be ready for a sudden start.

We are then at issue, this singular man and myself. His personal views are to a certain point explained. He has chosen an antiquated and desperate line of politics, and he claims, from some pretended tie of guardianship, or relationship, which he does not deign to explain, but which he seems to have been able to pass current on a silly country Justice and his knavish clerk, a *right to direct and to control* my motions. The *danger which awaited me in England*, and which I *might have escaped had I remained in* Scotland, was doubtless occasioned by the authority of this man. But what my poor mother might fear for me as a child—what my English friend, Samuel Griffiths, endeavoured to guard against during my youth and nonage, is now, it seems, come upon me; and, under a legal pretext, I am detained in what must be a most illegal manner, by a person, too, whose own political immunities have been forfeited by his conduct. It matters not—my mind is made up—neither persuasion nor threats shall force me into the desperate designs which this man meditates. Whether I am of the trifling consequence which my life hitherto seems to intimate, or whether I have (as would appear from my adversary's conduct) such importance, by birth or fortune, as may make me a desirable acquisition to a political faction, my resolution is taken in either case. Those who read this Journal, if it shall be perused by impartial eyes, shall judge of me truly; and if they consider me as a fool in encountering danger unnecessarily, they shall have no reason to believe me a coward or a turncoat, when I find myself engaged in it. I have been bred in sentiments of attachment to the family on the throne, and in these sentiments I will live and die. I have, indeed, some idea that Mr. Herries has already discovered that I am made of different and more unmalleable metal than he had at first believed. There were letters from my dear Alan Fairford, giving a ludicrous account of my instability of temper, in the same pocket-book, which, according to the admission of my pretended guardian, fell under the investigation of his domestic, during the night I passed at Broken burn, where, as I now recollect, my wet clothes, with the contents of my pockets, were, with the thoughtlessness of a young traveller, committed too rashly to the care of a strange servant. And my kind friend and hospitable landlord, Mr. Alexander Fairford, may also, and with justice, have spoken of my levities to this man. But he shall find he has made a false estimate upon these plausible grounds, since——

But I must break off for the present

CHAPTER IX.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THERE is at length a halt—at length I have gained so much privacy as to enable me to continue my Journal. It has become a sort of task of duty to me, without the discharge of which I do not feel that the business of the day is performed. True, no friendly eye may ever look upon these labours, which have amused the solitary hours of an unhappy prisoner. Yet, in the mean while, the exercise of the pen seems to act as a sedative upon my own agitated thoughts and tumultuous passions. I never lay it down but I rise stronger in resolution, more ardent in hope. A thousand vague fears, wild expectations, and indigested schemes, hurry through one's thoughts in seasons of doubt and of danger. But by arresting them as they flit across the mind, by throwing them on paper, and even by that mechanical act compelling ourselves to consider them with scrupulous and minute attention, we may perhaps escape becoming the dupes of our own excited imagination; just as a young horse is cured of the vice of starting, by being made to stand still and look for some time without any interruption at the cause of its terror.

There remains but one risk, which is that of discovery. But, besides the small characters in which my residence in Mr. Fairford's house enabled me to excel, for the purpose of transferring as many scroll sheets as possible to a huge sheet of stamped paper, I have, as I have elsewhere intimated, had hitherto the comfortable reflection, that if the record of my misfortunes should fall into the hands of him by whom they are caused, they would, without harming any one, show him the real character and disposition of the person who has become his prisoner—perhaps his victim. Now, however, that other names, and other characters, are to be mingled with the register of my own sentiments, I must take additional care of these papers, and keep them in such a manner that, in case the least hazard of detection, I may be able to des

them at a moment's notice. I shall not soon or easily forget the lesson I have been taught, by the prying disposition which Cristal Nixon, this man's agent and confederate, manifested at Brokenburn, and which proved the original cause of my sufferings.

My laying aside the last sheet of my Journal hastily, was occasioned by the unwonted sound of a violin, in the farm-yard beneath my windows. It will not appear surprising to those who have made music their study, that, after listening to a few notes, I became at once assured that the musician was no other than the itinerant, formerly mentioned as present at the destruction of Joshua Geddes's stake-nets, the superior delicacy and force of whose execution would enable me to swear to his bow amongst a whole orchestra. I had the less reason to doubt his identity, because he played twice over the beautiful Scottish air called Wandering Willie; and I could not help concluding that he did so for the purpose of intimating his own presence, since what the French call the *nom de guerre* of the performer was described by the tune.

Hope will catch at the most feeble twig for support in extremity. I knew this man, though deprived of sight, to be bold, ingenious, and perfectly capable of acting as a guide. I believed I had won his good-will, by having, in a frolic, assumed the character of his partner; and I remember that, in a wild, wandering, and disorderly course of life, men, as they become loosened from the ordinary bonds of civil society, hold those of comradeship more closely sacred; so that honour is sometimes found among thieves, and faith and attachment in such as the law has termed vagrants. The history of Richard Cœur de Lion and his ministrel, Blondel, rushed, at the same time, on my mind, though I could not even then suppress a smile at the dignity of the example, when applied to a blind fiddler and myself. Still there was something in all this to awaken a hope, that if I could open a correspondence with this poor violer, he might be useful in extricating me from my present situation.

His profession furnished me with some hope that this desired communication might be attained; since it is well known that, in Scotland, where there is so much national music, the words and airs of which are generally known, there is a kind of free-masonry amongst performers, by which they can, by the mere choice of a tune, express a great deal to the hearers. Personal allusions are often made in this manner, with much point and pleasantry; and nothing is more usual at public festivals, than that the air played to accompany a particular health or toast, is made the vehicle of compliment, of wit and sometimes of satire.*

While these things passed through my mind rapidly, I heard my friend beneath recommence, for the third time, the air from which his own name had been probably adopted, when he was interrupted by his rustic auditors.

"If thou canst play no other spring but that, mon, ho hadst best put up ho's pipes and be jogging. Squoire will be back anon, or Master Nixon, and we'll see who will pay poiper then."

Oho, thought I, if I have no sharper ears than those of my friends Jan and Dorcas to encounter, I may venture an experiment upon them; and, as most expressive of my state of captivity, I sung two or three lines of the 137th Psalm—

"By Babel's streams we sat and wept."

The country people listened with attention, and when I ceased, I heard them whisper together in tones of commiseration, "Lack-a-day, poor soul! so pretty a man to be beside his wits!"

"An he be that gate," said Wandering Willie, in a tone calculated to reach my ears, "I ken naething will raise his spirits like a spring." And he struck up with great vigour and spirit, the lively Scottish air, the words of which instantly occurred to me,—

"O whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad,
O whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad;
Though father and mother and a' should gae mad,
O whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad."

Every one must remember instances of this festive custom, in which the adaptation to the tune to the toast was remarkably felicitous. Old Niel Gow, and his son Nathaniel, were peculiarly happy on such occasions

I soon heard a clattering noise of feet in the court-yard, which I concluded to be Jan and Dorcas dancing a jig in their Cumberland wooden clogs. Under cover of this din, I endeavoured to answer Willie's signal by whistling, as loud as I could,

"Come back again and loe me
When a' the lave are-gane."

He instantly threw the dancers out by changing his air to

"There's my thumb, I'll ne'er beguile thee."

I no longer doubted that a communication betwixt us was happily established, and that, if I had an opportunity of speaking to the poor musician, I should find him willing to take my letter to the post, to invoke the assistance of some active magistrate, or of the commanding-officer of Carlisle Castle, or, in short, to do whatever else I could point out, in the compass of his power, to contribute to my liberation. But to obtain speech of him, I must have run the risk of alarming the suspicions of Dorcas, if not of her yet more stupid Corydon. My ally's blindness prevented his receiving any communication by signs from the window—even if I could have ventured to make them, consistently with prudence—so that notwithstanding the mode of intercourse we had adopted was both circuitous and peculiarly liable to misapprehension, I saw nothing I could do better than to continue it, trusting my own and my correspondent's acuteness, in applying to the airs the meaning they were intended to convey. I thought of singing the words themselves of some significant song, but feared I might, by doing so, attract suspicion. I endeavoured, therefore, to intimate my speedy departure from my present place of residence, by whistling the well-known air with which festive parties in Scotland usually conclude the dance.—

"Good-night and joy be wi' ye a',
For here nae langer maun I stay;
There's neither friend nor foe of mine
But wishes that I were away."

It appeared that Willie's powers of intelligence were much more active than mine, and that, like a deaf person, accustomed to be spoken to by signs, he comprehended, from the very first notes the whole meaning I intended to convey; and he accompanied me in the air with his violin, in such a manner as at once to show he understood my meaning, and to prevent my whistling from being attended to.

His reply was almost immediate, and was conveyed in the old martial air of "Hey, Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver." I ran over the words, and fixed on the following stanza, as most applicable to my circumstances:—

"Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush,
We'll over the Border and give them a brush;
There's somebody there we'll teach better behaviour—
Hey, Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver."

If these sounds alluded, as I hope they do, to any chance of assistance from my Scottish friends, I may indeed consider that a door is open to hope and freedom. I immediately replied with,

"My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe;
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

"Farewell to the Highlands! farewell to the North!
The birthplace of valour, the cradle of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the highlands for ever I love."

Willie instantly played, with a degree of spirit which might have awakened hope in Despair herself, if Despair could be supposed to understand Scotch music, the fine old Jacobite air,

"For a' that, and a' that,
And twice as much as a' that."

I next endeavoured to intimate my wish to send notice of my condition to my friends; and, despairing to find an air sufficiently expressive of my purpose, I ventured to sing a verse, which, in various forms, occurs so frequently in old ballads—

"Where will I get a bonny boy
That will win hose and shoon,

That will gae down to Darisdeer,
And bid my merry-men come?"

I drowned the latter part of the verse by playing much emphasis,

"Kind Robin loes me."

this, though I ran over the verses of the song in nind, I could make nothing; and before I could ive any mode of intimating my uncertainty, a rose in the court-yard that Cristal Nixon was ng. My faithful Willie was obliged to retreat; ıot before he had half played, half hummed, by of farewell,

"Leave thee—leave thee, lad—
I'll never leave thee;
The stars shall gae withershins
Ere I will leave thee."

m thus, I think, secure of one trusty adherent in misfortunes; and, however whimsical it may rely much on a man of his idle profession and ved of sight withal, it is deeply impressed on my , that his services may be both useful and ne- ry. There is another quarter from which I look iccour, and which I have indicated to thee, Alan, ore than one passage of my Journal. Twice, o early hour of daybreak, I have seen the indi- l alluded to in the court of the farm, and twice nade signs of recognition in answer to the res by which I endeavoured to make her com- nd my situation; but on both occasions, she ed her finger on her lips, as expressive of silence ecrecy.

e manner in which G. M. entered upon the scene ie first time, seems to assure me of her good- so far as her power may reach; and I have many ns to believe it is considerable. Yet she seemed ed and frightened during the very transitory mo- s of our interview, and I think was, upon the ɔccasion, startled by the entrance of some one he farm-yard, just as she was on the point of ssing me. You must not ask whether I am an riser, since such objects are only to be seen at eak; and although I have never again seen her, have reason to think she is not distant. It was ree nights ago, that, worn out by the uniform- my confinement, I had manifested more symp- of despondence than I had before exhibited. ı I conceive may have attracted the attention of mestics, through whom the circumstance might ire. On the next morning, the following lines ı my table; but how conveyed there, I cannot The hand in which they are written is a beau- talian manuscript:—

"As lords their labourers' hire delay,
Fate quits our toil with hopes to come,
Which, if far short of present pay,
Still owns a debt and names a sum.

"Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer, then,
Although a distant date be given;
Despair is treason towards man,
And blasphemy to Heaven."

it these lines were written with the friendly se of inducing me to keep up my spirits, I it doubt; and I trust the manner in which I conduct myself may show that the pledge is ted.

ı dress is arrived in which it seems to be my ected guardian's pleasure that I shall travel; hat does it prove to be?—A skirt, or upper-pet- of camlet, like those worn by country ladies of rate rank when on horseback, with such a rid- ask as they frequently use on journeys to pre- their eyes and complexion from the sun and and sometimes, it is suspected, to enable them y off a little coquetry. From the gayer mode ploying the mask, however, I suspect I shall be ded; for instead of being only pasteboard, co- with black velvet. I observed with anxiety nine is thickened with a plate of steel, which, huixote's visor, serves to render it more strong urable.

s apparatus, together with a steel clasp for ng the mask behind me with a padlock, gave *ırful recollections of the unfortunate* being, who, *being permitted to lay aside* such a visor, acquired the well-known historical epithet of the Man in the Iron Mask. I hesitated a moment whether I should so far submit to the acts of oppression designed against me as to assume this disguise, which was of course, contrived to aid their purposes. But then I remembered Mr. Herries's threat, that I should be kept close prisoner in a carriage, unless I assumed the dress which should be appointed for me; and I considered the comparative degree of freedom which I might purchase by wearing the mask and female dress, as easily and advantageously purchased. Here, therefore, I must pause for the present, and await what the morning may bring forth.

[To carry on the story from the documents before us, we think it proper here to drop the Journal of the captive Darsie Latimer, and adopt, instead, a narrative of the proceedings of Alan Fairford in pursuit of his friend, which forms another series in this history.]

CHAPTER X.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD.

The reader ought, by this time, to have formed some idea of the character of Alan Fairford. He had a warmth of heart which the study of the law and of the world could not chill, and talents which they had rendered unusually acute. Deprived of the personal patronage enjoyed by most of his contemporaries, who assumed the gown under the protection of their aristocratic alliances and descents, he early saw that he should have that to achieve for himself which fell to them as a right of birth. He laboured hard in silence and solitude, and his labours were crowned with success. But Alan doted on his friend Darsie, even more than he loved his profession, and, as we have seen, threw every thing aside when he thought Latimer in danger; forgetting fame and fortune, and hazarding even the serious displeasure of his father, to rescue him whom he loved with an elder brother's affection. Darsie, though his parts were more quick and brilliant than those of his friend, seemed always to the latter a being under his peculiar charge, whom he was called upon to cherish and protect, in cases where the youth's own experience was unequal to the exigency; and now, when the fate of Latimer seemed worse than doubtful, and Alan's whole prudence and energy were to be exerted in his behalf, an adventure which might have seemed perilous to most youths of his age, had no terrors for him. He was well acquainted with the laws of his country, and knew how to appeal to them; and besides his professional confidence, his natural disposition was steady, sedate, persevering, and undaunted. With these requisites he undertook a quest which, at that time, was not unattended with actual danger, and had much in it to appal a more timid disposition.

Fairford's first inquiry concerning his friend was of the chief magistrate of Dumfries, Provost Crosbie, who had sent the information of Darsie's disappearance. On his first application, he thought he discerned in the honest dignitary a desire to get rid of the subject. The Provost spoke of the riot at the fishing station as an "outbreak among those lawless loons the fishermen, which concerned the Sheriff," he said, "more than us poor Town-Council bodies, that have enough to do to keep peace within burgh, amongst such a set of commoners as the town are plagued with."

"But this is not all, Provost Crosbie," said Mr. Alan Fairford; "a young gentleman of rank and fortune has disappeared amongst their hands—you know him. My father gave him a letter to you—Mr. Darsie Latimer."

"Lack-a-day, yes! lack-a-day, yes!" said the Provost; "Mr. Darsie Latimer—he dined at my house—I hope he is well?"

"I hope so too," said Alan, rather indignantly, "but I desire more certainty on that point. You yourself wrote my father that he had disappeared."

"Truth, yes, and that is true," said the Provost,

"But did ne not go back to his friends in Scotland? it was not natural to think he would stay here."

"Not unless he is under restraint," said Fairford, surprised at the coolness with which the Provost seemed to take up the matter.

"Rely on it, sir," said Mr. Crosbie, "that if he has not returned to his friends in Scotland, he must have gone to his friends in England."

"I will rely on no such thing," said Alan; "if there is law or justice in Scotland, I will have the thing cleared to the very bottom."

"Reasonable, reasonable," said the Provost, "so far as is possible; but you know I have no power beyond the ports of the burgh."

"But you are in the commission besides, Mr. Crosbie; a Justice of Peace for the county."

"True, very true—that is," said the cautious magistrate, "I will not say but my name may stand on the list, but I cannot remember that I have ever qualified."*

"Why, in that case," said young Fairford, "there are ill-natured people might doubt your attachment to the Protestant line, Mr. Crosbie."

"God forbid, Mr. Fairford! I who have done and suffered in the Forty-five! I reckon the Highlandmen did me damage to the amount of 100*l.* Scots, forby all they ate and drank—no, no, sir, I stand beyond challenge: but as for plaguing myself with county business, let them that aught the mare shoe the mare. The Commissioners of Supply would see my back broken before they would help me in the burgh's work, and all the world kens the difference of the weight between public business in burgh and landward. What are their riots to me? have we not riots enough of our own?—But I must be getting ready; for the council meets this forenoon. I am blithe to see your father's son on the causeway of our ancient burgh, Mr. Alan Fairford. Were you a twelvemonth aulder, we would make a burgess of you, man. I hope you will come and dine with me before you go away. What think you of to-day at two o'clock—just a roasted chucky and a drappit egg?"

Alan Fairford resolved that his friend's hospitality should not, as it seemed the inviter intended, put a stop to his queries. "I must delay you for a moment," he said, "Mr. Crosbie; this is a serious affair; a young gentleman of high hopes, my own dearest friend, is missing—you cannot think it will be passed over slightly, if a man of your high character, and known zeal for the government, do not make some active inquiry. Mr. Crosbie, you are my father's friend, and I respect you as such—but to others it will have a bad appearance."

The withers of the Provost were not unwrung; he paced the room in much tribulation, repeating, "But what can I do, Mr. Fairford? I warrant your friend casts up again—he will come back again, like the ill shilling—he is not the sort of gear that tynes—a helliat boy, running through the country with a blind fiddler, and playing the fiddle to a parcel of blackguards, who can tell whore the like of him may have scampered to?"

"There are persons apprehended, and in the jail of the town, as I understand from the Sheriff-Substitute," said Mr Fairford; "you must call them before you, and inquire what they know of this young gentleman."

"Ay, ay—the Sheriff-Depute did commit some poor creatures, I believe—wretched, ignorant fishermen bodies, that had been quarrelling with Quaker Geddes and his stake-nets, whilk, under favour of your gown be it spoken, Mr. Fairford, are not over and above lawful, and the Town-Clerk thinks they may be lawfully removed *via facti*—but that is by the by. But sir, the creatures were a' dismissed for want of evidence; the Quaker would not swear to them, and what could the Sheriff and me do but just let them loose? Come awa, cheer up, Master Alan, and take a walk till dinner time—I must really go to the council."

"Stop a moment, Provost," said Alan; "I lodge a complaint before you, as a magistrate, and you will *find it serious to slight it over. You must have these men apprehended again.*"

* *By taking the oaths to Government.*

"Ay, ay—easy said; but catch them that can," answered the Provost; "they are ower the March by this time, or by the point of Cairn.—Lord help ye they are a kind of amphibious deevils, neither land nor water beasts—neither English nor Scots—neither county nor stewartry, as we say—they are dispersed like so much quicksilver. You may as well try to whistle a sealgh out of the Solway, as to get hold of one of them till all the fray is over."

"Mr. Crosbie this will not do," answered the young counsellor; "there is a person of more importance than such wretches as you describe concerned in this unhappy business—I must name to you a certain Mr. Herries."

He kept his eye on the Provost as he uttered the name, which he did rather at a venture, and from the connexion which that gentleman, and his real or supposed niece seemed to have with the fate of Darsie Latimer, than from any distinct cause of suspicion which he entertained. He thought the Provost seemed embarrassed, though he showed much desire to assume an appearance of indifference, in which he partly succeeded.

"Herries!" he said—"What Herries?—There are many of that name—not so many as formerly, for the old stocks are wearing out; but there is Herries of Heathgill, and Herries of Auchintulloch, and Herries"——

"To save you farther trouble, this person's designation is Herries of Birrenswork."

"Of Birrenswork?" said Mr. Crosbie; "I have you now, Mr. Alan. Could you not as well have said, the Laird of Redgauntlet?"

Fairford was too wary to testify any surprise at this identification of names, however unexpected. "I thought," said he, "he was more generally known by the name of Herries. I have seen and been in company with him under that name, I am sure."

"O ay; in Edinburgh, belike. You know Redgauntlet was unfortunate a great while ago, and though he was maybe not deeper in the mire than other folk, yet, for some reason or other, he did not get so easily out."

"He was attainted, I understand; and has no remission," said Fairford.

The cautious Provost only nodded, and said, "You may guess, therefore, why it is so convenient he should hold his mother's name, which is also partly his own when he is about Edinburgh. To bear his proper name might be accounted a kind of flying in the face of government, ye understand. But he has been long connived at—the story is an old story—and the gentleman has many excellent qualities, and is of a very ancient and honourable house—has cousins among the great folk—counts kin with the Advocate and with the Sheriff—hawks, you know, Mr. Alan, will not pike out hawks' een—he is widely connected—*my* wife is a fourth cousin of Redgauntlet's."

Hinc illæ lachrymæ! thought Alan Fairford to himself; but the hint presently determined him to proceed by soft means, and with caution. "I beg you to understand," said Fairford, "that in the investigation which I am about to make, I design no harm to Mr Herries, or Redgauntlet—call him what you will. Al I wish is, to ascertain the safety of my friend. I know that he was rather foolish in once going upon a mere frolic in disguise, to the neighbourhood of this same gentleman's house. In his circumstances, Mr. Redgauntlet may have misinterpreted the motives, and considered Darsie Latimer as a spy. His influence, I believe, is great, among the disorderly people you spoke of but now?"

The Provost answered with another sagacious shake of his head, that would have done honour to Lord Burleigh in the Critic.

"Well, then," continued Fairford, "is it not possible that, in the mistaken belief that Mr. Latimer was a spy, he may, upon such suspicion, have caused him to be carried off and confined somewhere?—Such things are done at elections, and on occasions less pressing than when men think their lives in danger from an informer."

"Mr. Fairford," said the Provost, very earnestly, "I scarce think such a mistake possible; or if, by any

extraordinary chance, it should have taken place, Redgauntlet, whom I cannot but know well, being, as I have said my wife's first cousin, (fourth cousin, I should say,) is altogether incapable of doing any thing harsh to the young gentleman—he might send him ower to Ailsay for a night or two, or maybe land him on the north coast of Ireland, or in Islay, or some of the Hebrides; but depend upon it, he is incapable of harming a hair of his head."

"I am determined not to trust to that, Provost," answered Fairford, firmly; "and I am a good deal surprised at your way of talking so lightly of such an aggression on the liberty of the subject. You are to consider, and Mr. Herries or Mr. Redgauntlet's friends would do very well also to consider, how it will sound in the ears of an English Secretary of State, that an attainted traitor (for such is this gentleman) has not only ventured to take up his abode in this realm—against the King of which he has been in arms—but is suspected of having proceeded, by open force and violence, against the person of one of the lieges, a young man, who is neither without friends nor property to secure his being righted."

The Provost looked at the young counsellor with a face in which distrust, alarm, and vexation, seemed mingled. "A fashious job," he said at last, "a fashious job; and it will be dangerous meddling with it. I should like ill to see your father's son turn informer against an unfortunate gentleman."

"Neither do I mean it," answered Alan, "provided that unfortunate gentleman and his friends give me a quiet opportunity of securing *my* friend's safety. If I could speak with Mr. Redgauntlet, and hear his own explanation, I should probably be satisfied. If I am forced to denounce him to government, it will be in his new capacity of a kidnapper. I may not be able, nor is it my business, to prevent his being recognised in his former character of an attainted person, excepted from the general pardon."

"Master Fairford," said the Provost, "would ye ruin the poor innocent gentleman on an idle suspicion?"

"Say no more of it, Mr. Crosbie; my line of conduct is determined—unless that suspicion is removed."

"Weel, sir," said the Provost, "since so it be, and since you say that you do not seek to harm Redgauntlet personally, I'll ask a man to dine with us to-day that kens as much about his matters as most folk. You must think, Mr. Alan Fairford, though Redgauntlet be my wife's near relative, and though, doubtless, I wish him weel, yet I am not the person who is like to be intrusted with his incomings and outgoings. I am not a man for that—I keep the kirk, and I abhor Popery—I have stood up for the House of Hanover, and for liberty and property—I carried arms, sir, against the Pretender, when three of the Highlandmen's baggage-carts were stopped at Ecclefechan; and I had an especial loss of a hundred pounds"——

"Scots," interrupted Fairford. "You forget you told me all this before."

"Scots or English, it was too much for me to lose," said the Provost; "so you see I am not a person to pack or peel with Jacobites, and such unfreemen as poor Redgauntlet."

"Granted, granted, Mr. Crosbie; and what then?" said Alan Fairford.

"Why, then, it follows, that if I am to help you at this pinch, it cannot be by and through my ain personal knowledge, but through some fitting agent or third person."

"Granted again," said Fairford. "And pray who may this third person be?"

"Wha but Pate Maxwell of Summertrees—him they call Pate-in-Peril."

"An old forty-five man, of course?"

"Ye may swear that," replied the Provost—"as black a Jacobite as the auld leaven can make him; but a sonsy, merry companion, that none of us think it worth while to break wi' for all his brags and his clavers. You would have thought, if he had had but his own way at Derby, he would have *marched Charlie Stewart through between Wade and the Duke*, as a *thread goes through the needle's ee, and seated him in* Saint James's before you could have said hand your hand. But though he is a windy body when he gets on his auld-warld stories, he has mair gumption in him than most people—knows business, Mr. Alan, being bred to the law; but never took the gown, because of the oaths, which kept more folk out then than they do now—the more's the pity."

"What! are you sorry, Provost, that Jacobitism is upon the decline?" said Fairford.

"No, no," answered the Provost—"I am only sorry for folks losing the tenderness of conscience which they used to have. I have a son breeding to the bar, Mr. Fairford; and, no doubt, considering my services and sufferings, I might have looked for some bit postie to him; but if the muckle tikes come in—I mean a' these Maxwells, and Johnstones, and great lairds, that the oaths used to keep out lang syne—the bits o' messan dogies, like my son, and may be like your father's son, Mr. Alan, will be sair put to the wall."

"But to return to the subject, Mr. Crosbie," said Fairford, "do you really think it likely that this Mr. Maxwell will be of service in this matter?"

"It's very like he may be, for he is the tongue of the trump to the whole squad of them," said the Provost; "and Redgauntlet, though he will not stick at times to call him a fool, takes more of his counsel than any man's else that I am aware of. If Pate can bring him to a communing, the business is done. He's a sharp chield, Pate-in-Peril."

"Pate-in-Peril!" repeated Alan; "a very singular name."

"Ay, and it was in as queer a way he got it; but I'll say naething about that," said the Provost, "for fear of forestalling his market; for ye are sure to hear it once at least, however oftener, before the punch-bowl gives place to the tea-pot.—And now, fare ye weel; for there is the council-bell clinking in earnest; and if I am not there before it jows in, Bailie Laurie will be trying some of his manœuvres."

The Provost, repeating his expectation of seeing Mr. Fairford at two o'clock, at length effected his escape from the young counsellor, and left him at a considerable loss how to proceed. The Sheriff, it seems, had returned to Edinburgh, and he feared to find the visible repugnance of the Provost to interfere with this Laird of Birrenswork, or Redgauntlet, much stronger amongst the country gentlemen, many of whom were Catholics as well as Jacobites, and most others unwilling to quarrel with kinsmen and friends, by prosecuting with severity political offences which had almost run a prescription.

To collect all the information in his power, and not to have recourse to the higher authorities until he could give all the light of which the case was capable, seemed the wiser proceeding in a choice of difficulties. He had some conversation with the Procurator-Fiscal, who, as well as the Provost, was an old correspondent of his father. Alan expressed to that officer a purpose of visiting Brokenburn, but was assured by him, that it would be a step attended with much danger to his own person, and altogether fruitless; that the individuals who had been ringleaders in the riot were long since safely sheltered in their various lurking-holes in the Isle of Man, Cumberland, and elsewhere; and that those who might remain would undoubtedly commit violence on any who visited their settlement with the purpose of inquiring into the late disturbances.

There were not the same objections to his hastening to Mount Sharon, where he expected to find the latest news of his friend; and there was time enough to do so, before the hour appointed for the Provost's dinner. Upon the road, he congratulated himself on having obtained one point of almost certain information. The person who had in a manner forced himself upon his father's hospitality, and had appeared desirous to induce Darsie Latimer to visit England, against whom, too, a sort of warning had been received from an individual connected with and residing in his own family, proved to be a promoter of the disturbance in which Darsie had disappeared.

What could be the cause of such an attempt on the liberty of an inoffensive and amiable man? It was impossible it could be merely owing to Redgauntlet's

mistaking Darsie for a spy; for though that was the solution which Fairford had offered to the Provost, he well knew that, in point of fact, he himself had been warned by his singular visiter of some danger to which his friend was exposed, before such suspicion could have been entertained; and the injunctions received by Latimer from his Guardian, or him who acted as such, Mr. Griffiths of London, pointed to the same thing. He was rather glad, however, that he had not let Provost Crosbie into his secret, farther than was absolutely necessary; since it was plain that the connexion of his wife with the suspected party was likely to affect his impartiality as a magistrate.

When Alan Fairford arrived at Mount Sharon, Rachel Geddes hastened to meet him, almost before the servant could open the door. She drew back in disappointment when she beheld a stranger, and said, to excuse her precipitation, that "she had thought it was her brother Joshua returned from Cumberland."

"Mr. Geddes is then absent from home?" said Fairford, much disappointed in his turn.

"He hath been gone since yesterday, friend," answered Rachel, once more composed to the quietude which characterizes her sect, but her pale cheek and red eye giving contradiction to her assumed equanimity.

"I am," said Fairford, hastily, "the particular friend of a young man not unknown to you, Miss Geddes—the friend of Darsie Latimer—and am come hither in the utmost anxiety, having understood from Provost Crosbie, that he had disappeared in the night when a destructive attack was made upon the fishing-station of Mr. Geddes."

"Thou dost afflict me, friend by thy inquiries," said Rachel, more affected than before; "for although the youth was like those of the worldly generation, wise in his own conceit, and lightly to be moved by the breath of vanity, yet Joshua loved him, and his heart clave to him as if he had been his own son. And when he himself escaped from the sons of Belial, which was not until they had tired themselves with reviling, and with idle reproach, and the jests of the scoffer, Joshua, my brother, returned to them once and again, to give ransom for the youth called Darsie Latimer, with offers of money and with promise of remission, but they would not hearken to him. Also, he went before the Head Judge, whom men call the Sheriff, and would have told him of the youth's peril; but he would in no way hearken to him unless he would swear unto the truth of his words, which thing he might not do without sin, seeing it is written, Swear not at all—also, that our conversation shall be yea or nay. Therefore, Joshua returned to me disconsolate, and said, 'Sister Rachel, this youth hath run into peril for my sake; assuredly I shall not be guiltless if a hair of his head be harmed, seeing I have sinned in permitting him to go with me to the fishing-station when such evil was to be feared. Therefore, I will take my horse, even Solomon, and ride swiftly into Cumberland, and I will make myself friends with Mammon of Unrighteousness, among the magistrates of the Gentiles, and among their mighty men; and it shall come to pass that Darsie Latimer shall be delivered, even if it were at the expense of half my substance.' And I said, 'Nay, my brother, go not, for they will but scoff at and revile thee; but hire with thy silver one of the scribes, who are eager as hunters in pursuing their prey, and he shall free Darsie Latimer from the men of violence by his cunning, and thy soul shall be guiltless of evil towards the lad.' But he answered and said, 'I will not be controlled in this matter.' And he is gone forth, and hath not returned, and I fear me that he may never return; for though he be peaceful, as becometh one who holds all violence as offence against his own soul, yet neither the floods of water, nor the fear of the snare, nor the drawn sword of the adversary brandished in the path, will overcome his purpose. Wherefore the Solway may swallow him up, or the sword of the enemy may devour him—nevertheless, my hope is better in Him who *directeth* all things, and ruleth over the waves of the *sea, and overruleth the devices* of the wicked, and *who can redeem us even as a bird* from the fowler's

This was all that Fairford could learn from Miss Geddes; but he heard with pleasure, that the good Quaker, her brother, had many friends among those of his own profession in Cumberland, and without exposing himself to so much danger as his sister seemed to apprehend, he trusted he might be able to discover some traces of Darsie Latimer. He himself rode back to Dumfries, having left with Miss Geddes his direction in that place, and an earnest request that she would forward thither whatever information she might obtain from her brother.

On Fairford's return to Dumfries, he employed the brief interval which remained before dinner-time, in writing an account of what had befallen Latimer, and of the present uncertainty of his condition, to Mr. Samuel Griffiths, through whose hands the remittances for his friend's service had been regularly made, desiring he would instantly acquaint him with such parts of his history as might direct him in the search which he was about to institute through the border counties, and which he pledged himself not to give up until he had obtained news of his friend, alive or dead. The young lawyer's mind felt easier when he had despatched this letter. He could not conceive any reason why his friend's life should be aimed at; he knew Darsie had done nothing by which his liberty could be legally affected; and although, even of late years, there had been singular histories of men, and women also, who had been trepanned, and concealed in solitudes and distant islands, in order to serve some temporary purpose, such violences had been chiefly practised by the rich on the poor, and by the strong on the feeble; whereas, in the present case, this Mr. Herries, or Redgauntlet, being amenable, for more reasons than one, to the censure of the law, must be the weakest in any struggle in which it could be appealed to. It is true that his friendly anxiety whispered, that the very cause which rendered this oppressor less formidable, might make him more desperate. Still, recalling his language, so strikingly that of the gentleman, and even of the man of honour, Alan Fairford concluded, that though, in his feudal pride, Redgauntlet might venture on the deeds of violence exercised by the aristocracy in other times, he could not be capable of any action of deliberate atrocity. And in these convictions he went to dine with Provost Crosbie, with a heart more at ease than might have been expected.*

CHAPTER XI.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

Five minutes had elapsed after the town-clock struck two, before Alan Fairford, who had made a small detour to put his letter into the post-house, reached the mansion of Mr. Provost Crosbie, and was at once greeted by the voice of that civic dignitary, and the rural dignitary his visiter, as by the voices of men impatient for their dinner.

"Come away, Mr. Fairford—the Edinburgh time is later than ours," said the Provost.

And, "Come away, young gentleman," said the Laird; "I remember your father weel, at the Cross, thirty years ago—I reckon you are as late in Edinburgh as at London, four o'clock hours—eh?"

"Not quite so degenerate," replied Fairford; "but certainly many Edinburgh people are so ill-advised as to postpone their dinner till three, that they may have full time to answer their London correspondents."

* Scotland, in its half civilized state, exhibited too many examples of the exertion of arbitrary force and violence, rendered easy by the dominion which lairds exerted over their tenants, and chiefs over their clans. The captivity of Lady Grange, in the desolate cliffs of Saint Kilda, is in the recollection of every one. At the supposed date of the novel also, a man of the name of Merrilees, a tanner in Leith, absconded from his country to escape his creditors; and after having slain his own mastiff dog, and put a bit of red cloth in its mouth, as if it had died in a contest with soldiers, and involved his own existence in as much mystery as possible, made his escape into Yorkshire. Here he was detected by persons sent in search of him, to whom he gave a portentous account of his having been carried off and concealed in various places. Mr. Merrilees was, in short, a kind of male Elizabeth Canning, but did not trespass on the public credulity quite so long.

noon correspondents!" said Mr. Maxwell; pray, what the devil have the people of Auld to do with London correspondents?"*

e tradesmen must have their goods," said d.

n they not buy our own Scottish manufac- and pick their customers' pockets in a more e manner?"

en the ladies must have fashions," said Fair-

n they not busk the plaid over their heads, as nothers did? A tartan screen, and once a- new cockernony from Paris, should serve a ss. But ye have not many of them left, l -Mareschal, Airley, Winton, Wemyss, Bal- all passed and gone—ay, ay, the countesses lies of quality will scarce take up too much of ll-room floor with their quality hoops now-a-

re is no want of crowding, however, sir," irford; "they begin to talk of a new Assem- m."

ew Assembly-Room!" said the old Jacobite "Umph—I mind quartering three hundred the old Assembly-Room†—But come, come— no more questions—the answers all smell of rds new lands, and do but spoil my appetite, were a pity, since here comes Mrs. Crosbie to mutton's ready."

s even so. Mrs. Crosbie had been absent, like n hospitable cares intent," a duty which she conceive herself exempted from, either by the of her husband's rank in the municipality, or ndour of her Brussels silk gown, or even by re highly prized lustre of her birth; for she n a Maxwell, and allied, as her husband often d his friends, to several of the first families in ity. She had been handsome, and was still / good-looking woman of her years; and her peep into the kitchen had somewhat d her complexion, it was no more than a touch of rouge might have done.

Provost was certainly proud of his lady, nay, id he was afraid of her; for, of the females edgauntlet family there went a rumour, that, ere they would, there was a gray mare as the stables of their husbands, as there is a orse in Wouvermans' pictures. The good o, was supposed to have brought a spice of nto Mr. Crosbie's household along with her; Provost's enemies at the Council-table of h used to observe, that he uttered there many arangue against the Pretender, and in favour George and government, of which he dared pronounced a syllable in his own bedcham- l that, in fact, his wife's predominating influ- l now and then occasioned his acting, or for- to act, in a manner very different from his rofessions of zeal for Revolution principles. as in any respect true, it was certain, on the nd, that Mrs. Crosbie, in all external points, to acknowledge the "lawful sway and right cy" of the head of the house, and if she did ruth reverence her husband, she at least o d) so.

tately dame received Mr. Maxwell (a cousin) with cordiality, and Fairford with civility; g, at the same time, with respect, to the ma- complaints of the Provost, that dinner was ing up. "But since you changed poor Peter n, that used to take care of the town-clock, it has never gone well a single day."

MacAlpin, my dear," said the Provost, himself too busy for a person in office, and alths and so forth, which it became no man or to pledge, far less one that is in point of ervant of the public. I understand that he lost the music-bells in Edinburgh, for playing 'Ower the water to Charlie,' upon the tenth of June. He is a black sheep, and deserves no encouragement."

"Not a bad tune, though, after all," said Summertrees; and, turning to the window, he half hummed, half whistled the air in question, then sang the last verse aloud:

"Oh I loe weel my Charlie's name,
Though some there be that abhor him;
But oh to see the deil gang hame
Wi' a' the Whigs before him!
Over the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charlie;
Come weal, come wo, we'll gather and go,
And live or die with Charlie."

Mrs. Crosbie smiled furtively on the Laird, wearing an aspect at the same time of deep submission; while the Provost, not choosing to hear his visiter's ditty, took a turn through the room, in unquestioned dignity and independence of authority.

"Aweel, aweel, my dear," said the lady, with a quiet smile of submission, "ye ken these matters best, and you will do your pleasure—they are far above my hand—only, I doubt if ever the town-clock will go right, or your meals be got up so regular as I should wish, till Peter MacAlpin gets his office back again. The body's auld, and can neither work nor want, but he is the only hand to set a clock."

It may be noticed in passing, that, notwithstanding this prediction, which, probably, the fair Cassandra had the full means of accomplishing, it was not till the second council-day thereafter that the misdemeanours of the Jacobite clock-keeper were passed over, and he was once more restored to his occupation of fixing the town's time, and the Provost's dinner-hour.

Upon the present occasion the dinner passed pleasantly away. Summertrees talked and jested with the easy indifference of a man who holds himself superior to his company. He was indeed an important person, as was testified by his portly appearance; his hat laced with *point d'Espagne;* his coat and waistcoat once richly embroidered, though now almost threadbare; the splendour of his solitaire, and laced ruffles, though the first was sorely creased, and the other sullied; not to forget the length of his silver-hilted rapier. His wit, or rather humour, bordered on the sarcastic, and intimated a discontented man; and although he showed no displeasure when the Provost attempted a repartee, yet it seemed that he permitted it upon mere sufferance, as a fencing-master, engaged with a pupil, will sometimes permit the tyro to nit him, solely by way of encouragement. The Laird's own jests, in the mean while, were eminently successful, not only with the Provost and his lady, but with the red-cheeked and red-ribboned servant-maid who waited at table, and who could scarce perform her duty with propriety, so effectual were the explosions of Summertrees. Alan Fairford alone was unmoved among all this mirth; which was the less wonderful, that, besides the important subject which occupied his thoughts, most of the Laird's good things consisted in sly allusions to little parochial or family incidents, with which the Edinburgh visiter was totally unacquainted; so that the laughter of the party sounded in his ear like the idle crackling of thorns under the pot, with this difference, that they did not accompany or second any such useful operation as the boiling thereof.

Fairford was glad when the cloth was withdrawn; and when Provost Crosbie (not without some points of advice from his lady, touching the precise mixture of the ingredients) had accomplished the compounding of a noble bowl of punch, at which the old Jacobite's eyes seemed to glisten, the glasses were pushed round it, filled, and withdrawn each by its owner, when the Provost emphatically named the toast, "The King," with an important look to Fairford, which seemed to say, You can have no doubt whom I mean, and therefore there is no occasion to particularize the individual.

Summertrees repeated the toast with a sly wink to the lady, while Fairford drank his glass in silence.

"Well, young advocate," said the landed proprietor, "I am glad to see there is some shame, if there

ich in those days, for within my recollection the Lon- as brought north in a small mail-cart; and men are ho recollect when it came down with only one sin- or Edinburgh, addressed to the manager of the Bri- Company.

mber bearing this identical answer given by an old gentleman of the Forty-Five, when he heard of the the New Assembly-Rooms in George Street.

little honesty, left in the Faculty. Some of your black-gowns, now-a-days, have as little of the one as of the other."

"At least, sir," replied Mr. Fairford, "I am so much of a lawyer as not willingly to enter into disputes which I am not retained to support—it would be but throwing away both time and argument."

"Come, come," said the lady, "we will have no argument in this house about Whig or Tory—the Provost kens what he maun *say*, and I ken what he should *think*; and for a' that has come and gane yet, there may be a time coming when honest men may say what they think, whether they be Provosts or not."

"D'ye hear that, Provost?" said Summertrees; "your wife's a witch, man; you should nail a horseshoe on your chamber-door—Ha, ha, ha!"

This sally did not take quite so well as former efforts of the Laird's wit. The lady drew up, and the Provost said half-aside, "The sooth bourd is nae bourd.* You will find the horseshoe hissing hot, Summertrees."

"You can speak from experience, doubtless, Provost," answered the Laird; "but I crave pardon—I need not tell Mrs. Crosbie that I have all respect for the auld and honourable House of Redgauntlet."

"And good reason ye have, that are sae sib to them," quoth the lady, "and kend weel baith them that are here, and them that are gane."

"In troth, and ye may say sae, madam," answered the Laird; "for poor Harry Redgauntlet that suffered at Carlisle, was hand and glove with me; and yet we parted on short leave-taking."

"Ay, Summertrees," said the Provost; "that was when you played Cheat-the-woodie, and gat the by-name of Pate-in-Peril. I wish you would tell the story to my young friend here. He likes weel to hear of a sharp trick, as most lawyers do."

"I wonder at your want of circumspection, Provost," said the Laird,—much after the manner of a singer, when declining to sing the song that is quivering upon his tongue's very end. "Ye should mind there are some auld stories that cannot be ripped up again with entire safety to all concerned. *Tace* is Latin for a candle."

"I hope," said the lady, "you are not afraid of any thing being said out of this house to your prejudice, Summertrees? I have heard the story before; but the oftener I hear it, the more wonderful I think it."

"Yes, madam; but it has been now a wonder of more than nine days, and it is time it should be ended," answered Maxwell.

Fairford now thought it civil to say, "that he had often heard of Mr. Maxwell's wonderful escape, and that nothing could be more agreeable to him than to hear the right version of it."

But Summertrees was obdurate, and refused to take up the time of the company with such "auld warld nonsense."

"Weel, weel," said the Provost, "a wilful man maun hae his way.—What do your folk in the county think about the disturbances that are beginning to spunk out in the colonies?"

"Excellent, sir, excellent. When things come to the worst they will mend; and to the worst they are coming.—But as to that nonsense ploy of mine, if ye insist on hearing the particulars,"—said the Laird, who began to be sensible that the period of telling his story gracefully was gliding fast away.

"Nay," said the Provost, "it was not for myself, but this young gentleman."

"Aweel, what for should I not pleasure the young gentleman?—I'll just drink the honest folk at hame and abroad, and deil ane else. And then—but you have heard it before, Mrs Crosbie?"

"Not so often as to think it tiresome, I assure ye," said the lady; and without further preliminaries, the Laird addressed Alan Fairford

'Ye have heard of a year they call the *forty-five*, *young gentleman*; when the Southrons' heads made *their last acquaintance with Scottish claymores? There was a set of rampauging chields* in the country then that they called rebels—I never could find out what for—Some men should have been wi' them that never came, Provost—Skye and the Bush aboon Traquair for that, ye ken—Weel, the job was settled at last. Cloured crowns were plenty, and raxed necks came into fashion. I dinna mind very weel what I was doing, swaggering about the country with dirk and pistol at my belt for five or six months, or thereaway; but I had a weary waking out of a wild dream. Then did I find myself on foot in a misty morning, with my hand, just for fear of going astray, linked into a handcuff, as they call it with poor Harry Redgauntlet's fastened into the other; and there we were, trudging along, with about a score more that had thrust their horns ower deep in the bog, just like ourselves, and a sergeant's guard of redcoats, with twa file of dragoons, to keep all quiet, and give us heart to the road. Now, if this mode of travelling was not very pleasant, the object did not particularly recommend it; for you understand, young man, that they did not trust these poor rebel bodies to be tried by juries of their ain kindly countrymen, though as would have thought they would have found Whig enough in Scotland to hang us all; but they behoved to trounce us away to be tried at Carlisle, where the folk had been so frightened, that had you brought whole Highland clan at once into the court, the would have put their hands upon their een, and cried 'hang them a',' just to be quit of them."

"Ay, ay," said the Provost, "that was a snell law I grant ye."

"Snell!" said his wife, "snell! I wish they that passed it had the jury I would recommend them to!

"I suppose the young lawyer thinks it all ver right," said Summertrees, looking at Fairford—"a *old* lawyer might have thought otherwise. Howeve the cudgel was to be found to beat the dog, and the chose a heavy one. Well, I kept my spirits better tha my companion, poor fellow; for I had the luck t have neither wife nor child to think about, and Harr Redgauntlet had both one and t'other.—You hav seen Harry, Mrs. Crosbie?"

"In troth have I," said she, with the sigh whic we give to early recollections, of which the object i no more. "He was not so tall as his brother, and gentler lad every way. After he married the grea English fortune, folk called him less of a Scotchma than Edward."

"Folk lee'd, then," said Summertrees; "poo Harry was none of your bold-speaking, rantin reivars, that talk about what they did yesterday, o what they will do to-morrow: it was when some thing was to do at the moment that you should hav looked at Harry Redgauntlet. I saw him at Cullo den, when all was lost, doing more than twenty o those bleezing braggarts, till the very soldiers tha took him, cried not to hurt him—for all somebody' orders, Provost—for he was the bravest fellow o them all. Weel, as I went by the side of Harry, an felt him raise my hand up in the mist of the morning as if he wished to wipe his eye—for he had not tha freedom without my leave—my very heart was like t break for him, poor fellow. In the mean while, I ha been trying and trying to make my hand as fine as lady's, to see if I could slip it out of my iron wrist band. You may think," he said, laying his brow bony hand on the table, "I had work enough wid such a shoulder of mutton fist; but if you observe the shakle-bones are of the largest, and so they were obliged to keep the handcuff wide; at length I got my hand slipped out, and slipped in again: and poor Harry was sae deep in his ain thoughts, I could no make him sensible what I was doing."

"Why not?" said Alan Fairford, for whom the tale began to have some interest.

"Because there was an unchancy beast of a dragoon riding close beside us on the other side; and if I had led him into my confidence as well as Harry it would not have been long before a pistol-ball slapped through my bonnet.—Well, I had little for it but to do the best I could for myself; and, by my conscience, it was time, when the gallows was staring me in the face. We were to halt for breakfast at Moffat. Well did I know the moors we were march

*The true joke is no joke.

aving hunted and hawked on every acre of very different times. So I waited, you see, on the edge of Errickstane brae—Ye ken hey call the Marquis's Beef-stand, because idale loons used to put their stolen cattle in

intimated his ignorance.

st have seen it as ye cam this way; it looks hills were laying their heads together, to daylight from the dark hollow space be- m. A d—d deep, black, blackguard-looking hole it is, and goes straight down from ide, as perpendicular as it can do, to be brae. At the bottom, there is a small bit , that you would think could hardly find its rom the hills that are so closely jammed

pass indeed," said Alan.

ay say that," continued the Laird. "Bad , sir, it was my only chance; and though esh crooped when I thought what a rumble ng to get, yet I kept my heart up all the d so just when we came on the edge of this l of the Johnstones, I slipped out my hand handcuff, cried to Harry Gauntlet, 'Follow isked under the belly of the dragoon horse— laid round me with the speed of lightning— self on my side, for there was no keeping d down the brae hurled I, over heather and blackberries, like a barrel down Chalmers's Auld Reekie. G—, sir, I never could help when I think how the scoundrel redcoats been bumbazed; for the mist being, as I , they had little notion, I take it, that they e verge of such a dilemma. I was half way rowing is faster work than rinning—ere get at their arms; and then it was flash, h—rap, rap, rap—from the edge of the road; ead was too jumbled to think any thing that or the hard knocks I got among the kept my senses thegither, whilk has been ronderful by all that ever saw the place; ed myself with my hands as gallantly as I to the bottom I came. There I lay for oment; but the thoughts of a gallows is the salts and scent-bottles in the world, for man to himself. Up I sprung, like a four- colt. All the hills were spinning round ike so many great big humming-tops. But nae time to think of that neither; more as the mist had risen a little with the firing. the villains, like sae mony craws on the e brae; and I reckon that they saw me; f the loons were beginning to crawl down ut liker auld wives in their red-cloaks, e a field-preaching, than such a souple lad

Accordingly, they soon began to stop heir pieces. Good-e'en to you, gentlemen, if that is to be the gate of it. If you have r word with me, you maun come as far as r-gauns. And so off I set, and never buck r ower the braes than I did; and I never ll I had put three waters, reasonably deep, ason was rainy, half-a-dozen mountains, thousand acres of the worst moss and ling nd, betwixt me and my friends the red-

that job which got you the name of Pate- said the Provost, filling the glasses, and g with great emphasis, while his guest, mated with the recollections which the cited, looked round with an air of triumph thy and applause,—"Here is to your good nd may you never put your neck in such a rain."*

h!—I do not know," answered Summer- I am not like to be tempted with another

ape of a Jacobite gentleman while on the road to ake his trial for his share in the affair of 1745, took rickstane-brae, in the singular manner ascribed to f Summertrees in the text. The author has seen in e gentleman to *whom the adventure actually hap- distance of time makes some indistinctness of but it is believed the real name was* MacEwen, or

opportunity*—Yet who knows?" And then he made a deep pause.

"May I ask what became of your friend, sir?" said Alan Fairford.

"Ah, poor Harry!" said Summertrees. "I'll tell you what, sir, it takes time to make up one's mind to such a venture, as my friend the Provost calls it: and I was told by Neil Maclean,—who was next file to us, but had the luck to escape the gallows by some slight-of-hand trick or other,—that, upon my breaking off, poor Harry stood like one motionless, although all our brethren in captivity made as much tumult as they could, to distract the attention of the soldiers. And run he did at last; but he did not know the ground, and either from confusion, or because he judged the descent altogether perpendicular, he fled up the hill to the left, instead of going down at once, and so was easily pursued and taken. If he had followed my example, he would have found enough among the shepherds to hide him, and feed him, as they did me, on bearmeal scones and braxy mutton,† till better days came round again."

"He suffered then for his share in the insurrection?" said Alan.

"You may swear that," said Summertrees. "His blood was too red to be spared when that sort of paint was in request. He suffered, sir, as you call it—that is, he was murdered in cold blood, with many a pretty fellow besides.—Well, we may have our day next—what is fristed is not forgiven—they think us all dead and buried—but"—— Here he filled his glass, and muttering some indistinct denunciations, drank it off, and assumed his usual manner, which had been a little disturbed towards the end of the narrative.

"What became of Mr. Redgauntlet's child?" said Fairford.

"*Mister* Redgauntlet!—He was Sir Henry Redgauntlet, as his son, if the child now lives, will be Sir Arthur—I called him Harry from intimacy, and Redgauntlet, as the chief of his name—His proper style was Sir Henry Redgauntlet."

"His son, therefore, is dead?" said Alan Fairford. "It is a pity so brave a line should draw to a close."

"He has left a brother," said Summertrees, "Edward Hugh Redgauntlet, who has now the representation of the family. And well it is; for though he be unfortunate in many respects, he will keep up the honour of the house better than a boy bred up amongst these bitter Whigs, the relations of his elder brother Sir Henry's lady. Then they are on no good terms with the Redgauntlet line—bitter Whigs they are, in every sense. It was a runaway match betwixt Sir Henry and his lady. Poor thing, they would not allow her to see him when in confinement—they had even the meanness to leave him without pecuniary assistance; and as all his own property was seized upon and plundered, he would have wanted common necessaries, but for the attachment of a fellow who was a famous fiddler—a blind man—I have seen him with Sir Henry myself, both before the affair broke out and while it was going on. I have heard that he fiddled in the streets of Carlisle, and carried what money he got to his master, while he was confined in the castle."

"I do not believe a word of it," said Mrs. Crosbie, kindling with indignation. "A Redgauntlet would have died twenty times before he had touched a fiddler's wages."

"Hout fye—hout fye—all nonsense and pride," said the Laird of Summertrees. "Scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings, cousin Crosbie—ye little ken what some of your friends were obliged to do yon time for a

* An old gentleman of the author's name was engaged in the affair of 1715, and with some difficulty was saved from the gallows, by the intercession of the Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. Her Grace, who maintained a good deal of authority over her clan, sent for the object of her intercession, and warning him of the risk which he had run, and the trouble she had taken on his account, wound up her lecture by intimating, that in case of such disloyalty again, he was not to expect her interest in his favour. "An it please your Grace," said the stout old Tory, "I fear I am too old to see another opportunity."

† BRAXY MUTTON.—The flesh of sheep that has died of disease, not by the hand of the butcher. In pastoral countries it is used as food with little ce...

sowp of brose, or a bit of bannock.—G—d, I carried a cutler's wheel for several weeks, partly for need, and partly for disguise—there I went bizz—bizz—whizz—zizz, at every auld wife's door; and if ever you want your shears sharpened, Mrs. Crosbie, I am the lad to do it for you, if my wheel was but in order."

"You must ask my leave first," said the Provost; "for I have been told you had some queer fashions of taking a kiss instead of a penny, if you liked your customer."

"Come, come, Provost," said the lady, rising, "if the maut gets abune the meal with you, it is time for me to take myself away—And you will come to my room, gentlemen, when you want a cup of tea."

Alan Fairford was not sorry for the lady's departure. She seemed too much alive to the honour of the house of Redgauntlet, though only a fourth cousin, not to be alarmed by the inquiries which he proposed to make after the whereabout of its present head. Strange confused suspicions arose in his mind, from his imperfect recollection of the tale of Wandering Willie, and the idea forced itself upon him, that his friend Darsie Latimer might be the son of the unfortunate Sir Henry. But before indulging in such speculations, the point was, to discover what had actually become of him. If he were in the hands of his uncle, might there not exist some rivalry in fortune, or rank, which might induce so stern a man as Redgauntlet to use unfair measures towards a youth whom he would find himself unable to mould to his purpose? He considered these points in silence, during several revolutions of the glasses as they wheeled in galaxy round the bowl, waiting until the Provost, agreeably to his own proposal, should mention the subject for which he had expressly introduced him to Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees.

Apparently the Provost had forgot his promise, or at least was in no great haste to fulfil it. He debated with great earnestness upon the stamp act, which was then impending over the American colonies, and upon other political subjects of the day, but said not a word of Redgauntlet. Alan soon saw that the investigation he meditated must advance, if at all, on his own special motion, and determined to proceed accordingly.

Acting upon this resolution, he took the first opportunity afforded by a pause in the discussion of colonial politics, to say, "I must remind you, Provost Crosbie, of your kind promise to procure some intelligence upon the subject I am so anxious about."

"Gadso!" said the Provost, after a moment's hesitation, "it is very true.—Mr. Maxwell, we wish to consult you on a piece of important business. You must know—indeed I think you must have heard, that the fishermen at Brokenburn, and higher up the Solway, have made a raid upon Quaker Geddes's stakenets, and levelled all with the sands."

"In troth I heard it, Provost, and I was glad to hear the scoundrels had so much pluck left, as to right themselves against a fashion which would make the upper heritors a sort of clocking-hens, to hatch the fish that folk below them were to catch and eat."

"Well, sir," said Alan, "that is not the present point. But a young friend of mine was with Mr. Geddes at the time this violent procedure took place, and he has not since been heard of. Now, our friend, the Provost, thinks that you may be able to advise"——

Here he was interrupted by the Provost and Summertrees speaking out both at once, the first endeavouring to disclaim all interest in the question, and the last to evade giving an answer.

"Me think!" said the Provost; "I never thought twice about it, Mr. Fairford; it was neither fish, nor flesh, nor salt herring of mine."

"And I able to advise!" said Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees; "what the devil can I advise you to do, excepting to send the bellman through the town to cry your lost sheep, as they do spaniel dogs or stray ponies?"

"*With your pardon,*" said Alan, calmly, but resolutely, "*I must ask a more serious answer.*"

"*Why, Mr. Advocate,*" answered Summertrees, "*I thought it was your business to give advice to the lieges, and not to take it from poor stupid country gentlemen.*"

"If not exactly advice, it is sometimes our duty to ask questions, Mr. Maxwell."

"Ay, sir, when you have your bag-wig and your gown on, we must allow you the usual privilege of both gown and petticoat, to ask what questions you please. But when you are out of your canonicals the case is altered. How come you, sir, to suppose that I have any business with this riotous proceeding, or should know more than you do what happened there? The question proceeds on an uncivil supposition."

"I will explain," said Alan, determined to give Mr. Maxwell no opportunity of breaking off the conversation. "You are an intimate of Mr. Redgauntlet—he is accused of having been engaged in this affray, and of having placed under forcible restraint the person of my friend, Darsie Latimer, a young man of property and consequence, whose fate I am here for the express purpose of investigating. This is the plain state of the case; and all parties concerned,—your friend, in particular,—will have reason to be thankful for the temperate manner in which it is my purpose to conduct the matter, if I am treated with proportionate frankness."

"You have misunderstood me," said Maxwell, with a tone changed to more composure; "I told you I was the friend of the late Sir Henry Redgauntlet, who was executed, in 1745, at Hairibie, near Carlisle, but I know no one who at present bears the name of Redgauntlet."

"You know Mr. Herries of Birrenswork," said Alan, smiling, "to whom the name of Redgauntlet belongs?"

Maxwell darted a keen reproachful look towards the Provost, but instantly smoothed his brow, and changed his tone to that of confidence and candour.

"You must not be angry, Mr. Fairford, that the poor persecuted nonjurors are a little upon the qui vive when such clever young men as you are making inquiries after us. I myself now, though I am quite out of the scrape, and may cock my hat at the Cross as I best like, sunshine or moonshine, have been yet so much accustomed to walk with the lap of my cloak cast over my face, that, faith, if a redcoat walk suddenly up to me, I wish for my wheel and whet-stone, again for a moment. Now Redgauntlet, poor fellow, is far worse off—he is, you may have heard, still under the lash of the law,—the mark of the beast is still on his forehead, poor gentleman,—and that makes us cautious—very cautious—which I am sure there is no occasion to be towards you, as no one of your appearance and manners would wish to trepan a gentleman under misfortune."

"On the contrary, sir," said Fairford, "I wish to afford Mr. Redgauntlet's friends an opportunity to get him out of the scrape, by procuring the instant liberation of my friend Darsie Latimer. I will engage, that if he has sustained no greater bodily harm than a short confinement, the matter may be passed over quietly, without inquiry; but to attain this end, so desirable for the man who has committed a great and recent infraction of the laws, which he had before grievously offended, very speedy reparation of the wrong must be rendered."

Maxwell seemed lost in reflection, and exchanged a glance or two, not of the most comfortable or congratulatory kind, with his host the Provost. Fairford rose and walked about the room, to allow them an opportunity of conversing together; for he was in hopes that the impression he had visibly made upon Summertrees was likely to ripen into something favourable to his purpose. They took the opportunity, and engaged in whispers to each other, eagerly and reproachfully on the part of the Laird, while the Provost answered in an embarrassed and apologetical tone. Some broken words of the conversation reached Fairford, whose presence they seemed to forget, as he stood at the bottom of the room, apparently intent upon examining the figures upon a fine Indian screen, a present to the Provost from his brother, captain of a vessel in the Company's service. What he overheard made it evident that his errand, and the chance

sacy with which he pursued it, occasioned altercation between the whisperers.

Maxwell at length let out the words, "A good fright; and so send him home with his tail scalded, like a dog that has come a privateering on strange premises."

The Provost's negative was strongly interposed—"Not to be thought of"—"making bad worse"—"my situation"—"my utility"—"you cannot conceive how obstinate—just like his father."

They then whispered more closely, and at length the Provost raised his drooping crest, and spoke in a cheerful tone. "Come, sit down to your glass, Mr. Fairford: we have laid our heads thegither, and you shall see it will not be our fault if you are not quite pleased, and Mr. Darsie Latimer let loose to take his fiddle under his neck again. But Summertrees thinks it will require you to put yourself into some bodily risk, which maybe you may not be so keen of."

"Gentlemen," said Fairford, "I will not certainly shun any risk by which my object may be accomplished; but I bind it on your consciences—on yours, Mr. Maxwell, as a man of honour and a gentleman; and on yours, Provost, as a magistrate and a loyal subject, that you do not mislead me in this matter."

"Nay, as for me," said Summertrees, "I will tell you the truth at once, and fairly own that I can certainly find you the means of seeing Redgauntlet, poor man; and that I will do, if you require it, and conjure him also to treat you as your errand requires; but poor Redgauntlet is much changed—indeed, to say truth, his temper never was the best in the world; however, I will warrant you from any very great danger."

"I will warrant myself from such," said Fairford, "by carrying a proper force with me."

"Indeed," said Summertrees, "you will do no such thing; for, in the first place, do you think that we will deliver up the poor fellow into the hands of the Philistines, when, on the contrary, my only reason for furnishing you with the clew I am to put into your hands, is to settle the matter amicably on all sides? And secondly, his intelligence is so good, that were you coming near him with soldiers, or constables, or the like, I shall answer for it, you will never lay salt to his tail."

Fairford mused for a moment. He considered, that to gain sight of this man, and knowledge of his friend's condition, were advantages to be purchased at every personal risk; and he saw plainly, that were he to take the course most safe for himself, and call in the assistance of the law, it was clear he would either be deprived of the intelligence necessary to guide him, or that Redgauntlet would be apprized of his danger, and might probably leave the country, carrying his captive along with him. He therefore repeated, "I put myself on your honour, Mr. Maxwell; and I will go alone to visit your friend. I have little doubt I shall find him amenable to reason; and that I shall receive from him a satisfactory account of Mr. Latimer."

"I have little doubt that you will," said Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees; "but still I think it will be only in the long run, and after having sustained some delay and inconvenience. My warrandice goes no further."

"I will take it as it is given," said Alan Fairford. But let me ask, would it not be better, since you value your friend's safety so highly, and surely would not willingly compromise mine, that the Provost or you should go with me to this man, if he is within any reasonable distance, and try to make him hear reason?"

"Me!—I will not go my foot's length," said the Provost; "and that, Mr. Alan, you may be well assured of, Mr. Redgauntlet is my wife's fourth cousin, that is undeniable; but were he the last of her kin and mine both, it would ill befit my office to be communing with rebels."

"Ay, or drinking with nonjurors," said Maxwell, filling his glass. "I would as soon expect to hear Claverhouse at *a field-preaching. And* as for *myself, Mr. Fairford, I cannot go, for just the opposite reason. It would be infra dig. in the Provost* of this most flourishing and loyal town to associate with Redgauntlet; and for me, it would be *noscitur a socio.* There would be post to London, with the tidings that two such Jacobites as Redgauntlet and I had met on a braeside—the Habeas Corpus would be suspended—fame would sound a charge from Carlisle to the Land's-End—and who knows but the very wind of the rumour might blow my estate from between my fingers, and my body over Errickstane-brae again? No, no; bide a gliff—I will go into the Provost's closet, and write a letter to Redgauntlet, and direct you how to deliver it."

"There is pen and ink in the office," said the Provost, pointing to the door of an inner apartment, in which he had his walnut-tree desk, and east-country cabinet.

"A pen that can write, I hope?" said the old Laird.

"It can write and spell baith,—in right hands," answered the Provost as the Laird retired and shut the door behind him.

CHAPTER XII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

THE room was no sooner deprived of Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees's presence, than the Provost looked very warily above, beneath, and around the apartment, hitched his chair towards that of his remaining guest, and began to speak in a whisper which could not have startled "the smallest mouse that creeps on floor."

"Mr. Fairford," said he, "you are a good lad; and, what is more, you are my auld friend your father's son. Your father has been agent for this burgh for years, and has a good deal to say with the council; so there have been a sort of obligations between him and me; it may have been now on this side and now on that; but obligations there have been. I am but a plain man, Mr. Fairford; but I hope you understand me?"

"I believe you mean me well, Provost; and I am sure," replied Fairford, "you can never better show your kindness than on this occasion."

"That's it—that's the very point I would be at, Mr. Alan," replied the Provost; "besides, I am, as becomes well my situation, a stanch friend to Kirk and King, meaning this present establishment in church and state; and so, as I was saying, you may command my best—advice."

"I hope for your assistance and co-operation also," said the youth.

"Certainly, certainly," said the wary magistrate. "Well, now, you see one may love the Kirk, and yet not ride on the rigging of it; and one may love the King, and yet not be cramming him eternally down the throat of the unhappy folk that may chance to like another King better. I have friends and connexions among them, Mr. Fairford, as your father may have clients—they are flesh and blood like ourselves, these poor Jacobite bodies—sons of Adam and Eve, after all; and therefore—I hope you understand me?—I am a plain-spoken man."

"I am afraid I do *not* quite understand you," said Fairford; "and if you have any thing to say to me in private, my dear Provost, you had better come quickly out with it, for the Laird of Summertrees must finish his letter in a minute or two."

"Not a bit, man—Pate is a lang-headed fellow, but his pen does not clear the paper as his greyhound does the Tinwald-furs. I gave him a wipe about that, if you noticed; I can say any thing to Pate-in-Peril—Indeed, he is my wife's near kinsman."

"But your advice, Provost," said Alan, who perceived that, like a shy horse, the worthy magistrate always started off from his own purpose just when he seemed approaching to it.

"Weel, you shall have it in plain terms, for I am a plain man.—Ye see, we will suppose that any friend like yourself were in the deepest hole of the Nith, and making a sprattle for your life. Now you see, such being the case, I have little chance of helping you, being a fat, short-armed man, and no swimmer.

and what would be the use of my jumping in after you?"—

"I understand you, I think," said Alan Fairford. "You think that Darsie Latimer is in danger of his life."

"Me!—I think nothing about it, Mr. Alan; but if he were, as I trust he is not, he is nae drap's blood akin to you, Mr. Alan."

"But here your friend, Summertrees," said the young lawyer, "offers me a letter to this Redgauntlet of yours—What say you to that?"

"Me!" ejaculated the Provost, "me, Mr. Alan? I say neither buff nor stye to it—But ye dinna ken what it is to look a Redgauntlet in the face;—better try my wife, who is but a fourth cousin, before ye venture on the Laird himsel.—just say something about the Revolution, and see what a look she can gie you."

"I shall leave you to stand all the shots from that battery, Provost," replied Fairford. "But speak out like a man—Do you think Summertrees means fairly by me?"

"Fairly—he is just coming—fairly? I am a plain man, Mr. Fairford—but ye said *Fairly?*"

"I do so," replied Alan, "and it is of importance to me to know, and to you to tell me if such is the case; for if you do not, you may be an accomplice to murder before the fact, and that under circumstances which may bring it near to murder under trust."

"Murder!—who spoke of murder?" said the Provost; "no danger of that, Mr. Alan—only, if I were you—to speak my plain mind"—Here he approached his mouth to the ear of the young lawyer, and, after another acute pang of travail, was safely delivered of his advice in the following abrupt words:—"Take a keek into Pate's letter before you deliver it."

Fairford started, looked the Provost hard in the face, and was silent; while Mr. Crosbie, with the self-approbation of one who has at length brought himself to the discharge of a great duty, at the expense of a considerable sacrifice, nodded and winked to Alan, as if enforcing his advice; and then swallowing a large glass of punch, concluded, with the sigh of a man released from a heavy burden, "I am a plain man, Mr. Fairford."

"A plain man?" said Maxwell, who entered the room at that moment, with the letter in his hand,—"Provost, I never heard you make use of the word, but when you had some sly turn of your own to work out."

The Provost looked silly enough, and the Laird of Summertrees directed a keen and suspicious glance upon Alan Fairford, who sustained it with professional intrepidity.—There was a moment's pause.

"I was trying," said the Provost, "to dissuade our young friend from his wildgoose expedition."

"And I," said Fairford, "am determined to go through with it. Trusting myself to you, Mr. Maxwell, I conceive that I rely, as I before said, on the word of a gentleman."

"I will warrant you," said Maxwell, "from all serious consequences—some inconveniences you must look to suffer."

"To these I shall be resigned," said Fairford, "and stand prepared to run my risk."

"Well then," said Summertrees, "you must go"—

"I will leave you to yourselves, gentlemen," said the Provost, rising; "when you have done with your crack, you will find me at my wife's tea-table."

"And a more accomplished old woman never drank cat-lap," said Maxwell, as he shut the door; "the last word has him, speak it who will—and yet because he is a whilly-whaw body, and has a plausible tongue of his own, and is well enough connected, and especially because no body could ever find out whether he is Whig or Tory, this is the third time they have made him Provost!—But to the matter in hand This letter, Mr. Fairford," putting a sealed one into his hand, "is addressed, you observe, to Mr. H—— of B——, and contains your credentials for that gentleman, who is also known by his family name of Redgauntlet, but less frequently addressed by it, because it is mentioned something invidiously in a certain act of Parliament. I have little doubt he will assure you of your friend's safety, and in a short time place him at freedom—that is, supposing him under present restraint. But the point is, to discover where he is—and, before you are made acquainted with this necessary part of the business, you must give me your assurance of honour that you will acquaint no one, either by word or letter, with the expedition which you now propose to yourself."

"How, sir?" answered Alan; "can you expect that I will not take the precaution of informing some person of the route I am about to take, that in case of accident it may be known where I am, and with what purpose I have gone thither?"

"And can you expect," answered Maxwell, in the same tone, "that I am to place my friend's safety not merely in your hands, but in those of any person you may choose to confide in, and who may use the knowledge to his destruction?—Na—na—I have pledged my word for your safety, and you must give me yours to be private in the matter—giff-gaff—you know."

Alan Fairford could not help thinking that this obligation to secrecy gave a new and suspicious colouring to the whole transaction; but considering that his friend's release might depend upon his accepting the condition, he gave it in the terms proposed, and with the resolution of abiding by it.

"And now, sir," he said, "whither am I to proceed with this letter? Is Mr. Herries at Brokenburn?"

"He is not: I do not think he will come thither again, until the business of the stake-nets be hushed up, nor would I advise him to do so—the Quakers, with all their demureness, can bear malice as long as other folk; and though I have not the prudence of Mr. Provost, who refuses to ken where his friends are concealed during adversity, lest, perchance, he should be asked to contribute to their relief, yet I do not think it necessary or prudent to inquire into Redgauntlet's wanderings, poor man, but wish to remain at perfect freedom to answer, if asked at, that I ken nothing of the matter. You must, then, go to old Tom Trumbull's, at Annan—Tam Turnpenny, as they call him,—and he is sure either to know where Redgauntlet is himself, or to find some one who can give a shrewd guess. But you must attend that old Turnpenny will answer no question on such a subject without you give him the pass-word, which at present you must do, by asking him the age of the moon; if he answers, 'Not light enough to land a cargo, you are to answer, 'Then plague on Aberdeen Almanacks,' and upon that he will hold free intercourse with you.—And now, I would advise you to lose no time, for the parole is often changed—and take care of yourself among these moonlight lads, for laws and lawyers do not stand very high in their favour."

"I will set out this instant," said the young barrister; "I will but bid the Provost and Mrs. Crosbie farewell, and then get on horseback so soon as the hostler of the George Inn can saddle him;—as for the smugglers, I am neither gauger nor supervisor, and, like the man who met the devil, if they have nothing to say to me, I have nothing to say to them."

"You are a mettled young man," said Summertrees, evidently with increasing good-will, on observing an alertness and contempt of danger, which perhaps he did not expect from Alan's appearance and profession,—"a very mettled young fellow indeed! and it is almost a pity"—— Here he stopped short.

"What is a pity?" said Fairford.

"It is almost a pity that I cannot go with you myself, or at least send a trusty guide."

They walked together to the bedchamber of Mrs. Crosbie, for it was in that asylum that the ladies of the period dispensed their tea, when the parlour was occupied by the punch-bowl.

"You have been good bairns to-night, gentlemen," said Mrs. Crosbie: "I am afraid, Summertrees, that the Provost has given you a bad browst; you are not used to quit the lee-side of the punch-bowl in such a hurry. I say nothing to you, Mr. Fairford, for you are

too young a man yet for stoup and bicker; but I hope you will not tell the Edinburgh fine folk that the Provost has scrimped you of your cogie, as the sang says?"

"I am much obliged for the Provost's kindness, and yours, madam," replied Alan; "but the truth is, I have still a long ride before me this evening, and the sooner I am on horseback the better."

"This evening?" said the Provost, anxiously; "had you not better take daylight with you to-morrow morning?"

"Mr. Fairford will ride as well in the cool of the evening," said Summertrees, taking the word out of Alan's mouth.

The Provost said no more, nor did his wife ask any questions, nor testify any surprise at the suddenness of their guest's departure.

Having drank tea, Alan Fairford took leave with the usual ceremony. The Laird of Summertrees seemed studious to prevent any further communication between him and the Provost, and remained lounging on the landing-place of the stair while they made their adieus—heard the Provost ask if Alan proposed a speedy return, and the latter reply, that his stay was uncertain, and witnessed the parting shake of the hand, which, with a pressure more warm than usual, and a tremulous, "God bless and prosper you!" Mr. Crosbie bestowed on his young friend. Maxwell even strolled with Fairford as far as the George, although resisting all his attempts at further inquiry into the affairs of Redgauntlet, and referring him to Tom Trumbull, alias Turnpenny, for the particulars which he might find it necessary to inquire into.

At length Alan's hack was produced; an animal long in neck, and high in bone, accoutred with a pair of saddle-bags containing the rider's travelling wardrobe. Proudly surmounting his small stock of necessaries, and no way ashamed of a mode of travelling which a modern Mr. Silvertongue would consider as the last of degradations, Alan Fairford took leave of the old Jacobite, Pate-in-Peril, and set forward on the road to the royal burgh of Annan. His reflections during his ride were none of the most pleasant. He could not disguise from himself that he was venturing rather too rashly into the power of outlawed and desperate persons; for with such only, a man in the situation of Redgauntlet could be supposed to associate. There were other grounds for apprehension. Several marks of intelligence betwixt Mrs. Crosbie and the Laird of Summertrees had not escaped Alan's acute observation; and it was plain that the Provost's inclinations towards him, which he believed to be sincere and good, were not firm enough to withstand the influence of this league between his wife and friend. The Provost's adieus, like Macbeth's amen, had stuck in his throat, and seemed to intimate that he apprehended more than he dare give utterance to.

Laying all these matters together, Alan thought, with no little anxiety, on the celebrated lines of Shakespeare,

—"A drop
That in the ocean seeks another drop," &c.

But pertinacity was a strong feature in the young lawyer's character. He was, and always had been, totally unlike the "horse hot at hand," who tires before noon through his own over eager exertions in the beginning of the day. On the contrary, his first efforts seemed frequently inadequate to accomplishing his purpose, whatever that for the time might be; and it was only as the difficulties of the task increased, that his mind seemed to acquire the energy necessary to combat and subdue them. If, therefore, he went anxiously forward upon his uncertain and perilous expedition, the reader must acquit him of all idea, even in a passing thought, of the possibility of abandoning his search, and resigning Darsie Latimer to his destiny.

A couple of hours riding brought him to the little town of Annan, situated on the shores of the Solway, between eight and nine o'clock. The sun had set, but the day was not yet ended; and when he had alighted and seen his horse properly cared for at the principal inn of the place, he was readily directed to *Mr. Maxwell's friend, old Tom Trumbull*, with whom every body seemed well acquainted. He endeavoured to fish out from the lad that acted as a guide, something of this man's situation and profession; but the general expressions of "a very decent man"—"a very honest body"—"well to pass in the world," and such like, were all that could be extracted from him; and while Fairford was following up the investigation with closer interrogatories, the lad put an end to them by knocking at the door of Mr. Trumbull, whose decent dwelling was a little distance from the town, and considerably nearer to the sea. It was one of a little row of houses running down to the water-side, and having gardens and other accommodations behind. There was heard within the uplifting of a Scottish psalm; and the boy saying, "They are at exercise, sir," gave intimation they might not be admitted till prayers were over.

When, however, Fairford repeated the summons with the end of his whip, the singing ceased, and Mr. Trumbull himself, with his psalm-book in his hand, kept open by the insertion of his forefinger between the leaves, came to demand the meaning of this unseasonable interruption.

Nothing could be more different than his whole appearance seemed to be from the confidant of a desperate man, and the associate of outlaws in their unlawful enterprises. He was a tall, thin, bony figure, with white hair combed straight down on each side of his face, and an iron-gray hue of complexion; where the lines or rather, as Quin said of Macklin, the cordage, of his countenance were so steraly adapted to a devotional and even ascetic expression, that they left no room for any indication of reckless daring, or sly dissimulation. In short, Trumbull appeared a perfect specimen of the rigid old Covenanter, who said only what he thought right, acted on no other principle but that of duty, and, if he committed errors, did so under the full impression that he was serving God rather than man.

"Do you want me sir?" he said to Fairford, whose guide had slunk to the rear, as if to escape the rebuke of the severe old man,—"We were engaged, and it is the Saturday night."

Alan Fairford's preconceptions were so much deranged by this man's appearance and manner that he stood for a moment bewildered, and would as soon have thought of giving a cant pass-word to a clergyman descending from the pulpit, as to the respectable father of a family just interrupted in his prayers for and with the objects of his care. Hastily concluding Mr. Maxwell had passed some idle jest on him, or rather that he had mistaken the person to whom he was directed, he asked if he spoke to Mr. Trumbull.

"To Thomas Trumbull," answered the old man—"What may be your business, sir?" And he glanced his eye to the book he held in his hand, with a sigh like that of a saint desirous of dissolution.

"Do you know Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees?" said Fairford.

"I have heard of such a gentleman in the country-side, but have no acquaintance with him," answered Mr. Trumbull; "he is, as I have heard, a Papist; for the whore that sitteth on the seven hills ceaseth not yet to pour forth the cup of her abomination on these parts."

"Yet he directed me hither, my good friend," said Alan. "Is there another of your name in this town of Annan?"

"None," replied Mr. Trumbull, "since my worthy father was removed; he was indeed a shining light.—I wish you good-even, sir."

"Stay one single instant," said Fairford; "this is a matter of life and death."

"Not more than the casting the burden of our sins where they should be laid," said Thomas Trumbull, about to shut the door in the inquirer's face.

"Do you know," said Alan Fairford, "the Laird of Redgauntlet?"

"Now Heaven defend me from treason and rebellion!" exclaimed Trumbull. "Young gentleman, you are importunate. I live here among my own people, and do not consort with Jacobites and mass-mongers."

He seemed about to shut the door but did not

shut it, a circumstance which did not escape Alan's notice.

"Mr. Redgauntlet is sometimes," he said, "called Herries of Birrenswork; perhaps you may know him under that name."

"Friend, you are uncivil," answered Mr. Trumbull; "honest men have enough to do to keep one name undefiled. I ken nothing about those who have two. Good-even to you, friend."

He was now about to slam the door in his visiter's face without further ceremony, when Alan, who had observed symptoms that the name of Redgauntlet did not seem altogether so indifferent to him as he pretended, arrested his purpose by saying, in a low voice, "At least you can tell me what age the moon is?"

The old man started, as if from a trance, and, before answering, surveyed the querist with a keen penetrating glance, which seemed to say, "Are you really in possession of this key to my confidence, or do you speak from mere accident?"

To this keen look of scrutiny, Fairford replied by a smile of intelligence.

The iron muscles of the old man's face did not, however, relax, as he dropped, in a careless manner, the countersign, "Not light enough to land a cargo."

"Then plague of all Aberdeen Almanacks!"

"And plague of all fools that waste time," said Thomas Trumbull. "Could you not have said as much at first?—And standing wasting time, and encouraging lookers-on, in the open street too? Come in by—in by."

He drew his visiter into the dark entrance of the house, and shut the door carefully; then putting his head into an apartment which the murmurs within announced to be filled with the family, he said aloud, "A work of necessity and mercy—Malachi, take the book—you will sing six double verses of the hundred and nineteen—and you may lecture out of the Lamentations. And, Malachi,"—this he said in an under tone,—"see you give them a screed of doctrine that will last them till I come back; or else these inconsiderate lads will be out of the house, and away to the publics, wasting their precious time, and, it may be, putting themselves in the way of missing the morning tide."

An articulate answer from within intimated Malachi's acquiescence in the commands imposed; and Mr. Trumbull, shutting the door, muttered something about fast bind, fast find, turned the key, and put it into his pocket; and then bidding his visiter have a care of his steps, and make no noise, he led him through the house, and out at a back-door, into a little garden. Here a plaited alley conducted them, without the possibility of their being seen by any neighbour, to a door in the garden-wall, which being opened, proved to be a private entrance into a three-stalled stable; in one of which was a horse, that whinnied on their entrance. "Hush, hush!" cried the old man, and presently seconded his exhortations to silence by throwing a handful of corn into the manger, and the horse soon converted his acknowledgement of their presence into the usual sound of munching and grinding his provender.

As the light was now failing fast, the old man, with much more alertness than might have been expected from the rigidity of his figure, closed the window-shutters in an instant, produced phosphorus and matches, and lighted a stable-lantern, which he placed on the corn bin, and then addressed Fairford. "We are private here, young man; and as some time has been wasted already, you will be so kind as to tell me what is your errand. Is it about the way of business, or the other job?"

"My business with you, Mr. Trumbull, is to request you will find me the means of delivering this letter, from Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees to the Laird of Redgauntlet."

'Humph—fashious job!—Pate Maxwell will still be the auld man—always Pate-in-Peril—Craig-in-Peril, for what I know. Let me see the letter from him."

He examined it with much care, turning it up and down, and looking at the seal very attentively. "All's right, I see; it has the private mark for haste and speed. I bless my Maker that I am no great man, or great man's fellow; and so I think no more of these passages than just to help them forward in the way of business. You are an utter stranger in these parts, I warrant?"

Fairford answered in the affirmative.

"Ay—I never saw them make a wiser choice—I must call some one to direct you what to do—Stay, we must go to him, I believe. You are well recommended to me, friend, and doubtless trusty; otherwise you may see more than I would like to show, or am in the use of showing in the common line of business."

Saying this, he placed his lantern on the ground, beside the post of one of the empty stalls, drew up a small spring-bolt which secured it to the floor, and then forcing the post to one side, discovered a small trap-door. "Follow me," he said, and dived into the subterranean descent to which this secret aperture gave access.

Fairford plunged after him, not without apprehensions of more kinds than one, but still resolved to prosecute the adventure.

The descent, which was not above six feet, led to a very narrow passage, which seemed to have been constructed for the precise purpose of excluding every one who chanced to be an inch more in girth than was his conductor. A small vaulted room, of about eight feet square, received them at the end of this lane. Here Mr. Trumbull left Fairford alone, and returned for a instant, as he said, to shut his concealed trap-door.

Fairford liked not his departure, as it left him in utter darkness; besides that his breathing was much affected by a strong and stifling smell of spirits, and other articles of a savour more powerful than agreeable to the lungs. He was very glad, therefore, when he heard the returning steps of Mr. Trumbull, who, when once more by his side, opened a strong though narrow door in the wall, and conveyed Fairford into an immense magazine of spirit-casks, and other articles of contraband trade.

There was a small light at the end of this range of well-stocked subterranean vaults, which, upon a low whistle, began to flicker and move towards them. An undefined figure, holding a dark lantern, with the light averted, approached them, whom Mr. Trumbull thus addressed:—"Why were you not at worship, Job; and this Saturday at e'en?"

"Swanston was loading the Jenny, sir; and I stayed to serve out the article."

"True—a work of necessity, and in the way of business. Does the Jumping Jenny sail this tide?"

"Ay, ay, sir; she sails for"——

"I did not ask you *where* she sailed for, Job," said the old gentleman, interrupting him. "I thank my Maker, I know nothing of their incomings or outgoings. I sell my article fairly and in the ordinary way of business; and I wash my hands of every thing else. But what I wished to know is, whether the gentleman called the Laird of the Solway Lakes is on the other side of the Border even now?"

"Ay, ay," said Job, "the Laird is something in my own line, you know—a little contraband or so. There is a statute for him—But no matter; he took the sands after the splore at the Quaker's fish-traps yonder; for he has a leal heart the Laird, and is always true to the country-side. But avast—is all snug here?"

So saying, he suddenly turned on Alan Fairford the light side of the lantern he carried, who, by the transient gleam which it threw in passing on the man who bore it, saw a huge figure, upwards of six feet high, with a rough hairy cap on his head, and a set of features corresponding to his bulky frame. He thought also he observed pistols at his belt.

"I will answer for this gentleman," said Mr. Trumbull; "he must be brought to speech of the Laird."

"That will be kittle steering," said the subordinate personage; "for I understood that the Laird and his folk were no sooner on the other side than the wind

sharks were on them, and some mounted lobsters from Carlisle; and so they were obliged to split and squander. There are new brooms out to sweep the country of them they say; for the brush was a hard one; and they say there was a lad drowned;—he was not one of the Laird's gang, so there was the less matter."

"Peace! prithee, peace, Job Rutledge," said honest, pacific Mr. Trumbull. "I wish thou couldst remember, man, that I desire to know nothing of your roars and splores, your brooms and brushes. I dwell here among my own people; and I sell my commodity to him who comes in the way of business; and so wash my hands of all consequences, as becomes a quiet subject and an honest man. I never take payment, save in ready money."

"Ay, ay," muttered he with the lantern, "your worship, Mr. Trumbull, understands that in the way of business."

"Well, I hope you will one day know, Job," answered Mr. Trumbull,—"the comfort of a conscience void of offence, and that fears neither gauger nor collector, neither excise nor customs. The business is to pass this gentleman to Cumberland upon earnest business, and to procure him speech with the Laird of the Solway Lakes—I suppose that can be done? Now I think Nanty Ewart, if he sails with the brig this morning tide, is the man to set him forward."

"Ay, ay, truly is he," said Job; "never man knew the border, dale and fell, pasture and ploughland, better than Nanty; and he can always bring him to the Laird, too, if you are sure the gentleman's right. But indeed that's his own look-out; for were he the best man in Scotland, and the chairman of the d—d Board to boot, and had fifty men at his back, he were as well not visit the Laird for any thing but good. As for Nanty, he is word and blow, a d—d deal fiercer than Christie Nixon that they keep such a din about. I have seen them both tried, by ——."

Fairford now found himself called upon to say something; yet his feelings, upon finding himself thus completely in the power of a canting hypocrite, and of his retainer, who had so much the air of a determined ruffian, joined to the strong and abominable fume which they snuffed up with indifference, while it almost deprived him of respiration, combined to render utterance difficult. He stated, however, that he had no evil intentions towards the Laird, as they called him, but was only the bearer of a letter to him on particular business, from Mr. Maxwell of Summertree.

"Ay, ay," said Job, "that may be well enough; and if Mr. Trumbull is satisfied that the scrive is right, why, we will give you a cast in the Jumping Jenny this tide, and Nanty Ewart will put you on a way of finding the Laird, I warrant you."

"I may for the present return, I presume, to the inn where I have left my horse?" said Fairford.

"With pardon," replied Mr. Trumbull, "you have been ower far hen with us for that; but Job will take you to a place where you may sleep rough till he calls you. I will bring you what little baggage you can need—for those who go on such errands must not be dainty. I will myself see after your horse, for a merciful man is merciful to his beast—a matter too often forgotten in our way of business."

"Why, Master Trumbull," replied Job, "you know that when we are chased, it's no time to shorten sail, and so the boys do ride whip and spur"——He stopped in his speech, observing the old man had vanished through the door by which he had entered—"That's always the way with old Turnpenny," he said to Fairford; "he cares for nothing of the trade but the profit—now, d—me, if I don't think the fun of it is better worth while. But come along, my fine chap; I must stow you away in safety until it is time to go aboard."

CHAPTER XIII.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

Fairford followed his gruff guide among a labyrinth of barrels and puncheons, on which he had more than once like to have broken his nose, and from thence into what, by the glimpse of the passing lantern upon a desk and writing materials, seemed to be a small office for the despatch of business. Here there appeared no exit; but the smuggler, or smuggler's ally, availing himself of a ladder, seven feet from the ground, and Fairford, still following Job, was involved in another tortuous and dark passage, which involuntarily reminded him of Peter Peebles's lawsuit. At the end of this labyrinth, when he had little guess where he had been conducted, and was, according to the French phrase, totally *desorienté*, Job suddenly set down the lantern, and availing himself of the flame to light two candles which stood on the table, asked if Alan would choose any thing to eat, recommending, at all events, a slug of brandy, to keep out the night air. Fairford declined both, but inquired after his baggage.

"The old master will take care of that himself," said Job Rutledge; and drawing back in the direction in which he had entered, he vanished from the further end of the apartment, by a mode which the candles, still shedding an imperfect light, gave Alan no means of ascertaining. Thus the adventurous young lawyer was left alone in the apartment to which he had been conducted by so singular a passage.

In this condition, it was Alan's first employment to survey, with some accuracy, the place where he was; and accordingly, having trimmed the lights, he walked slowly round the apartment, examining its appearance and dimensions. It seemed to be such a small dining-parlour as is usually found in the house of the better class of artisans, shopkeepers, and such persons, having a recess at the upper end, and the usual furniture of an ordinary description. He found a door, which he endeavoured to open, but it was locked on the outside. A corresponding door on the same side of the apartment admitted him into a closet, upon the front shelves of which were punch-bowls, glasses, tea-cups, and the like, while on one side was hung a horseman's great-coat of the coarsest materials, with two great horse-pistols peeping out of the pocket, and on the floor stood a pair of well-spattered jack-boots, the usual equipment of the time, at least for long journeys.

Not greatly liking the contents of the closet, Alan Fairford shut the door, and resumed his scrutiny round the walls of the apartment, in order to discover the mode of Job Rutledge's retreat. The secret passage was, however, too artificially concealed, and the young lawyer had nothing better to do than to meditate on the singularity of his present situation. He had long known that the excise laws had occasioned an active contraband trade betwixt Scotland and England, which then, as now, existed, and will continue to exist, until the utter abolition of the wretched system which establishes an inequality of duties betwixt the different parts of the same kingdom; a system, be it said in passing, mightily resembling the conduct of a pugilist, who should tie up one arm that he might fight the better with the other. But Fairford was unprepared for the expensive and regular establishments by which the illicit traffic was carried on, and could not have conceived that the capital employed in it should have been adequate to the erection of these extensive buildings, with all their contrivances for secrecy of communication. He was musing on these circumstances, not without some anxiety for the progress of his own journey, when suddenly, as he lifted his eyes, he discovered old Mr. Trumbull at the upper end of the apartment, bearing in one hand a small bundle, in the other his dark lantern, the light of which, as he advanced, he directed full upon Fairford's countenance.

Though such an apparition was exactly what he expected, yet he did not see the grim, stern old man present himself thus suddenly without emotion; especially when he recollected, what to a youth of his pious education was peculiarly shocking, that the grizzled hypocrite was probably that instant arisen from his knees to Heaven, for the purpose of engaging in the mysterious transactions of a desperate and illegal trade.

The old man accustomed to judge with ready sharpness of the physiognomy of those with whom he had business, did not fail to remark something like agitation in Fairford's demeanour. "Have ye taken the rue?" said he. "Will ye take the sheaf from the mare, and give up the venture?"

"Never!" said Fairford, firmly, stimulated at once by his natural spirit, and the recollection of his friend; "never, while I have life and strength to follow it out!"

"I have brought you," said Trumbull, "a clean shirt and some stockings, which is all the baggage you can conveniently carry, and I will cause one of the lads lend you a horseman's coat, for it is ill sailing or riding without one; and, touching your valise, it will be as safe in my poor house, were it full of the gold of Ophir, as if it were in the depth of the mine."

"I have no doubt of it," said Fairford.

"And now," said Trumbull, again, "I pray you to tell me by what name I am to name you to Nanty [which is Antony] Ewart?"

"By the name of Alan Fairford," answered the young lawyer.

"But that," said Mr. Trumbull, in reply, "is your own proper name and surname."

"And what other should I give?" said the young man; "do you think I have any occasion for an alias? And, besides, Mr. Trumbull," added Alan, thinking a little raillery might intimate confidence of spirit, "you blessed yourself, but a little while since, that you had no acquaintance with those who defiled their names so far as to be obliged to change them."

"True, very true," said Mr. Trumbull; "nevertheless, young man, my gray hairs stand unreproved in this matter; for, in my line of business, when I sit under my vine and my fig-tree, exchanging the strong waters of the north for the gold which is the price thereof, I have, I thank Heaven, no disguises to keep with any man, and wear my own name of Thomas Trumbull, without any chance that the same may be polluted. Whereas, thou, who art to journey in miry ways, and amongst a strange people, mayst do well to have two names, as thou hast two shirts, the one to keep the other clean."

Here he emitted a chuckling grunt, which lasted for two vibrations of the pendulum exactly, and was the only approach towards laughter in which old Turnpenny, as he was nicknamed, was ever known to indulge.

"You are witty, Mr. Trumbull," said Fairford; "but jests are no arguments—I shall keep my own name."

"At your own pleasure," said the merchant; "there is but one name which," &c. &c. &c.

We will not follow the hypocrite through the impious cant which he added, in order to close the subject.

Alan followed him, in silent abhorrence to the recess in which the beaufet was placed, and which was so artificially made as to conceal another of those traps with which the whole building abounded. This concealment admitted them to the same winding passage by which the young lawyer had been brought thither. The path which they now took amid these mazes, differed from the direction in which he had been guided by Rutledge. It led upwards, and terminated beneath a garret window. Trumbull opened it, and with more agility than his age promised, clambered out upon the leads. If Fairford's journey had been hitherto in a stifled and subterranean atmosphere, it was now open, lofty, and airy enough; for he had to follow his guide over leads and slates, which the old smuggler traversed with the dexterity of a cat. It is true his course was facilitated by knowing exactly where certain stepping-places and holdfasts were placed, of which Fairford could not so readily avail himself; but, after a difficult and somewhat perilous progress along the roofs of two or three houses, they at length descended by a skylight into a garret room, and from thence by the stairs into a public-house; for such it appeared by the ringing of bells, whistling for waiters and attendance, bawling of "House, house, here!" chorus of sea songs, and the *like noises*

Having descended to the second story, and entered a room there, in which there was a light, old Mr. Trumbull rung the bell of the apartment thrice, with an interval betwixt each, during which, he told deliberately the number twenty. Immediately after the third ringing the landlord appeared, with stealthy step, and an appearance of mystery on his buxom visage. He greeted Mr. Trumbull, who was his landlord as it proved, with great respect, and expressed some surprise at seeing him so late, as he termed it, "on Saturday at e'en."

"And I Robin Hastie," said the landlord to the tenant, "am more surprised than pleased, to hear see muckle din in your house, Robie, so near the honourable Sabbath; and I must mind you, that it is contravening the terms of your tack, whilk stipulate, that you should shut your public on Saturday at nine o'clock, at latest."

"Yes, sir," said Robin Hastie, no way alarmed at the gravity of the rebuke, "but you must take tent that I have admitted naebody but you, Mr. Trumbull, (who by the way admitted yoursell,) since nine o'clock; for the most of the folk have been here for several hours about the lading, and so on, of the brig. It is not full tide yet, and I cannot put the men out into the street. If I did, they would go to some other public and their souls would be nae the better, and my purse muckle the waur; for how am I to pay the rent, if I do not sell the liquor?"

"Nay, then," said Thomas Trumbull, "if it is a work of necessity, and in the honest independent way of business, no doubt there is balm in Gilead. But prithee, Robin, wilt thou see if Nanty Ewart be as is most likely, amongst these unhappy topers; and if so, let him step this way cannily and speak to me and this young gentleman. And it's dry talking, Robin—you must minister to us a bowl of punch—ye ken my gage."

"From a mutchkin to a gallon, I ken your honour's taste, Mr. Thomas Trumbull," said mine host; "and ye shall hang me over the sign-post if there be a drap mair lemon or a curn less sugar than just suits you. There are three of you—you will be for the auld Scots peremptory pint-stoup* for the success of the voyage?"

"Better pray for it than drink for it, Robin," said Mr. Trumbull. "Yours is a dangerous trade, Robin; it hurts mony a ane—baith host and guest. But ye will get the blue bowl, Robin—the blue bowl—that will sloken all their drouth, and prevent the sinful repetition of whipping for an oke of a Saturday at e'en. Ay, Robin it is a pity of Nanty Ewart—Nanty likes the turning up of his little finger unco weel, and we maunna stint him, Robin, so as we leave him sense to steer by."

"Nanty Ewart could steer through the Pentland Frith though he were as drunk as the Baltic Ocean," said Robin Hastie; and instantly tripping down stairs, he speedily returned with the materials for what he called his *broust*, which consisted of two English quarts of spirits, in a huge blue bowl, with all the ingredients for punch, in the same formidable proportion. At the same time he introduced Mr. Antony or Nanty Ewart, whose person, although he was a good deal flustered with liquor, was different from what Fairford expected. His dress was what is emphatically termed the shabby genteel—a frock with tarnished lace—a small cocked-hat, ornamented in a similar way—a scarlet waistcoat, with faded embroidery, breeches of the same, with silver knee-bands, and he wore a smart hanger and a pair of pistols in a sullied sword-belt.

"Here I come, patron," he said, shaking hands with Mr. Trumbull. "Well, I see you have got some grog aboard."

"It is not my custom, Mr. Ewart," said the old gentlemen, "as you well know, to become a chamberer or carouser thus late on Saturday at e'en; but I wanted to recommend to your attention a young friend

* The Scottish pint of liquid measure comprehends four English measures of the same denomination. The jest is well-known of my poor countryman, who, driven to extremity by the raillery of the Southern, on the small denomination of the Scottish coin, at length answered, "Ay, ay! But the deil tak them that has the *least pint-stoup*."

of ours, that is going upon a something particular journey, with a letter to our friend the Laird, from Pate-in-Peril, as they call him."

"Ay—indeed?—he must be in high trust for so young a gentleman.—I wish you joy, sir," bowing to Fairford. "By'r Lady, as Shakspeare says, you are bringing up a neck to a fair end.—Come, patron, we will drink to Mr. What-shall-call-um—What is his name?—Did you tell me?—And have I forgot it already?"

"Mr. Alan Fairford," said Trumbull.

"Ay, Mr. Alan Fairford—a good name for a fair trader—Mr. Alan Fairford; and may he be long withheld from the topmost round of ambition, which I take to be the highest round of a certain ladder."

While he spoke, he seized the punch ladle, and began to fill the glasses. But Mr. Trumbull arrested his hand, until he had, as he expressed himself, sanctified the liquor by a long grace; during the pronunciation of which, he shut indeed his eyes, but his nostrils became dilated, as if he were snuffing up the fragrant beverage with peculiar complacency.

When the grace was at length over, the three friends sat down to their beverage, and invited Alan Fairford to partake. Anxious about his situation, and disgusted as he was with his company, he craved, and with difficulty obtained permission, under the allegation of being fatigued, heated, and the like, to stretch himself on a couch which was in the apartment, and attempted at least to procure some rest before high water, when the vessel was to sail.

He was at length permitted to use his freedom, and stretched himself on the couch, having his eyes for some time fixed on the jovial party he had left, and straining his ears to catch if possible a little of their conversation. This he soon found was to no purpose; for what did actually reach his ears was disguised so completely by the use of cant words, and the thieves Latin called slang, that even when he caught the words, he found himself as far as ever from the sense of their conversation. At length he fell asleep.

It was after Alan had slumbered for three or four hours, that he was wakened by voices bidding him rise up and prepare to be jogging. He started up accordingly, and found himself in presence of the same party of boon companions, who had just despatched their huge bowl of punch. To Alan's surprise, the liquor had made but little innovation on the brains of men, who were accustomed to drink at all hours, and in the most inordinate quantities. The landlord indeed spoke a little thick, and the texts of Mr. Thomas Trumbull stumbled on his tongue; but Nanty was one of those topers, who, becoming early what *bon vivants* term flustered, remain whole nights and days at the same point of intoxication; and, in fact, as they are seldom entirely sober, can be as rarely seen absolutely drunk. Indeed, Fairford, had he not known how Ewart had been engaged whilst he himself was asleep, would almost have sworn when he awoke, that the man was more sober than when he first entered the room.

He was confirmed in this opinion when they descended below, where two or three sailors and ruffian-looking fellows awaited their commands. Ewart took the whole direction upon himself, gave his orders with briefness and precision, and looked to their being executed with the silence and celerity which that peculiar crisis required. All were now dismissed for the brig, which lay, as Fairford was given to understand, a little farther down the river, which is navigable for vessels of light burden, till almost within a mile of the town.

When they issued from the inn, the landlord bid them good-by. Old Trumbull walked a little way with them, but the air had probably considerable effect on the state of his brain; for, after reminding Alan Fairford that the next day was the honourable Sabbath, he became extremely excursive in an attempt to exhort him to keep it holy. At length, being perhaps sensible that he was becoming unintelligible, he thrust a volume into Fairford's hand—hiccupping at the same time—"*Good book—good* book—fine *hymn-book—fit for the honourable* Sabbath, whilk *awaits us to-morrow morning.*"—Here the iron tongue of time told five from the town steeple of Annan, to the further confusion of Mr. Trumbull's already disordered ideas. "Ay? is Sunday come and gone already?—Heaven be praised! Only it is a marvel the afternoon is sae dark for the time of the year—Sabbath has slipped ower quietly, but we have reason to bless oursells it has not been altogether misemployed. I heard little of the preaching—a could moralist, I doubt, served that out—but, eh—the prayer—I mind it as if I had said the words mysell."—Here he repeated one or two petitions, which were probably a part of his family devotions, before he was summoned forth to what he called the way of business. "I never remember a Sabbath pass so cannily off in my life."—Then he recollected himself a little, and said to Alan, "You may read that book, Mr. Fairford, to-morrow, all the same, though it be Monday; for, you see, it was Saturday when we were thegether, and now it's Sunday, and it's dark night—so the Sabbath has slipped clean away through our fingers, like water through a sieve, which abideth not; and we have to begin again to-morrow morning, in the weariful, base, mean, earthly employments, whilk are unworthy of an immortal spirit—always excepting the way of business."

Three of the fellows were now returning to the town, and, at Ewart's command, they cut short the patriarch's exhortation, by leading him back to his own residence. The rest of the party then proceeded to the brig, which only waited their arrival to get under weigh and drop down the river. Nanty Ewart betook himself to steering the brig, and the very touch of the helm seemed to dispel the remaining influence of the liquor which he had drunk, since, through a troublesome and intricate channel, he was able to direct the course of his little vessel with the most perfect accuracy and safety.

Alan Fairford, for some time, availed himself of the clearness of the summer morning to gaze on the dimly seen shores betwixt which they glided, becoming less and less distinct as they receded from each other, until at length, having adjusted his little bundle by way of pillow, and wrapt around him the great-coat with which old Trumbull had equipped him, he stretched himself on the deck, to try to recover the slumber out of which he had been awakened. Sleep had scarce begun to settle on his eyes, ere he found something stirring about his person. With ready presence of mind he recollected his situation, and resolved to show no alarm until the purpose of this became obvious; but he was soon relieved from his anxiety, by finding it was only the result of Nanty's attention to his comfort, who was wrapping around him, as softly as he could, a great boat-cloak, in order to defend him from the morning air.

"Thou art but a cockerel," he muttered, "but 'twere pity thou wert knocked off the perch before seeing a little more of the sweet and sour of this world—though, faith, if thou hast the usual luck of it, the best way were to leave thee to the chance of a seasoning fever."

These words, and the awkward courtesy with which the skipper of the little brig tucked the sea-coat round Fairford, gave him a confidence of safety which he had not yet thoroughly possessed. He stretched himself in more security on the hard planks, and was speedily asleep, though his slumbers were feverish and unrefreshing.

It has been elsewhere intimated that Alan Fairford inherited from his mother a delicate constitution, with a tendency to consumption; and, being an only child, with such a cause for apprehension, care, to the verge of effeminacy, was taken to preserve him from damp beds, wet feet, and those various emergencies, to which the Caledonian boys of much higher birth, but more active habits, are generally accustomed. In man, the spirit sustains the constitutional weakness, as in the winged tribes the feathers bear aloft the body. But there is a bound to these supporting qualities; and as the pinions of the bird must at length grow weary, so the vis animi of the human structure becomes broken down by continued fatigue.

When the voyager was awakened by the light of the sun now riding high in Heaven, he found himself

under the influence of an almost intolerable headache, with heat, thirst, shootings across the back and loins, and other symptoms, intimating violent cold, accompanied with fever. The manner in which he had passed the preceding day and night, though perhaps it might have been of little consequence to most young men, was to him, delicate in constitution and nurture, attended with bad and even perilous consequences. He felt this was the case, yet would fain have combated the symptoms of indisposition, which, indeed, he imputed chiefly to sea-sickness. He sat up on deck, and looked on the scene around, as the little vessel, having borne down the Solway Frith, was beginning, with a favourable northerly breeze, to bear away to the southward, crossing the entrance of the Wampool river, and preparing to double the most northerly point of Cumberland.

But Fairford felt annoyed with deadly sickness, as well as by pain of a distressing and oppressive character; and neither Criffel, rising in majesty on the one hand, nor the distant yet more picturesque outline of Skiddaw and Glaramara upon the other, could attract his attention in the manner in which it was usually fixed by beautiful scenery, and especially that which had in it something new as well as striking. Yet it was not in Alan Fairford's nature to give way to despondence, even when seconded by pain. He had recourse, in the first place, to his pocket; but instead of the little Sallust he had brought with him, that the perusal of a favourite classical author might help to pass away a heavy hour, he pulled out the supposed hymn-book with which he had been presented a few hours before, by that temperate and scrupulous person, Mr. Thomas Trumbull, *alias* Turnpenny. The volume was bound in sable, and its exterior might have become a psalter. But what was Alan's astonishment to read on the titlepage the following words:—Merry Thoughts for Merry Men; or, Mother Midnight's Miscellany for the small Hours;" and, turning over the leaves, he was disgusted with profligate tales, and more profligate songs, ornamented with figures corresponding in infamy with the letterpress.

"Good God!" he thought, "and did this hoary reprobate summon his family together, and, with such a disgraceful pledge of infamy in his bosom, venture to approach the throne of his Creator? It must be so; the book is bound after the manner of those dedicated to devotional subjects, and doubtless, the wretch, in his intoxication, confounded the books he carried with him, as he did the days of the week."—Seized with the disgust with which the young and generous usually regard the vices of advanced life, Alan, having turned the leaves of the book over in hasty disdain, flung it from him, as far as he could, into the sea. He then had recourse to the Sallust, which he had at first sought for in vain. As he opened the book, Nanty Ewart, who had been looking over his shoulder, made his own opinion heard.

"I think now, brother, if you are so much scandalized at a little piece of sculduddery, which, after all, does nobody any harm, you had better have given it to me than have flung it into the Solway."

"I hope, sir," answered Fairford, civilly, "you are in the habit of reading better books."

"Faith," answered Nanty, "with help of a little Geneva text, I could read my Sallust as well as you can;" and snatching the book from Alan's hand, he began to read, in the Scottish accent:—"'*Igitur ex divitiis juventutem luxuria atque avaritia cum superbia invasere: rapere, consumere; sua parvi pendere, aliena cupere; pudorem, amicitiam, pudicitiam, divina atque humana promiscua, nihil pensi neque moderati habere.*'*—There is a slap in the face now, for an honest fellow that has been buccaneering! Never could keep a groat of what he got, or hold his fingers from what belonged to another, said you? Fie, fie, friend Crispus, thy morals are as crabbed and austere as thy style—the one has as little mercy as the other has grace. By my soul, it is unhandsome to make personal reflections on an old acquaintance, who seeks a little civil intercourse with you after nigh twenty years' separation. On my soul, Master Sallust deserves to float on the Solway better than Mother Midnight herself."

"Perhaps, in some respect, he may merit better usage at our hands," said Alan; "for if he has described vice plainly, it seems to have been for the purpose of rendering it generally abhorred."

"Well," said the seaman, "I have heard of the Sortes Virgilianæ, and I dare say the Sortes Sallustianæ are as true every tittle. I have consulted honest Crispus on my own account, and have had a cuff for my pains. But now see, I open the book on your behalf, and behold what occurs first to my eye!—Lo you there—'*Catilina... omniam flagitiosorum atque facinorosorum circum se habebat.*' And then again—'*Etiam si quis à culpa vacuus in amicitiam ejus inciderat, quotidiano usu par similisque ceteris efficiebatur.*'* That is what I call plain speaking on the part of the old Roman, Mr. Fairford. By the way, that is a capital name for a lawyer."

"Lawyer as I am," said Fairford, "I do not understand your innuendo."

"Nay, then," said Ewart, "I can try it another way, as well as the hypocritical old rascal Turnpenny himself could do. I would have you to know that I am well acquainted with my Bible-book, as well as with my friend Sallust." He then, in a snuffling and canting tone, began to repeat the Scripture text—"'*David therefore departed thence, and went to the cave of Adullam. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves together unto him, and he became a captain over them.*' What think you of that?" he said, suddenly changing his manner. "Have I touched you now, sir?"

"You are as far off as ever," replied Fairford.

"What the devil! and you a repeating frigate between Summertrees and the Laird! Tell that to the marines—the sailors won't believe it. But you are right to be cautious, since you can't say who are right, who not.—But you look ill; it's but the cold morning air—Will you have a can of flip, or a jorum of hot rumbo?—or will you splice the main-brace"—(showing a spirit-flask)—"Will you have a quid—or a pipe—or a cigar?—a pinch of snuff, at least, to clear your brains and sharpen your apprehension?"

Fairford rejected all these friendly propositions.

"Why, then," continued Ewart, "if you will do nothing for the free trade, I must patronise it myself."

So saying, he took a large glass of brandy.

"A hair of the dog that bit me," he continued,—"of the dog that will worry me one day soon; and yet, and be d—d to me for an idiot, I must always have him at my throat. But, says the old catch"—Here he sung, and sung well—

"'Let's drink—let's drink—while life we have;
We'll find but cold drinking, cold drinking in the grave.'

All this," he continued, "is no charm against the headache. I wish I had any thing that could do you good.—Faith, and we have tea and coffee aboard! I'll open a chest or a bag, and let you have some in an instant. You are at the age to like such catlap better than better stuff."

Fairford thanked him, and accepted his offer of tea.

Nanty Ewart was soon heard calling about, "Break open yon chest—take out your capful, you bastard of a powder-monkey; we may want it again.—No sugar?—all used up for grog, say you?—knock another loaf to pieces, can't ye?—and get the kettle boiling, ye hell's baby, in no time at all!"

By dint of these energetic proceedings, he was in a short time able to return to the place where his passenger lay sick and exhausted, with a cup, or rather a canful, of tea; for every thing was on a large scale on board of the Jumping Jenny. Alan drank it

* The translation of the passage is thus given by Sir Henry Steuart of Allanton.—"The youth, taught to look up to riches as the sovereign good, became apt pupils in the school of Luxury. Rapacity and profusion went hand in hand. Careless of *their own fortunes, and eager to possess those of others, shame and remorse, modesty and moderation, every principle gave way.*"—*Works of Sallust, with Original Essays*, vol. ii. p. 17.

* After enumerating the evil qualities of Catiline's associates, the author adds, "If it happened that any as yet uncontaminated by vice were fatally drawn into his friendship, the effects of intercourse and snares artfully spread, subdued every scruple, and early assimilated them to their conductors."—Ibidem, p. 18.

eagerly, and with so much appearance of being refreshed, that Nanty Ewart swore he would have some too, and only laced it, as his phrase went, with a single glass of brandy.*

CHAPTER XIV.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

We left Alan Fairford on the deck of the little smuggling brig, in that disconsolate situation, when sickness and nausea attack a heated and fevered frame, and an anxious mind. His share of sea-sickness, however, was not so great as to engross his sensations entirely, or altogether to divert his attention from what was passing around If he could not delight in the swiftness and agility with which the "little frigate" walked the waves, or amuse himself by noticing the beauty of the sea-views around him, where the distant Skiddaw raised his brow, as if in defiance of the clouded eminence of Criffel, which lorded it over the Scottish side of the estuary, he had spirits and composure enough to pay particular attention to the master of the vessel, on whose character his own safety in all probability was dependent.

Nanty Ewart had now given the helm to one of his people, a bald-pated, grizzled old fellow, whose whole life had been spent in evading the revenue laws, with now and then the relaxation of a few months' imprisonment, for deforcing officers, resisting seizures, and the like offences.

Nanty himself sat down by Fairford, helped him to his tea, with such other refreshments as he could think of, and seemed in his way sincerely desirous to make his situation as comfortable as things admitted. Fairford had thus an opportunity to study his countenance and manners more closely.

It was plain, Ewart, though a good seaman, had not been bred upon that element. He was a reasonably good scholar, and seemed fond of showing it, by recurring to the subject of Sallust and Juvenal; while, on the other hand, sea-phrases seldom chequered his conversation. He had been in person what is called a smart little man; but the tropical sun had burnt his originally fair complexion to a dusty red; and the bile which was diffused through his system, had stained it with a yellowish black—what ought to have been the white part of his eyes, in particular, had a hue as deep as the topaz. He was very thin, or rather emaciated, and his countenance, though still indicating alertness and activity, showed a constitution exhausted with excessive use of his favourite stimulus.

"I see you look at me hard," said he to Fairford. "Had you been an officer of the d—d customs, my terriers' backs would have been up." He opened his breast and showed Alan a pair of pistols disposed between his waistcoat and jacket, placing his finger at the same time upon the cock of one of them. "But come, you are an honest fellow, though you're a close one. I dare say you think me a queer customer; but I can tell you, they that see the ship leave harbour know but little of the seas she is to sail through. My father, honest old gentleman, never would have thought to see me master of the Jumping Jenny."

Fairford said, it seemed very clear indeed that Mr. Ewart's education was far superior to the line he at present occupied.

"O, Criffel to Solway Moss!" said the other. "Why, man, I should have been an expounder of the word, with a wig like a snow-wreath, and a stipend like—like—like a hundred pounds a-year, I suppose. I can spend thrice as much as that, though, being such as I am." Here he sung a scrap of an old Northumbrian ditty, mimicking the burr of the natives of that county:—

> "Willy Foster's gone to sea,
> Siller buckles at his knee,
> He'll come back and marry me—
> Canny Willy Foster."

"I have no doubt," said Fairford, "your present occupation is more lucrative; but I should have thought the church might have been more"——

He stopped, recollecting that it was not his business to say any thing disagreeable.

"More respectable, you mean, I suppose?" said Ewart, with a sneer, and squirting the tobacco-juice through his front teeth; then was silent for a moment, and proceeded in a tone of candour which some internal touch of conscience dictated. "And so it would, Mr. Fairford—and happier, too, by a thousand degrees—though I have had my pleasures too. But there was my father, (God bless the old man!) a true chip of the old Presbyterian block, walked his parish like a captain on the quarter-deck, and was always ready to do good to rich and poor—Off went the laird's hat to the minister, as fast as the poor man's bonnet. When the eye saw him—Pshaw! what have I to do with that now?—Yes, he was, as Virgil hath it, '*Vir sapientia et pietate gravis.*' But he might have been the wiser man, had he kept me at home, when he sent me at nineteen to study Divinity at the head of the highest stair in the Covenant-Close. It was a cursed mistake in the old gentleman. What though Mrs. Cantrips of Kittlebasket (for she wrote herself no less) was our cousin five times removed, and took me on that account to board and lodging, at six shillings, instead of seven shillings a-week? it was a d—d bad saving, as the case proved. Yet her very dignity might have kept me in order: for she never read a chapter excepting out of a Cambridge Bible, printed by Daniel, and bound in embroidered velvet. I think I see it at this moment! And on Sundays, when we had a quart of twopenny ale, instead of buttermilk, to our porridge, it was always served up in a silver posset-dish. Also she used silver-mounted spectacles, whereas even my father's were cased in mere horn. These things had their impression at first, but we get used to grandeur by degrees. Well, sir!—God, I can scarce get on with my story—it sticks in my throat—must take a trifle to wash it down.—Well, this dame had a daughter—Jess Cantrips, a black-eyed, bouncing wench—and, as the devil would have it, there was the d—d five-story stair—her foot was never from it, whether I went out or came home from the Divinity Hall. I would have eschewed her, sir—I would, on my soul; for I was as innocent a lad as ever came from Lammermuir; but there was no possibility of escape, retreat, or flight, unless I could have got a pair of wings, or made use of a ladder seven stories high, to scale the window of my attic. It signifies little talking—you may suppose how all this was to end—I would have married the girl, and taken my chance—I would, by Heaven! for she was a pretty girl, and a good girl, till she and I met; but you know the old song, 'Kirk would not let us be.' A gentleman, in my case, would have settled the matter with the Kirk-treasurer for a small sum of money; but the poor stibbler, the penniless dominie, having married his cousin of Kittlebasket, must next have proclaimed her frailty to the whole parish, by mounting the throne of Presbyterian penance, and proving, as Othello says, 'his love a whore,' in face of the whole congregation.

* I am sorry to say, that the modes of concealment described in the imaginary premises of Mr. Trumbull, are of a kind which have been common on the frontiers of late years. The neighbourhood of two nations having different laws, though united in government, still leads to a multitude of transgressions on the Border, and extreme difficulty in apprehending delinquents. About twenty years since, as far as my recollection serves, there was along the frontier an organized gang of comers, forgers, smugglers, and other malefactors, whose operations were conducted on a scale not inferior to what is here described. The chief of the party was one Richard Mendham, a carpenter, who rose to opulence, although ignorant even of the arts of reading and writing But he had found a short road to wealth, and had taken singular measures for conducting his operations. Amongst these, he found means to build, in the suburb of Berwick called Spittal, a street of small houses, as if for the investment of property. He himself inhabited one of these; another, a species of public-house, was open to his confederates, who held secret and unsuspected communication with him by crossing the roofs of the intervening houses, and descending by a trap-stair, which admitted them into the alcove of the dining-room of Dick Mendham's private mansion. A vault, too, beneath Mendham's stable, was accessible in the manner mentioned in the novel. The post of one of the stalls turned round on a bolt being withdrawn, and gave admittance to a subterranean place of concealment for contraband and stolen goods, to a great extent. Richard Mendham, the head of this very formidable conspiracy, which involved malefactors of every kind, was tried and executed at Jedburgh, where the author was present as Sheriff of Selkirkshire. Mendham had previously been tried, but escaped by want of proof and the ingenuity of his counsel.

In this extremity I dared not stay where I was, and so thought to go home to my father. But first I got Jack Hadaway, a lad from the same parish, and who lived in the same infernal stair, to make some inquiries how the old gentleman had taken the matter. I soon, by way of answer, learned, to the great increase of my comfortable reflections, that the good old man made as much clamour, as if such a thing as a man's eating his wedding dinner without saying grace had never happened since Adam's time. He did nothing for six days but cry out, 'Ichabod, Ichabod, the glory is departed from my house!' and on the seventh he preached a sermon, in which he enlarged on this incident as illustrative of one of the great occasions for humiliation, and causes of national defection. I hope the course he took comforted himself—I am sure it made me ashamed to show my nose at home. So I went down to Leith, and, exchanging my hoddin gray coat of my mother's spinning for such a jacket as this, I entered my name at the rendezvous as an able-bodied landsman, and sailed with the tender round to Plymouth, where they were fitting out a squadron for the West Indies. There I was put aboard the Fearnought, Captain Daredevil—among whose crew I soon learned to fear Satan, (the terror of my early youth,) as little as the toughest Jack on board. I had some qualms at first, but I took the remedy" (tapping the case-bottle) "which I recommended to you, being as good for sickness of soul as for sickness of the stomach—What, you won't?—very well, I must, then—here is to ye."

"You would, I am afraid, find your education of little use in your new condition?" said Fairford.

"Pardon me, sir," resumed the Captain of the Jumping Jenny; "my handful of Latin, and small pinch of Greek, were as useless as old junk, to be sure; but my reading, writing, and accompting, stood me in good stead, and brought me forward. I might have been schoolmaster—ay, and master, in time; but that valiant liquor, rum, made a conquest of me rather too often, and so, make what sail I could, I always went to leeward. We were four years broiling in that blasted climate, and I came back at last with a little prize-money.—I always had thoughts of putting things to rights in the Covenant-Close, and reconciling myself to my father. I found out Jack Hadaway, who was *Tuptowing* away with a dozen of wretched boys, and a fine string of stories he had ready to regale my ears withal. My father had lectured on what he called 'my falling away,' for seven Sabbaths, when, just as his parishioners began to hope that the course was at an end, he was found dead in his bed on the eighth Sunday morning. Jack Hadaway assured me, that if I wished to atone for my errors, by undergoing the fate of the first martyr, I had only to go to my native village, where the very stones of the street would rise up against me as my father's murderer. Here was a pretty item—well, my tongue clove to my mouth for an hour, and was only able at last to utter the name of Mrs. Cantrips. O this was a new theme for my Job's comforter. My sudden departure—my father's no less sudden death—had prevented the payment of the arrears of my board and lodging—the landlord was a haberdasher, with a heart as rotten as the muslin wares he dealt in. Without respect to her age, or gentle kin, my Lady Kittlebasket was ejected from her airy habitation—her porridge-pot, silver posset-dish, silver-mounted spectacles, and Daniel's Cambridge Bible, sold, at the Cross of Edinburgh, to the cadie who would bid highest for them, and she herself driven to the workhouse, where she got in with difficulty, but was easily enough lifted out, at the end of the month, as dead as her friends could desire. Merry tidings this to me, who had been the d—l" (he paused a moment) "*origo mali*—Gad, I think my confession would sound better in Latin than in English!

"But the best jest was behind—I had just power to stammer out something about Jess—by my faith he *had* an answer! I had taught Jess one trade, and, like a prudent girl, she had found out another for *herself; unluckily, they were both contraband*, and *Jess Cantrips, daughter of the Lady Kittlebasket*, had *the honour to be transported to the plantations*, for street-walking and pocket-picking, about *six months* before I touched shore."

He changed the bitter tone of affected pleasantry into an attempt to laugh; then drew his swarthy hand across his swarthy eyes, and said in a more natural accent, "Poor Jess!"

There was a pause—until Fairford, pitying the poor man's state of mind, and believing he saw something in him that, but for early error and subsequent profligacy, might have been excellent and noble, helped on the conversation by asking, in a tone of commiseration, how he had been able to endure such a load of calamity.

"Why, very well," answered the seaman; "exceedingly well—like a tight ship in a brisk gale.—Let me recollect.—I remember thanking Jack, very composedly, for the interesting and agreeable communication; I then pulled out my canvass pouch, with my hoard of moidores, and taking out two pieces, I bid Jack keep the rest till I came back, as I was for a cruise about Auld Reekie. The poor devil looked anxiously, but I shook him by the hand and ran down stairs, in such confusion of mind, that, notwithstanding what I had heard, I expected to meet Jess at every turning.

"It was market-day, and the usual number of rogues and fools were assembled at the Cross. I observed every body looked strange on me, and I thought some laughed. I fancy I had been making queer faces enough, and perhaps talking to myself. When I saw myself used in this manner, I held out my clenched fists straight before me, stooped my head, and, like a ram when he makes his race, darted off right down the street, scattering groups of weather-beaten lairds and perriwigged burgesses, and bearing down all before me. I heard the cry of 'Seize the madman!' echoed, in Celtic sounds, from the City Guard, with 'Cease ta matman!'—but pursuit and opposition were in vain. I pursued my career; the smell of the sea, I suppose, led me to Leith, where, soon after, I found myself walking very quietly, on the shore, admiring the tough round and sound cordage of the vessels, and thinking how a loop, with a man at the end of one of them, would look, by way of tassel.

"I was opposite to the rendezvous, formerly my place of refuge—in I bolted—found one or two old acquaintances, made half-a-dozen new ones—drank for two days—was put aboard the tender—off to Portsmouth—then landed at the Haslaar hospital in a fine hissing-hot fever. Never mind—I got better—nothing can kill me—the West Indies were my lot again, for since I did not go where I deserved in the next world, I had something as like such quarters as can be had in this—black devils for inhabitants—flames and earthquakes, and so forth, for your element. Well, brother, something or other I did or said—I can't tell what—How the devil should I when I was as drunk as David's sow, you know?—But I was punished, my lad—made to kiss the wench that never speaks but when she scolds, and that's the gunner's daughter, comrade. Yes, the minister's son of—no matter where—has the cat's scratch on his back! This roused me—and when we were ashore with the boat, I gave three inches of the dirk, after a stout tussle, to the fellow I blamed most, and so took the bush for it. There were plenty of wild lads then along shore—and, I don't care who knows—I went on the account, look you—sailed under the black flag and marrow-bones—was a good friend to the sea, and an enemy to all that sailed on it."

Fairford, though uneasy in his mind at finding himself, a lawyer, so close to a character so lawless thought it best, nevertheless, to put a good face on the matter, and asked Mr. Ewart, with as much unconcern as he could assume, "whether he was fortunate as a rover?"

"No, no—d—n it, no," replied Nanty; "the devil a crumb of butter was ever churned that would stick upon my bread. There was no order among us—he that was captain to-day, was swabber to-morrow; and as for plunder—they say old Avery, and one or two close hunks, made money; but in my time, all went as it came: and reason good, for if a fellow had

saved five dollars, his throat would have been cut in his hammock—And then it was a cruel, bloody work—Pah—we'll say no more about it. I broke with them at last, for what they did on board of a bit of a snow—no matter what it was—bad enough, since it frightened me—I took French leave, and came in upon the proclamation, so I am free of all that business. And here I sit, the skipper of the Jumping Jenny—a nutshell of a thing, but goes through the water like a dolphin. If it were not for yon hypocritical scoundrel at Annan, who has the best end of the profit, and takes none of the risk, I should be well enough—as well as I want to be. Here is no lack of my best friend,"—touching his case-bottle;—"but, to tell you a secret, he and I have got so used to each other, I begin to think he is like a professed joker, that makes your sides sore with laughing, if you see him but now and then; but if you take up house with him, he can only make your head stupid. But I warrant the old fellow is doing the best he can for me, after all."

"And what may that be?" said Fairford.

"He is KILLING me," replied Nanty Ewart; "and I am only sorry he is so long about it."

So saying he jumped on his feet, and tripping up and down the deck, gave his orders with his usual clearness and decision, notwithstanding the considerable quantity of spirits which he had contrived to swallow while recounting his history.

Although far from feeling well, Fairford endeavoured to rouse himself and walk to the head of the brig, to enjoy the beautiful prospect, as well as to take some note of the course which the vessel held. To his great surprise, instead of standing across to the opposite shore from which she had departed, the brig was going down the Frith, and apparently steering into the Irish sea. He called to Nanty Ewart, and expressed his surprise at the course they were pursuing, and asked why they did not stand straight across the Frith for some port in Cumberland.

"Why, this is what I call a reasonable question, now," answered Nanty; "as if a ship could go as straight to its port, as a horse to the stable, or a freetrader could sail the Solway as securely as a King's cutter! Why, I'll tell ye, brother—if I do not see a smoke on Bowness, that is the village upon the head-land yonder, I must stand out to sea for twenty-four hours at least, for we must keep the weathergage if there are hawks abroad."

"And if you do see the signal of safety, Master Ewart, what is to be done then?"

"Why then, and in that case, I must keep off till night, and then run you, with the kegs and the rest of the lumber, ashore at Skinburness."

"And then I am to meet with this same Laird whom I have the letter for?" continued Fairford.

"That," said Ewart, "is thereafter as it may be: the ship has its course—the fair-trader has his port—but it is not so easy to say where the Laird may be found. But he will be within twenty miles of us, off or on—and it will be my business to guide you to him."

Fairford could not withstand the passing impulse of terror which crossed him, when thus reminded that he was so absolutely in the power of a man, who, by his own account, had been a pirate, and who was at present, in all probability, an outlaw as well as a contraband trader. Nanty Ewart guessed the cause of his involuntary shuddering.

"What the devil should I gain," he said, "by passing so poor a card as you are?—Have I not had ace of trumps in my hand, and did I not play it fairly? Ay, I say the Jumping Jenny can run in other ware as well as kegs. Put *sigma* and *tau* to *Ewart*, and see how that will spell—D'ye take me now?"

"No, indeed," said Fairford; "I am utterly ignorant of what you allude to?"

"Now, by Jove!" said Nanty Ewart, "thou art either the deepest or the shallowest fellow I ever met with—or you are not right after all. I wonder where Summertrees could pick up such a tender alongshore. Will you let me see his letter?"

Fairford did *not hesitate to gratify his wish*, which, *he was aware, he could not easily resist.* The master *of the Jumping Jenny looked at the direction* very attentively, then turned the letter to and fro, and examined each flourish of the pen, as if he were judging of a piece of ornamented manuscript; then handed it back to Fairford, without a single word of remark.

"Am I right now?" said the young lawyer.

"Why, for that matter," answered Nanty, "the letter is right, sure enough; but whether you are right or not, is your own business, rather than mine."—And, striking upon a flint with the back of a knife, he kindled a cigar as thick as his finger, and began to smoke away with great perseverance.

Alan Fairford continued to regard him with a melancholy feeling divided betwixt the interest he took in the unhappy man, and a not unnatural apprehension for the issue of his own adventure.

Ewart, notwithstanding the stupifying nature of his pastime, seemed to guess what was working in his passenger's mind; for, after they had remained some time engaged in silently observing each other, he suddenly dashed his cigar on the deck, and said to him, "Well then, if you are sorry for me, I am sorry for you. D—n me, if I have cared a button for man or mother's son, since two years since, when I had another peep of Jack Hadaway. The fellow was got as fat as a Norway whale—married to a great Dutch-built quean that had brought him six children. I believe he did not know me, and thought I was come to rob his house; however, I made up a poor face, and told him who I was. Poor Jack would have given me shelter and clothes, and began to tell me of the moidores that were in bank, when I wanted them. Egad, he changed his note when I told him what my life had been, and only wanted to pay me my cash and get rid of me. I never saw so terrified a visage. I burst out a-laughing in his face, told him it was all a humbug, and that the moidores were all his own, henceforth and for ever, and so ran off. I caused one of our people send him a bag of tea and a keg of brandy, before I left—poor Jack! I think you are the second person these ten years, that has cared a tobacco-stopper for Nanty Ewart."

"Perhaps, Mr. Ewart," said Fairford, "you live chiefly with men too deeply interested for their own immediate safety, to think much upon the distress of others?"

"And with whom do you yourself consort, I pray?" replied Nanty, smartly. "Why with plotters, that can make no plot to better purpose than their own hanging; and incendiaries, that are snapping the flint upon wet tinder. You'll as soon raise the dead as raise the Highlands—you'll as soon get a grunt from a dead sow as any comfort from Wales or Cheshire. You think because the pot is boiling, that no scum but yours can come uppermost—I know better, by——. All these rackets and riots that you think are trending your way, have no relation at all to your interest; and the best way to make the whole kingdom friends again at once, would be the alarm of such an undertaking as these mad old fellows are trying to launch into."

"I really am not in such secrets as you seem to allude to," said Fairford; and, determined at the same time to avail himself as far as possible of Nanty's communicative disposition, he added, with a smile, "And if I were, I should not hold it prudent to make them much the subject of conversation. But I am sure, so sensible men as Summertrees and the Laird may correspond together without offence to the state."

"I take you, friend—I take you," said Nanty Ewart, upon whom, at length, the liquor and tobacco-smoke began to make considerable innovation. "As to what gentlemen may or may not correspond about, why we may pretermit the question, as the old Professor used to say at the Hall; and as to Summertrees, I will say nothing, knowing him to be an old fox. But I say that this fellow the Laird is a firebrand in the country; that he is stirring up all the honest fellows who should be drinking their brandy quietly, by telling them stories about their ancestors and the forty-five; and that he is trying to turn all waters into his own mill-dam, and to set his sails to all winds. And because the London people are roaring about for some pinches of their own, he thinks to win them to his turn with a wet finger. And he gets encouragement from some

because they want a spell of money from him; and from others, because they fought for the cause once, and are ashamed to go back; and others, because they have nothing to lose; and others, because they are discontented fools. But if he has brought you, or any one, I say not whom, into this scrape, with the hope of doing any good, he's a d—d decoy-duck, and that's all I can say for him; and you are geese, which is worse than being decoy-ducks, or lame-ducks either. And so here is to the prosperity of King George the Third, and the true Presbyterian religion, and confusion to the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender!—I'll tell you what, Mr. Fairbairn, I am but tenth owner of this bit of a craft, the Jumping Jenny—but tenth owner—and must sail her by my owners' directions. But if I were whole owner, I would not have the brig be made a ferry-boat for your jacobitical, old-fashioned Popish riff-raff, Mr. Fairport—I would not, by my soul; they should walk the plank, by the gods, as I have seen better men do when I sailed under the What-d'ye-callum colours. But being contraband goods, and on board my vessel, and I with my sailing orders in my hand, why, I am to forward them as directed—I say, John Roberts, keep her up a bit with the helm.—And so, Mr. Fairweather, what I do is—as the d—d villain Turnpenny says—all in the way of business."

He had been speaking with difficulty for the last five minutes, and now at length dropped on the deck, fairly silenced by the quantity of spirits which he had swallowed, but without having shown any glimpse of the gayety, or even of the extravagance, of intoxication.

The old sailor stepped forward and flung a sea-cloak over the slumberer's shoulders, and added, looking at Fairford, "Pity of him he should have this fault; for without it, he would have been as clever a fellow as ever trode a plank with ox leather."

"And what are we to do now?" said Fairford.

"Stand off and on, to be sure, till we see the signal, and then obey orders."

So saying, the old man turned to his duty, and left the passenger to amuse himself with his own meditations. Presently afterward a light column of smoke was seen rising from the little headland.

"I can tell you what we are to do now, master," said the sailor. "We'll stand out to sea, and then run in again with the evening tide, and make Skinburness; or, if there's not light, we can run into the Wampool river, and put you ashore about Kirkbride or Leaths, with the long-boat."

Fairford, unwell before, felt this destination condemned him to an agony of many hours, which his disordered stomach and aching head were ill able to endure. There was no remedy, however, but patience, and the recollection that he was suffering in the cause of friendship. As the sun rose high, he became worse; his sense of smell appeared to acquire a morbid degree of acuteness, for the mere purpose of inhaling and distinguishing all the various odours with which he was surrounded, from that of pitch, to all the complicated smells of the hold. His heart, too, throbbed under the heat, and he felt as if in full progress towards a high fever.

The seamen, who were civil and attentive, considering their calling, observed his distress, and one contrived to make an awning out of an old sail, while another compounded some lemonade, the only liquor which their passenger could be prevailed upon to touch. After drinking it off, he obtained, but could not be said to enjoy, a few hours of troubled slumber.

CHAPTER XV.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

Alan Fairford's spirit was more ready to encounter labour than his frame was adequate to support it. In spite of his exertions, when he awoke, after five or six hours' slumber, he found that he was so much disabled by dizziness in his head, and pains in his limbs, that he could not raise himself without assistance. He heard with some pleasure that they were [illegible] right for the Wampool river, and that he would be put on shore in a very short time. The vessel accordingly lay to, and presently showed a weft in her ensign, which was hastily answered by signals from on shore. Men and horses were seen to come down the broken path which leads to the shore; the latter all properly tackled for carrying their loading. Twenty fishing barks were pushed afloat at once, and crowded round the brig with much clamour, laughter, cursing, and jesting. Amidst all this apparent confusion there was the essential regularity. Nanty Ewart again walked his quarter-deck as if he had never tasted spirits in his life, issued the necessary orders with precision, and saw them executed with punctuality. In half an hour the loading of the brig was in a great measure disposed in the boats; in a quarter of an hour more, it was landed on the beach, and another interval of about the same duration was sufficient to distribute it on the various strings of packhorses which waited for that purpose, and which instantly dispersed, each on its own proper adventure. More mystery was observed, in loading the ship's boat with a quantity of small barrels, which seemed to contain ammunition. This was not done until the commercial customers had been dismissed; and it was not until this was performed that Ewart proposed to Alan, as he lay stunned with pain and noise, to accompany him ashore.

It was with difficulty that Fairford could get over the side of the vessel, and he could not seat himself on the stern of the boat without assistance from the captain and his people. Nanty Ewart, who saw nothing in this worse than an ordinary fit of sea-sickness, applied the usual topics of consolation. He assured his passenger that he would be quite well by and by, when he had been half an hour on terra firma, and that he hoped to drink a can and smoke a pipe with him at Father Crackenthorp's, for all that he felt a little out of the way for riding the wooden horse.

"Who is Father Crackenthorp?" said Fairford, though scarcely able to articulate the question.

"As honest a fellow as is of a thousand," answered Nanty. "Ah, how much good brandy he and I have made little of in our day! By my soul, Mr. Fairbird, he is the prince of skinkers, and the father of the free trade—not a stingy hypocritical devil like old Turnpenny Skinflint, that drinks drunk on other folk's cost, and thinks it sin when he has to pay for it—but a real hearty old cock;—the sharks have been at and about him this many a day, but Father Crackenthorp knows how to trim his sails—never a warrant but he hears of it before the ink's dry. He is *bonus socius* with headborough and constable. The King's Exchequer could not bribe a man to inform against him. If any such rascal were to cast up, why, he would miss his ears next morning, or be sent to seek them in the Solway. He is a statesman,* though he keeps a public; but, indeed, that is only for convenience, and to excuse his having cellarage and folk about him; his wife's a canny woman—and his daughter Doll too. Gad, you'll be in port there till you get round again; and I'll keep my word with you, and bring you to speech of the Laird. Gad, the only trouble I shall have is to get you out of the house; for Doll is a rare wench, and my dame a funny old one, and Father Crackenthorp the rarest companion! He'll drink you a bottle of rum or brandy without starting, but never wet his lips with that nasty Scottish stuff that the canting old scoundrel Turnpenny has brought into fashion. He is a gentleman, every inch of him, old Crackenthorp; in his own way, that is; and besides, he has a share in the Jumping Jenny, and many a moonlight outfit besides. He can give Doll a pretty penny, if he likes the tight fellow that would turn in with her for life."

In the midst of this prolonged panegyric on Father Crackenthorp, the boat touched the beach, the rowers backed their oars to keep her afloat, whilst the other fellows jumped into the surf, and, with the most rapid dexterity began to hand the barrels ashore.

"Up with them higher on the beach, my hearties," exclaimed Nanty Ewart—"High and dry—high and dry—this gear will not stand wetting. Now,

* A small landed proprietor.

out with our spare hand here—high and dry with him too. What's that?—the galloping of horse! Oh, I hear the jingle of the packsaddles—they are our own folk."

By this time all the boat's load was ashore, consisting of the little barrels; and the boat's crew, standing to their arms, ranged themselves in front, waiting the advance of the horses which came clattering along the beach. A man, overgrown with corpulence, who might be distinguished in the moonlight, panting with his own exertions, appeared at the head of the cavalcade, which consisted of horses linked together, and accommodated with packsaddles, and chains for securing the kegs, which made a dreadful clattering.

"How now, Father Crackenthorp?" said Ewart—"Why this hurry with your horses?—We mean to stay a night with you, and taste your old brandy, and my dame's home-brewed. This signal is up, man, and all is right."

"All is wrong, Captain Nanty," cried the man to whom he spoke; "and you are the lad that is like to find it so, unless you bundle off—there are new brooms bought at Carlisle yesterday to sweep the country of you and the like of you—so you were better be jogging inland."

"How many rogues are the officers?—If not more than ten, I will make fight."

"The devil you will!" answered Crackenthorp. "You were better not, for they have the bloody-backed dragoons from Carlisle with them."

"Nay, then, said Nanty, "we must make sail.—Come, Master Fairlord, you must mount and ride.—He does not hear me—he has fainted, I believe—What the devil shall I do?—Father Crackenthorp, I must leave this young fellow with you till the gale blows out—hark ye—goes between the Laird and the t'other old one; he can neither ride nor walk—I must send him up to you."

"Send him up to the gallows!" said Crackenthorp; "there is Quartermaster Thwacker, with twenty men, up yonder; an he had not some kindness for Doll, I had never got hither for a start—but you must get off, or they will be here to seek us, for his orders are woundy particular; and these kegs contain worse than whisky—a hanging matter, I take it."

"I wish they were at the bottom of Wampool river, with them they belong to," said Nanty Ewart. "But they are part of cargo, and what to do with the poor young fellow"——

"Why, many a better fellow has roughed it on the grass, with a cloak o'er him," said Crackenthorp. "If he hath a fever, nothing is so cooling as the night air."

"Yes, he would be cold enough in the morning, no doubt; but it's a kind heart, and shall not cool so soon, if I can help it," answered the captain of the Jumping Jenny.

"Well, Captain, an ye will risk your own neck for another man's, why not take him to the old girls at Fairladies?"

"What, the Miss Arthurets!—The Papist jades! But never mind; it will do—I have known them take in a whole sloop's crew that were stranded on the sands."

"You may run some risk, though, by turning up to Fairladies; for I tell you they are all up through the country."

"Never mind—I may chance to put some of them down again," said Nanty, cheerfully.—"Come, lads, bustle to your tackle. Are you all loaded?"

"Ay, ay, Captain; we will be ready in a jiffy," answered the gang.

"D—n your captains!—Have you a mind to have me hanged if I am taken?—All's hail-fellow, here."

"A sup at parting," said Father Crackenthorp, extending a flask to Nanty Ewart.

"Not the twentieth part of a drop," said Nanty. "No Dutch courage for me—my heart is always high enough when there's *a chance of fighting; besides, if I live drunk, I should like to die sober.*—Here, old Jephson—*you are the best-natured brute* amongst them—get the lad between us on a quiet horse, and we will keep him upright, I warrant."

As they raised Fairford from the ground, he groaned heavily, and asked faintly where they were taking him to.

"To a place where you will be as snug and quiet as a mouse in his hole," said Nanty, "if so be that we can get you there safely.—Good by, Father Crackenthorp—poison the quartermaster, if you can."

The loaded horses then sprang forward at a hard trot, following each other in a line, and every second horse being mounted by a stout fellow in a smock-frock, which served to conceal the arms with which most of these desperate men were provided. Ewart followed in the rear of the line, and, with the occasional assistance of old Jephson, kept his young charge erect in the saddle. He groaned heavily from time to time; and Ewart, more moved with compassion for his situation than might have been expected from his own habits, endeavoured to amuse him and comfort him, by some account of the place to which they were conveying him—his words of consolation being, however, frequently interrupted by the necessity of calling to his people, and many of them being lost amongst the rattling of the barrels, and clinking of the tackle and small chains by which they are secured on such occasions.

"And you see, brother, you will be in safe quarters at Fairladies—good old scrambling house—good old maids enough, if they were not Papists.—Hollo, you Jack Lowther; keep the line, can't ye, and shut your rattle-trap, you broth of a——! And so, being of a good family, and having enough, the old lasses have turned a kind of saints, and nuns, and so forth. The place they live in was some sort of a nun-shop long ago, as they have them still in Flanders; so folk call them the Vestals of Fairladies—that may be or may not be; and I care not whether it be or no.—Blinkinsop, hold your tongue, and be d—d!—And so, betwixt great alms and good dinners, they are well thought of by rich and poor, and their trucking with Papists is looked over. There are plenty of priests, and stout young scholars, and such like, about the house—it's a hive of them—More shame that government send dragoons out after a few honest fellows that bring the old women of England a drop of brandy, and let these ragamuffins smuggle in as much papistry and—Hark!—was that a whistle?—No, it's only a plover. You Jem Collier, keep a look-out a-head—we'll meet them at the High Whins, or Brotthole bottom, or nowhere. Go a furlong a-head, I say, and look sharp.—These Miss Arthurets feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and such like acts—which my poor father used to say were filthy rags, but he dressed himself out with as many of them as most folk.—D—n that stumbling horse! Father Crackenthorp should be d—d himself for putting an honest fellow's neck in such jeopardy."

Thus, and with much more to the same purpose, Nanty ran on, increasing, by his well-intended annoyance, the agony of Alan Fairford, who, tormented by racking pain along the back and loins, which made the rough trot of the horse torture to him, and his aching head still further rendered and split by the hoarse voice of the sailor, close to his ear. Perfectly passive, however, he did not even essay to give any answer; and indeed his own bodily distress was now so great and engrossing, that to think of his situation was impossible, even if he could have mended it by doing so.

Their course was inland; but in what direction, Alan had no means of ascertaining. They passed at first over heaths and sandy downs; they crossed more than one brook, or *beck*, as they are called in that country—some of them of considerable depth—and at length reached a cultivated country, divided, according to the English fashion of agriculture, into very small fields or closes, by high banks, overgrown with underwood, and surmounted by hedge-row trees, amongst which winded a number of impracticable and complicated lanes, where the boughs projecting from the embankments on each side, intercepted the light of the moon, and endangered the safety of the horsemen. But, through this labyrinth the experience of the guides

conducted them without a blunder, and without even the slackening of their pace. In many places, however, it was impossible for three men to ride abreast; and therefore the burden of supporting Alan Fairford fell alternately to old Jephson, and to Nanty; and it was with much difficulty that they could keep him upright in his saddle.

At length when his powers of sufferance were quite worn out, and he was about to implore them to leave him to his fate in the first cottage or shed—or under a haystack or a hedge—or any where, so he was left at ease, Collier, who rode a-head, passed back the word that they were at the avenue to Fairladies—"Was he to turn up?"

Committing the charge of Fairford to Jephson, Nanty dashed up to the head of the troop, and gave his orders.—"Who knows the house best?"

"Sam Skelton's a Catholic," said Lowther.

"A d—d bad religion," said Nanty, of whose Presbyterian education, a hatred of Popery seemed to be the only remnant. "But I am glad there is one amongst us, any how.—You, Sam, being a Papist, know Fairladies, and the old maidens, I dare say; so do you fall out of the line, and wait here with me; and do you Collier, carry on to Walinford bottom, then turn down the beck till you come to the old mill, and Goodman Grist the Miller or old Peel-the-Causeway, will tell you where to stow; but I will be up with you before that."

The string of loaded horses then struck forward at their former pace, while Nanty, with Sam Skelton, waited by the road-side till the rear came up, when Jephson and Fairford joined them, and, to the great relief of the latter, they began to proceed at an easier pace than formerly, suffering the gang to precede them, till the clatter and clang attending their progress began to die away in the distance. They had not proceeded a pistol-shot from the place where they parted, when a short turning brought them in front of an old mouldering gate-way, whose heavy pinnacles were decorated in the style of the seventeenth century, with clumsy architectural ornaments; several of which had fallen down from decay, and lay scattered about, no further care having been taken than just to remove them out of the direct approach to the avenue. The great stone pillars, glimmering white in the moonlight, had some fanciful resemblance to supernatural apparitions, and the air of neglect all around, gave an uncomfortable idea of the habitation to those who passed its avenue.

"There used to be no gate here," said Skelton, finding their way unexpectedly stopped.

"But there is a gate now, and a porter too," said a rough voice from within. "Who be you, and what do you want at this time of night?"

"We want to come to speech of the ladies—of the Miss Arthurets," said Nanty; "and to ask lodging for a sick man."

"There is no speech to be had of the Miss Arthurets at this time of night, and you may carry your sick man to the doctor," answered the fellow from within, gruffly; "for as sure as there is savour in salt, and scent in rosemary, you will get no entrance—put your pipes up and be jogging on."

"Why, Dick Gardener," said Skelton, "be thou then turned porter?"

"What, do you know who I am?" said the domestic sharply.

"I know you, by your by-word," answered the other; "What, have you forgot little Sam Skelton, and the brock in the barrel?"

"No, I have not forgotten you," answered the acquaintance of Sam Skelton; "but my orders are peremptory to let no one up the avenue this night, and therefore"——

"But we are armed, and will not be kept back," said Nanty. "Hark ye, fellow, were it not better for you to take a guinea and let us in, than to have us break the door first, and thy pate afterwards? for I won't see my comrade die at your door—be assured of that."

"Why, I dunna know," said the fellow; "but what mun we think those that rode by in such hurry?"

"We of our folk from Bownass, Stoniecultrum, and thereby," answered Skelton; "Jack Lowther, and old Jephson, and broad Will Lamplugh, and such like."

"Well," said Dick Gardener, "as sure as there is savour in salt, and scent in rosemary, I thought it had been the troopers from Carlisle and Wigton, and the sound brought my heart to my mouth."

"Had thought thou wouldst have known the clatter of a cask from the clash of a broadsword, as well as e'er a quaffer in Cumberland," answered Skelton.

"Come, brother, less of your jaw, and more of your legs, if you please," said Nanty; "every moment we stay is a moment lost. Go to the ladies, and tell them that Nanty Ewart, of the Jumping Jenny, has brought a young gentleman, charged with letters from Scotland, to a certain gentleman of consequence in Cumberland—that the soldiers are out, and the gentleman is very ill, and if he is not received at Fairladies, he must be left either to die at the gate, or to be taken, with all his papers about him, by the redcoats."

Away ran Dick Gardener with this message; and, in a few minutes, lights were seen to flit about, which convinced Fairford, who was now, in consequence of the halt, a little restored to self-possession, that they were traversing the front of a tolerably large mansion-house.

"What if thy friend, Dick Gardener, comes not back again?" said Jephson to Skelton.

"Why, then," said the person addressed, "I shall owe him just such a licking as thou, old Jephson, hadst from Dan Cooke, and will pay as duly and truly as he did."

The old man was about to make an angry reply, when his doubts were silenced by the return of Dick Gardener who announced that Miss Arthuret was coming herself as far as the gateway to speak with them.

Nanty Ewart cursed, in a low tone, the suspicion of old maids and the churlish scruples of Catholics that made so many obstacles to helping a fellow-creature, and wished Miss Arthuret a hearty rheumatism or toothache as the reward of her excursion; but the lady presently appeared, to cut short further grumbling. She was attended by a waiting-maid with a lantern, by means of which she examined the party on the outside, as closely as the imperfect light, and the spars of the newly-erected gate, would permit.

"I am sorry we have disturbed you so late, Madam Arthuret," said Nanty; "but the case is this"——

"Holy Virgin," said she "why do you speak so loud? Pray, are you not the Captain of the Saint Genevieve?"

"Why, ay, ma'am," answered Ewart, "they call the brig so at Dunkirk, sure enough; but along shore here, they call her the Jumping Jenny."

"You brought over the holy Father Buonaventure did you not?"

"Ay, ay, madam, I have brought over enough of them black cattle," answered Nanty.

"Fie! fie! friend," said Miss Arthuret; "it is a pity that the saints should commit these good men to the heretic's care."

"Why, no more they would, ma'am," answered Nanty, "could they find a Papish lubber that knew the coast as I do; then I am trusty as steel to owners and always look after cargo—live lumber, ordead flesh or spirits, all is one to me; and your Catholics have such d—d large hoods, with pardon, ma'am, that they can sometimes hide two faces under them. But here is a gentleman dying, with letters about him from the Laird of Summertrees to the Laird of the Lochs, as they call him, along Solway, and every minute he lies here is a nail in his coffin."

"Saint Mary! what shall we do?" said Miss Arthuret; "we must admit him, I think, at all risks. You, Richard Gardener, help one of these men to carry the gentleman up to the Place; and you, Selby, see him lodged at the end of the long gallery.—You are a heretic, Captain, but I think you are trusty, and I know you have been trusted—but if you are imposing on me"——

"Not I, madam—never attempt to impose on ladies of your experience—my practice that way has been

among the young ones.—Come, cheerly, Mr. Fairford—you will be taken good care of—try to walk."

Alan did so; and, refreshed by his halt, declared himself able to walk to the house with the sole assistance of the gardener.

"Why, that's hearty. Thank thee, Dick, for lending him thine arm,"—and Nanty slipped into his hand the guinea he had promised.—"Farewell then, Mr. Fairford, and farewell, Madam Arthuret, for I have been too long here."

So saying, he and his two companions threw themselves on horseback, and went off at a gallop. Yet, even above the clatter of their hoofs did the incorrigible Nanty halloo out the old ballad—

> "A lovely lass to a friar came,
> To confession a-morning early;—
> 'In what, my dear, are you to blame?
> Come tell me most sincerely?'
> 'Alas! my fault I dare not name—
> But my lad he loved me dearly.'"

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Miss Seraphina, as the unhallowed sounds reached her ears; "what profane heathens be these men, and what frights and pinches we be put to among them! The saints be good to us, what a night has this been!—the like never seen at Fairladies.—Help me to make fast the gate, Richard, and thou shalt come down again to wait on it, lest there come more unwelcome visiters—Not that you are unwelcome young gentleman, for it is sufficient that you need such assistance as we can give you, to make you welcome to Fairladies—only, another time would have done as well—but, hem! I dare say it is all for the best. The avenue is none of the smoothest, sir, look to your feet. Richard Gardener should have had it mown and levelled, but he was obliged to go on a pilgrimage to Saint Winifred's Well, in Wales."—(Here Dick gave a short dry cough, which, as if he had found it betrayed some internal feeling a little at variance with what the lady said, he converted into a muttered *Sancta Winifreda, ora pro nobis.* Miss Arthuret, mean time, proceeded)—"We never interfere with our servants' vows or penances, Master Fairford—I know a very worthy father of your name, perhaps a relation—I say, we never interfere with our servants' vows. Our Lady forbid they should not know some difference between our service and a heretic's.—Take care, sir, you will fall if you have not a care. Alas! by night and day there are many stumbling-blocks in our paths!

With more talk to the same purpose, all of which tended to show a charitable, and somewhat silly woman, with a strong inclination to her superstitious devotion, Miss Arthuret entertained her new guest, as, stumbling at every obstacle which the devotion of his guide, Richard, had left in the path, he at last, by ascending some stone steps, decorated on the side with griffins, or some such heraldic anomalies, attained a terrace extending in front of the Place of Fairladies; an old-fashioned gentleman's house of some consequence, with its range of notched gable-ends and narrow windows, relieved by here and there an old turret about the size of a pepper-box. The door was locked, during the brief absence of the mistress; a dim light glimmered through the sashed door of the hall, which opened beneath a huge stone porch, loaded with jessamine and other creepers. All the windows were dark as pitch.

Mrs. Arthuret tapped at the door. "Sister, sister Angelica?"

"Who is there?" was answered from within; "is it you, sister Seraphina?"

"Yes, yes, undo the door; do you not know my voice?"

"No doubt, sister," said Angelica, undoing bolt and bar; "but you know our charge, and the enemy is watchful to surprise us—*incedit sicut leo rorans*, saith the breviary.—Whom have you brought here? Oh, sister, what have you done?"

"It is a young man," said Seraphina, hastening to interrupt her sister's remonstrance, "a relation, I believe, of our worthy Father Fairford; left at the gate by the captain of *that blessed vessel* the Saint *Genevieve—almost dead—and charged with despatches to"*—

She lowered her voice as she mumbled over the last words.

"Nay, then, there is no help," said Angelica; "but it is unlucky."

During this dialogue between the vestals of Fairladies, Dick Gardener deposited his burden in a chair, where the young lady, after a moment of hesitation, expressing a becoming reluctance to touch the hand of a stranger, put her finger and thumb upon Fairford's wrist, and counted his pulse.

"There is fever here, sister," she said; "Richard must call Ambrose, and we must send some of the febrifuge."

Ambrose arrived presently, a plausible and respectable-looking old servant, bred in the family, and who had risen from rank to rank in the Arthuret service, till he was become half-physician, half-almoner, half-butler, and entire governor; that is, when the Father Confessor, who frequently eased him of the toils of government, chanced to be abroad. Under the direction, and with the assistance, of this venerable personage, the unlucky Alan Fairford was conveyed to a decent apartment at the end of a long gallery, and, to his inexpressible relief, consigned to a comfortable bed. He did not attempt to resist the prescription of Mr. Ambrose, who not only presented him with the proposed draught, but proceeded so far as to take a considerable quantity of blood from him, by which last operation he probably did his patient much service.

CHAPTER XVI.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD, CONTINUED.

On the next morning, when Fairford awoke, after no very refreshing slumbers, in which were mingled many wild dreams of his father, and of Darsie Latimer,—of the damsel in the green mantle, and the vestals of Fairladies,—of drinking small beer with Nanty Ewart, and being immersed in the Solway with the Jumping Jenny,—he found himself in no condition to dispute the order of Mr. Ambrose, that he should keep his bed, from which, indeed, he could not have raised himself without assistance. He became sensible that his anxiety, and his constant efforts for some days past, had been too much for his health, and that, whatever might be his impatience, he could not proceed in his undertaking until his strength was re-established.

In the mean while, no better quarters could have been found for an invalid. The attendants spoke under their breath, and moved only on tiptoe—nothing was done unless *par ordonnance du medecin*—Esculapius reigned paramount in the premises at Fairladies. Once a-day, the ladies came in great state to wait upon him, and inquire after his health, and it was then that Alan's natural civility, and the thankfulness which he expressed for their timely and charitable assistance, raised him considerably in their esteem. He was on the third day removed to a better apartment than that in which he had been at first accommodated. When he was permitted to drink a glass of wine, it was of the first quality; one of those curious old-fashioned cob-webbed bottles being produced on the occasion, which are only to be found in the crypts of old country seats, where they may have slurked undisturbed for more than half a century.

But however delightful a residence for an invalid, Fairladies, as its present inmate became soon aware, was not so agreeable to a convalescent. When he dragged himself to the window so soon as he could crawl from bed, behold it was closely grated, and commanded no view except of a little paved court. This was nothing remarkable, most old Border-houses having their windows so secured; but then Fairford observed, that whoever entered or left the room, always locked the door with great care and circumspection; and some proposals which he made to take a walk in the gallery, or even in the garden, were so coldly received, both by the ladies and their prime minister, Mr. Ambrose, that he saw himself

such an extension of his privileges as a guest would not be permitted.

Anxious to ascertain whether this excessive hospitality would permit him his proper privilege of free-agency, he announced to this important functionary, with grateful thanks for the care with which he had been attended, his purpose to leave Fairladies next morning, requesting only, as a continuance of the favours with which he had been loaded, the loan of a horse to the next town; and, assuring Mr. Ambrose that his gratitude would not be limited by such a trifle, he slipped three guineas into his hand, by way of seconding his proposal. The fingers of that worthy domestic closed as naturally upon the *honorarium*, as if a degree in the learned faculty had given him a right to clutch it; but his answer concerning Alan's proposed departure was at first evasive, and when he was pushed, it amounted to a peremptory assurance that he could not be permitted to depart to-morrow; it was as much as his life was worth, and his ladies would not authorize it.

"I know best what my own life is worth," said Alan; "and I do not value it in comparison to the business which requires my instant attention."

Receiving still no satisfactory answer from Mr. Ambrose, Fairford thought it best to state his resolution to the ladies themselves, in the most measured, respectful, and grateful terms; but still such as expressed a firm determination to depart on the morrow, or next day at farthest. After some attempts to induce him to stay, on the alleged score of health, which were so expressed that he was convinced they were only used to delay his departure, Fairford plainly told them that he was intrusted with despatches of consequence to the gentleman known by the name of Herries, Redgauntlet, and the Laird of the Lochs; and that it was matter of life and death to deliver them early.

"I dare say, Sister Angelica," said the elder Miss Arthuret, "that the gentleman is honest; and if he is really a relation of Father Fairford, we can run no risk."

"Jesu Maria!" exclaimed the younger. "Oh fie, Sister Seraphina! Fie, fie!—*Vade retro*—get thee behind me!"

"Well, well; but sister—Sister Angelica—let me speak with you in the gallery."

So out the ladies rustled in their silks and tissues, and it was a good half hour ere they rustled in again, with importance and awe on their countenances.

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Fairford, the cause of our desire to delay you is—there is a religious gentleman in this house at present"——

"A most excellent person indeed"—said the sister Angelica.

"An anointed of his Master!" echoed Seraphina,—"and we should be glad that, for conscience' sake, you would hold some discourse with him before your departure."

"Oho!" thought Fairford, "the murder is out—here is a design of conversion!—I must not affront the good old ladies, but I shall soon send off the priest, I think."—He then answered aloud, "that he should be happy to converse with any friend of theirs—that in religious matters he had the greatest respect for every modification of Christianity, though, he must say, his belief was made up to that in which he had been educated; nevertheless, if his seeing the religious person they recommended could in the least show his respect"——

"It is not quite that," said Sister Seraphina, "although I am sure the day is too short to hear him—Father Buonaventure, I mean—speak upon the concerns of our souls; but"——

"Come, come, sister Seraphina," said the younger, "it is needless to talk so much about it. His—his Eminence—I mean Father Buonaventure—will himself explain what he wants this gentleman to know."

"His Eminence," said Fairford, surprised—"Is this gentleman so high in the Catholic Church?—The title is given only to Cardinals, I think."

"*He is not* a Cardinal as yet," answered Seraphina, "*but I assure you, Mr. Fairford, he is as high in rank as he is eminently endowed with good gifts, and*"

"Come away," said Sister Angelica. "Holy Virgin, how you do talk!—What has Mr. Fairford to do with Father Buonaventure's rank?—Only, sir, you will remember that the Father has been always accustomed to be treated with the most profound deference;—indeed"——

"Come away, sister," said Sister Seraphina, in her turn; "who talks now, I pray you? Mr. Fairford will know how to comport himself."

"And we had best both leave the room," said the younger lady, "for here his Eminence comes."

She lowered her voice to a whisper as she pronounced the last words; and as Fairford was about to reply, by assuring her that any friend of hers should be treated by him with all the ceremony he could expect, she imposed silence on him, by holding up her finger.

A solemn and stately step was now heard in the gallery; it might have proclaimed the approach not merely of a bishop or cardinal, but of the Sovereign Pontiff himself. Nor could the sound have been more respectfully listened to by the two ladies, had it announced that the Head of the Church was approaching in person. They drew themselves, like sentinels on duty, one on each side of the door by which the long gallery communicated with Fairford's apartment, and stood there immoveable, and with countenances expressive of the deepest reverence.

The approach of Father Buonaventure was so slow, that Fairford had time to notice all this, and to marvel in his mind what wily and ambitious priest could have contrived to subject his worthy but simple-minded hostesses to such superstitious trammels. Father Buonaventure's entrance and appearance in some degree accounted for the whole.

He was a man of middle life, about forty or upwards; but either care, or fatigue, or indulgence, had brought on the appearance of premature old age, and given to his fine features a cast of seriousness or even sadness. A noble countenance, however, still remained; and though his complexion was altered, and wrinkles stamped upon his brow in many a melancholy fold, still the lofty forehead, the full and well-opened eye, and the well-formed nose, showed how handsome in better days he must have been. He was tall, but lost the advantage of his height by stooping; and the cane which he wore always in his hand, and occasionally used, as well as his slow though majestic gait, seemed to intimate that his form and limbs felt already some touch of infirmity. The colour of his hair could not be discovered, as, according to the fashion, he wore a periwig. He was handsomely, though gravely dressed in a secular habit, and had a cockade in his hat; circumstances which did not surprise Fairford, who knew that a military disguise was very often assumed by the seminary priests, whose visits to England, or residence there subjected them to legal penalties.

As this stately person entered the apartment, the two ladies facing inward, like soldiers on their post when about to salute a superior officer, dropped on either hand of the Father a courtesy so profound, that the hoop petticoats which performed the feat seemed to sink down to the very floor, nay, through it, as if a trapdoor had opened for the descent of the dames who performed this act of reverence.

The Father seemed accustomed to such homage, profound as it was; he turned his person a little way first towards one sister, and then towards the other, while, with a gracious inclination of his person, which certainly did not amount to a bow, he acknowledged their courtesy. But he passed forward without addressing them, and seemed by doing so, to intimate that their presence in the apartment was unnecessary.

They accordingly glided out of the room, retreating backwards, with hands clasped and eyes cast upwards, as if imploring blessings on the religious man whom they venerated so highly. The door of the apartment was shut after them, but not before Fairford had perceived that there were one or two men in the gallery, and that, contrary to what he had before observed, the door, though shut, was not locked on the outside.

"Can the good souls apprehend danger from us

ir idolatry?" thought Fairford. But
o make farther observations, for the
ady reached the middle of the apart-

o receive him respectfully, but as he
n the visiter, he thought that the
is looks. His reasons for remaining
ogent enough to account for this,
istened to relieve him, by looking
is turn; but when again he raised
l the broad light eye of the stranger
that he was almost put out of coun-
teadiness of his gaze. During this
ed standing.
at, sir," said the Father; "you have

the tone of one who desires an in-
l in his presence, and his voice was
is.
what surprised to find himself over-
of superiority, which could be only
d towards one over whom religion
influence, sat down at his bidding,
springs, and was at a loss how to
g of equality on which he felt that
ind. The stranger kept the advan-
id obtained.
ir, I am informed, is Fairford?" said

by a bow.
Scottish bar," continued his visiter.
iove, in the West, a family of birth
Fairford of Fairford."
this a strange observation from a
tic, as his name intimated Father
be; but only answered, he believed
family.
t kindred with them, Mr. Fairford?"
quirer.
ie honour to lay such a claim," said
father's industry has raised his family
bscure situation—I have no hereditinction of any kind.—May I ask the
quiries?"
m it presently," said Father Buona-
d given a dry and dissatisfied *hem* at
s acknowledging a plebeian descent.
ed him to be silent, and proceeded

t of condition, you are, doubtless, by
education, a man of honour and a

ir," said Alan, colouring with dis-
ve not been accustomed to have it

ung man," said the unperturbed que-
n serious business, and no idle eti-
rent its being discussed seriously.—
y aware, that you speak to a person
e severe and unjust laws of the pre-
?"
of the statute 1700, chapter 3," said
g from the realm Priests and traffick-
I punishing by death, on summary
such person who being so banished
ne English law, I believe, is equally
ave no means of knowing you, sir,
e persons; and I think your prudence
to you to keep your own counsel."
it, sir; and I have no apprehensions
consequences from your having seen
," said the Priest.
," said Alan. "I consider myself as
life to the Mistresses of Fairladies;
a vile requital on my part to pry into
n what I may have seen or heard
itable roof. If I were to meet the
If in such a situation, he should, even
little stretch to my loyalty, be free
from my indiscretion."
er!" said the Priest, with some angry
immediately softened his *tone and*
bt, however, that person is a preten-
eople think his pretensions are not
ill founded. But before running into politics, give me leave to say, that I am surprised to find a gentleman of your opinions in habits of intimacy with Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees and Mr. Redgauntlet, and the medium of conducting the intercourse betwixt them."

"Pardon me, sir," replied Alan Fairford; "I do not aspire to the honour of being reputed their confidant or go-between. My concern with those gentlemen is limited to one matter of business, dearly interesting to me, because it concerns the safety—perhaps the life—of my dearest friend."

"Would you have any objections to intrust me with the cause of your journey?" said Father Buonaventure. "My advice may be of service to you, and my influence with one or both these gentlemen is considerable."

Fairford hesitated a moment, and hastily revolving all circumstances, concluded that he might perhaps receive some advantage from propitiating this personage; while, on the other hand, he endangered nothing by communicating to him the occasion of his journey. He, therefore, after stating shortly, that he hoped Mr. Buonaventure would render him the same confidence which he required on his part, gave a short account of Darsie Latimer—of the mystery which hung over his family—and of the disaster which had befallen him. Finally, of his own resolution to seek for his friend, and to deliver him, at the peril of his own life.

The Catholic Priest, whose manner it seemed to be to avoid all conversation which did not arise from his own express motion, made no remarks upon what he had heard, but only asked one or two abrupt questions, where Alan's narrative appeared less clear to him; then rising from his seat, he took two turns through the apartment, muttering between his teeth, with emphasis, the word "Madman!" But apparently he was in the habit of keeping all violent emotions under restraint; for he presently addressed Fairford with the most perfect indifference.

"If," said he, "you thought you could do so without breach of confidence, I wish you would have the goodness to show me the letter of Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees. I desire to look particularly at the address."

Seeing no cause to decline this extension of his confidence, Alan, without hesitation, put the letter into his hand. Having turned it round as old Trumbull and Nanty Ewart had formerly done, and, like them, having examined the address with much minuteness, he asked whether he had observed these words, pointing to a pencil-writing upon the under side of the letter. Fairford answered in the negative, and, looking at the letter, read with surprise, "*Cave ne literas Bellerophontis adferres;*" a caution which coincided so exactly with the Provost's admonition, that he would do well to inspect the letter of which he was bearer, that he was about to spring up and attempt an escape, he knew not wherefore or from whom.

"Sit still, young man," said the Father, with the same tone of authority which reigned in his whole manner, although mingled with stately courtesy. "You are in no danger—my character shall be a pledge for your safety.—By whom do you suppose these words have been written?"

Fairford could have answered, "by Nanty Ewart," for he remembered seeing that person scribble something with a pencil, although he was not well enough to observe with accuracy where, or upon what. But not knowing what suspicions, or what worse consequences, the seaman's interest in his affairs might draw upon him, he judged it best to answer that he knew not the hand.

Father Buonaventure was again silent for a moment or two, which he employed in surveying the letter with the strictest attention; then stepped to the window, as if to examine the address and writing of the envelope with the assistance of a stronger light, and Alan Fairford beheld him, with no less amazement than high displeasure, coolly and deliberately break the seal, open the letter, and peruse the contents.

"Stop, sir, hold!" he exclaimed, so soon as his astonishment permitted him to express his resentment in words: "by what right do you dare"——

"Peace, young gentleman," said the Father, repelling him with a wave of his hand; "be assured I do not act without warrant—nothing can pass betwixt Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Redgauntlet that I am not fully entitled to know."

"It may be so," said Alan, extremely angry; "but though you may be these gentlemen's father confessor, you are not mine; and in breaking the seal of a letter intrusted to my care, you have done me"——

"No injury, I assure you," answered the unperturbed priest; "on the contrary, it may be a service."

"I desire no advantage at such a rate, or to be obtained in such a manner," answered Fairford; "restore me the letter instantly, or"——

"As you regard your own safety," said the priest, "forbear all injurious expressions, and all menacing gestures. I am not one who can be threatened or insulted with impunity; and there are enough within hearing to chastise any injury or affront offered to me, in case I may think it unbecoming to protect or avenge myself with my own hand."

In saying this, the Father assumed an air of such fearlessness and calm authority, that the young lawyer, surprised and overawed, forbore, as he had intended, to snatch the letter from his hand, and confined himself to bitter complaints of the impropriety of his conduct, and of the light in which he himself must be placed to Redgauntlet, should he present him a letter with a broken seal.

"That," said Father Buonaventure, "shall be fully cared for. I will myself write to Redgauntlet, and enclose Maxwell's letter, provided always you continue to desire to deliver it, after perusing the contents."

He then restored the letter to Fairford, and, observing that he hesitated to peruse it, said emphatically, "Read it, for it concerns you."

This recommendation, joined to what Provost Crosbie had formerly recommended, and to the warning, which he doubted not that Nanty intended to convey by his classical allusion, decided Fairford's resolution. "If these correspondents," he thought, "are conspiring against my person, I have a right to counterplot them; self-preservation, as well as my friend's safety, require that I should not be too scrupulous."

So thinking, he read the letter, which was in the following words:—

"DEAR RUGGED AND DANGEROUS,

"WILL you never cease meriting your old nickname? You have springed your dottrel, I find, and what is the consequence?—why, that there will be hue and cry after you presently. The bearer is a pert young lawyer, who has brought a formal complaint against you, which, luckily, he has preferred in a friendly court. Yet, favourable as the judge was disposed to be, it was with the utmost difficulty that cousin Jenny and I could keep him to his tackle. He begins to be timid, suspicious, and intractable, and I fear Jenny will soon bend her brows on him in vain. I know not what to advise—the lad who carries this is a good lad—active for his friend—and I have pledged my honour he shall have no personal ill-usage—Pledged my honour, remark these words, and remember I can be rugged and dangerous as well as my neighbours. But I have not insured him against a short captivity, and as he is a stirring active fellow, I see no remedy but keeping him out of the way till this business of the good Father B—— is safely blown over, which God send it were!—Always thine, even should I be once more CRAIG-IN-PERIL."

"What think you, young man, of the danger you have been about to encounter so willingly?"

"As strangely," replied Alan Fairford, "as of the extraordinary means which you have been at present pleased to use for the discovery of Mr. Maxwell's purpose."

"Trouble not yourself to account for my conduct," said the Father; "I have a warrant for what I do, and fear no responsibility. But tell me what is your *present purpose*."

"*I should not perhaps name it to you, whose own safety may be implicated.*"

"*I understand you,*" answered the Father; "you would appeal to the existing government?—That can at no rate be permitted—we will rather detain you as Fairladies by compulsion."

"You will probably," said Fairford, "first weigh the risk of such a proceeding in a free country."

"I have incurred more formidable hazard," said the priest, smiling; "yet I am willing to find a milder expedient. Come; let us bring the matter to a compromise."—And he assumed a conciliating graciousness of manner, which struck Fairford as being rather too condescending for the occasion; "I presume you will be satisfied to remain here in seclusion for a day or two longer, provided I pass my solemn word to you, that you shall meet with the person whom you seek after—meet with him in perfect safety, and, I trust, in good health, and be afterwards both at liberty to return to Scotland, or dispose of yourselves as each of you may be minded?"

"I respect the *verbum sacerdotis* as much as can reasonably be expected from a Protestant," answered Fairford; "but, methinks, you can scarce expect me to repose so much confidence in the word of an unknown person, as is implied in the guarantee which you offer me."

"I am not accustomed, sir," said the Father, in a very haughty tone, "to have my word disputed. But," he added, while the angry hue passed from his cheek, after a moment's reflection, "you know me not, and ought to be excused. I will repose more confidence in your honour than you seem willing to rest upon mine; and since we are so situated that one must rely upon the other's faith, I will cause you to be set presently at liberty, and furnished with the means of delivering your letter as addressed, provided that now, knowing the contents, you think it safe for yourself to execute the commission."

Alan Fairford paused. "I cannot see," he at length replied, "how I can proceed with respect to the accomplishment of my sole purpose, which is the liberation of my friend, without appealing to the law, and obtaining the assistance of a magistrate. If I present this singular letter of Mr. Maxwell, with the contents of which I have become so unexpectedly acquainted, I shall only share his captivity."

"And if you apply to a magistrate, young man, you will bring ruin on these hospitable ladies, to whom in all human probability, you owe your life. You cannot obtain a warrant for your purpose, without giving a clear detail of all the late scenes through which you have passed. A magistrate would oblige you to give a complete account of yourself, before arming you with his authority against a third party, and in giving such an account, the safety of these ladies will necessarily be compromised. A hundred spies have had, and still have, their eyes upon this mansion; but God will protect his own."—He crossed himself devoutly, and then proceeded.—"You can take an hour to think of your best plan, and I will pledge myself to forward it thus far, provided it be not asking you to rely more on my word than your prudence can warrant. You shall go to Redgauntlet,—I name him plainly, to show my confidence in you,—and you shall deliver him this letter of Mr. Maxwell's, with one from me, in which I will enjoin him to set your friend at liberty, or at least to make no attempts upon your own person, either by detention or otherwise. If you can trust me thus far," he said, with a proud emphasis on the words, "I will on my side see you depart from this place with the most perfect confidence that you will not return armed with powers to drag its inmates to destruction. You are young and inexperienced—bred to a profession also which sharpens suspicion, and gives false views of human nature. I have seen much of the world, and have known better than most men, how far mutual confidence is requisite in managing affairs of consequence."

He spoke with an air of superiority, even of authority, by which Fairford, notwithstanding his own internal struggles, was silenced and overawed so much, that it was not till the Father had turned to leave the apartment that he found words to ask him what the consequences would be, should he decline to depart on the terms proposed.

must then, for the safety of all parties, re-
some days an inhabitant of Fairladies, where
the means of detaining you, which self-pre-
will in that case compel us to make use of.
tivity will be short; for matters cannot long
s they are—The cloud must soon rise, or it
k upon us for ever.—*Benedicite!*"
hese words he left the apartment.
d, upon his departure, felt himself much at a
t course to pursue. His line of education, as
his father's tenets in matters of church and
d taught him a holy horror for Papists, and a
hief in whatever had been said of the punic
suits, and of the expedients of mental re-
, by which the Catholic priests in general
posed to evade keeping faith with heretics.
e was something of majesty, depressed in-
l overclouded, but still grand and imposing,
anner and words of Father Buonaventure,
was difficult to reconcile with those precon-
inions which imputed subtlety and fraud to
ind order. Above all, Alan was aware, that
epted not his freedom upon the terms offered
vas likely to be detained by force; so that, in
nt of view, he was a gainer by adopting them.
m, indeed, came across him, when he consi-
a lawyer, that this Father was, probably, in
f law, a traitor; and that there was an ugly
the Statute Book, called Misprision of Trea-
the other hand, whatever he might think or
he could not take upon him to say that the
a priest, whom he had never seen in the
his order, or in the act of celebrating mass;
e felt himself at liberty to doubt of that, re-
which he possessed no legal proof. He
arrived at the conclusion, that he would do
ccept his liberty, and proceed to Redgauntlet
guarantee of Father Buonaventure, which
e doubted would be sufficient to save him
sonal inconvenience. Should he once ob-
ch of that gentleman, he felt the same con-
is formerly, that he might be able to con-
n of the rashness of his conduct, should he
ant to liberate Darsie Latimer. At all events,
l learn where his friend was, and how cir-
ed.

thus made up his mind, Alan waited anx-
the expiration of the hour which had been
him for deliberation. He was not kept on
r-hooks of impatience an instant longer than
nted moment arrived, for, even as the clock
mbrose appeared at the door of the gallery,
e a sign that Alan should follow him. He
nd after passing through some of the intri-
nues common in old houses, was ushered
nall apartment, commodiously fitted up, in
found Father Buonaventure reclining on a
the attitude of a man exhausted by fatigue
osition. On a small table beside him, a sil-
ssed salver sustained a Catholic book of
small flask of medicine, a cordial, and a lit-
p of old china. Ambrose did not enter the
only bowed profoundly, and closed the door
least possible noise, so soon as Fairford had

own, young man," said the Father, with the
of condescension which had before sur-
d rather offended Fairford. "You have been
know too well by my own case, that indis-
requires indulgence.—Have you," he conti-
soon as he saw him seated, "resolved to
r to depart?"
epart," said Alan, "under the agreement that
guarantee my safety with the extraordinary
ho has conducted himself in such a lawless
owards my friend, Darsie Latimer."
ot judge hastily, young man," replied the
"Redgauntlet has the claims of a guardian
ward, in respect to the young gentleman,
ht to dictate his place of residence, although
ave been injudicious in selecting the means
he thinks to enforce his authority."
situation as an *attainted person abrogates*
ts," said Fairford, hastily.

"Surely," replied the priest, smiling at the young lawyer's readiness, "in the eye of those who acknowledge the justice of the attainder—but that do not I. However, sir, here is the guarantee—look at its contents, and do not again carry the letters of Uriah."

Fairford read these words:—

"GOOD FRIEND,

"We send you hither a young man desirous to know the situation of your ward, since he came under your paternal authority, and hopeful of dealing with you for having your relative put at large. This we recommend to your prudence, highly disapproving, at the same time, of any force or coercion, when such can be avoided, and wishing, therefore, that the bearer's negotiation may be successful. At all rates, however, the bearer hath our pledged word for his safety and freedom, which, therefore, you are to see strictly observed, as you value our honour and your own. We farther wish to converse with you, with as small loss of time as may be, having matters of the utmost confidence to impart. For this purpose we desire you to repair hither with all haste, and thereupon we bid you heartily farewell. P. B."

"You will understand, sir," said the Father, when he saw that Alan had perused his letter, "that, by accepting charge of this missive, you bind yourself to try the effect of it before having recourse to any legal means, as you term them, for your friend's release."

"There are a few ciphers added to this letter," said Fairford, when he had perused the paper attentively, —"may I inquire what their import is?"

"They respect my own affairs," answered the Father, briefly; "and have no concern whatever with yours."

"It seems to me, however," replied Alan, "natural to suppose"——

"Nothing must be supposed incompatible with my honour," replied the priest, interrupting him; "when such as I am confer favours, we expect that they shall be accepted with gratitude, or declined with thankful respect—not questioned or discussed."

"I will accept your letter, then," said Fairford, after a minute's consideration, "and the thanks you expect shall be most liberally paid, if the result answer what you teach me to expect."

"God only commands the issue," said Father Buonaventure. "Man uses means.—You understand, that, by accepting this commission, you engage yourself in honour to try the effect of my letter upon Mr. Redgauntlet, before you have recourse to informations or legal warrants?"

"I hold myself bound, as a man of good faith and honour, to do so," said Fairford.

"Well, I trust you," said the Father. "I will now tell you, that an express, despatched by me last night, has, I hope, brought Redgauntlet to a spot many miles nearer this place, where he will not find it safe to attempt any violence on your friend, should he be rash enough to follow the advice of Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees rather than my commands. We now understand each other."

He extended his hand towards Alan, who was about to pledge his faith in the usual form by grasping it with his own, when the Father drew back hastily. Ere Allan had time to comment upon this repulse, a small side-door, covered with tapestry, was opened; the hangings were drawn aside, and a lady, as if by sudden apparition, glided into the apartment. It was neither of the Miss Arthurets, but a woman in the prime of life, and in the full-blown expansion of female beauty, tall, fair, and commanding in her aspect. Her locks, of paly gold, were taught to fall over a brow, which, with the stately glance of the large, open, blue eyes, might have become Juno herself; her neck and bosom were admirably formed, and of a dazzling whiteness. She was rather inclined to *embonpoint*, but not more than became her age, of apparently thirty years. Her step was that of a queen, but it was of Queen Vashti, not Queen Esther—the bold and commanding, not the retiring beauty.

Father Buonaventure raised himself on the couch—

angrily, as if displeased by this intrusion. "How now, madam," he said, with some sternness; "why have we the honour of your company?"

"Because it is my pleasure," answered the lady, composedly.

"Your pleasure, madam!" he repeated in the same angry tone.

"My pleasure, sir," she continued, "which always keeps exact pace with my duty. I had heard you were unwell—let me hope it is only business which produces this seclusion."

"I am well," he replied; "perfectly well, and I thank you for your care—but we are not alone, and this young man"——

"That young man?" she said, bending her large and serious eye on Alan Fairford, as if she had been for the first time aware of his presence—"may I ask who he is?"

"Another time, madam; you shall learn his history after he is gone. His presence renders it impossible for me to explain farther."

"After he is gone may be too late," said the lady; "and what is his presence to me, when your safety is at stake? He is the heretic lawyer whom those silly fools, the Arthurets, admitted into this house, at a time when they should have let their own father knock at the door in vain, though the night had been a wild one. You will not surely dismiss him?"

"Your own impatience can alone make that step perilous," said the Father; "I have resolved to take it—do not let your indiscreet zeal, however excellent its motive, add any unnecessary risk to the transaction."

"Even so?" said the lady, in a tone of reproach, yet mingled with respect and apprehension. "And thus you will still go forward, like a stag upon the hunter's snares, with undoubting confidence, after all that has happened?"

"Peace, madam," said Father Buonaventure, rising up; "be silent, or quit the apartment; my designs do not admit of female criticism."

To this peremptory command the lady seemed about to make a sharp reply; but she checked herself, and pressing her lips strongly together, as if to secure the words from bursting from them which were already formed upon her tongue, she made a deep reverence, partly as it seemed in reproach, partly in respect, and left the room as suddenly as she had entered it.

The Father looked disturbed at this incident, which he seemed sensible could not but fill Fairford's imagination with an additional throng of bewildering suspicions; he bit his lip, and muttered something to himself as he walked through the apartment; then suddenly turned to his visiter with a smile of much sweetness, and a countenance in which every rougher expression was exchanged for those of courtesy and kindness.

"The visit we have been just honoured with, my young friend, has given you," he said, "more secrets to keep than I would have wished you burdened with. The lady is a person of condition—of rank and fortune—but nevertheless, is so circumstanced, that the mere fact of her being known to be in this country, would occasion many evils. I should wish you to observe secrecy on this subject, even to Redgauntlet or Maxwell, however much I trust them in all that concerns my own affairs."

"I can have no occasion," replied Fairford, "for holding any discussion with these gentlemen, or with any others, on the circumstance which I have just witnessed—it could only have become the subject of my conversation by mere accident, and I will now take care to avoid the subject entirely."

"You will do well, sir, and I thank you," said the Father, throwing much dignity into the expression of obligation which he meant to convey. "The time may perhaps come when you will learn what it is to have obliged one of *my* condition. As to the lady, she has the highest merit, and nothing can be said of her justly which would not redound to her praise. *Nevertheless*—in short, sir, we wander at present as *in a morning mist—the sun will, I trust,* soon rise and *disclose it, when all that now seems* mysterious will be fully revealed—or it will sink into rain," he added, in a solemn tone, "and then explanation will be of little consequence.—Adieu, sir; I wish you well."

He made a graceful obeisance, and vanished through the same side-door by which the lady had entered; and Alan thought he heard their voices high in dispute in the adjoining apartment.

Presently afterwards, Ambrose entered, and told him that a horse and guide waited him beneath the terrace.

"The good Father Buonaventure," added the butler, "has been graciously pleased to consider your situation, and desired me to inquire whether you have any occasion for a supply of money?"

"Make my respects to his reverence," answered Fairford, "and assure him I am provided in that particular. I beg you also to make my acknowledgments to the Miss Arthurets, and assure them that their kind hospitality, to which I probably owe my life, shall be remembered with gratitude as long as that life lasts. You yourself, Mr. Ambrose, must accept of my kindest thanks for your skill and attention."

Mid these acknowledgments they left the house, descended the terrace, and reached the spot where the gardener, Fairford's old acquaintance, waited for him, mounted upon one horse, and leading another.

Bidding adieu to Ambrose, our young lawyer mounted, and rode down the avenue, often looking back to the melancholy and neglected dwelling in which he had witnessed such strange scenes, and musing upon the character of its mysterious inmates, especially the noble and almost regal seeming priest, and the beautiful but capricious dame who, if she was really Father Buonaventure's penitent, seemed less docile to the authority of the church, than, as Alan conceived, the Catholic discipline permitted. He could not indeed help being sensible that the whole deportment of these persons differed much from his preconceived notions of a priest and devotee. Father Buonaventure, in particular, had more natural dignity and less art and affectation in his manner, than accorded with the idea which Calvinists were taught to entertain of that wily and formidable person, a Jesuitical missionary.

While reflecting on these things, he looked back so frequently at the house, that Dick Gardener, a forward, talkative fellow, who began to tire of silence, at length said to him, "I think you will know Fairladies when you see it again, sir?"

"I dare say I shall, Richard," answered Fairford, good-humouredly. "I wish I knew as well where I am to go next. But you can tell me, perhaps?"

"Your worship should know better than I," said Dick Gardener; "nevertheless, I have a notion you are going where all you Scotsmen should be sent, whether you will or no."

"Not to the devil, I hope, good Dick?" said Fairford.

"Why, no. That is a road which you may travel as heretics; but as Scotsmen, I would only send you three-fourths of the way—and that is back to Scotland again—always craving your honour's pardon."

"Does our journey lie that way?" said Fairford.

"As far as the water side," said Richard. "I am to carry you to old Father Crackenthorp's, and then you are within a spit and a stride of Scotland, as the saying is. But mayhap you may think twice of going thither, for all that; for Old England is fat feeding ground for north-country cattle."

CHAPTER XVII.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER.

Our history must now, as the old romancers won to say, "leave to tell" of the quest of Alan Fairford and instruct our readers of the adventures which befell Darsie Latimer, left as he was in the precarious custody of his self-named tutor, the Laird of the Lochs of Solway, to whose arbitrary pleasure he found it necessary for the present to conform himself.

In consequence of this prudent resolution, and although he did not assume such a disguise without some

sensations of shame and degradation, Darsie permitted Cristal Nixon to place over his face, and secure by a string, one of those silk masks which ladies frequently wore to preserve their complexions, when exposed to the air during long journeys on horseback. He remonstrated somewhat more vehemently against the long riding-skirt, which converted his person from the waist into the female guise, but was obliged to concede this point also.

The metamorphosis was then complete; for the fair reader must be informed, that in those rude times, the ladies, when they honoured the masculine dress by assuming any part of it, wore just such hats, coats, and waistcoats, as the male animals themselves made use of, and had no notion of the elegant compromise betwixt male and female attire, which has now acquired *par excellence*, the name of a *habit*. Trolloping things our mothers must have looked, with long square-cut coats, lacking collars, and with waistcoats plentifully supplied with a length of pocket, which hung far downwards from the middle. But then they had some advantage from the splendid colours, lace, and gay embroidery, which masculine attire then exhibited; and, as happens in many similar instances, the finery of the materials made amends for the want of symmetry and grace of form in the garments themselves. But this is a digression.

In the court of the old mansion, half manor-place, half farm-house, or rather a decayed manor-house, converted into an abode for a Cumberland tenant, stood several saddled horses. Four or five of them were mounted by servants or inferior retainers, all of whom were well-armed with sword, pistol, and carabine. But two had riding furniture for the use of females—the one being accoutred with a side-saddle, the other with a pillion attached to the saddle.

Darsie's heart beat quicker within him; he easily comprehended that one of these was intended for his own use; and his hopes suggested that the other was designed for that of the fair Green-Mantle, whom, according to his established practice, he had adopted for the queen of his affections, although his opportunities of holding communication with her had not exceeded the length of a silent supper on one occasion, and the going down a country-dance on another. This, however, was no unwonted mood of passion with Darsie Latimer, upon whom Cupid was used to triumph only in the degree of a Mahratta conqueror, who overruns a province with the rapidity of lightning, but finds it impossible to retain it beyond a very brief space. Yet this new love was rather more serious than the scarce skinned-up wounds which his friend Fairford used to ridicule. The damsel had shown a sincere interest in his behalf; and the air of mystery with which that interest was veiled, gave her, to his lively imagination, the character of a benevolent and protecting spirit, as much as that of a beautiful female.

At former times, the romance attending his short-lived attachments had been of his own creating, and had disappeared soon as ever he approached more closely to the object with which he had invested it. On the present occasion, it really flowed from external circumstances, which might have interested less susceptible feeling, and an imagination less lively than that of Darsie Latimer, young, inexperienced, and enthusiastic as he was.

He watched, therefore, anxiously to whose service the palfrey bearing the lady's saddle was destined. But ere any female appeared to occupy it, he was himself summoned to take his seat on the pillion behind Cristal Nixon, amid the grins of his old acquaintance Jan, who helped him to horse, and the unrestrained laughter of Cicely, who displayed on the occasion a case of teeth which might have rivalled ivory.

Latimer was at an age when being an object of general ridicule even to clowns and milkmaids, was not a matter of indifference, and he longed heartily to have laid his horsewhip across Jan's shoulders. That, however, was a solacement of his feelings which was not at the moment to be *thought of*; and Cristal Nixon *presently put an end to his unpleasant situation, by ordering the riders to go on.* He himself kept the centre of the troop, two men riding before and two behind him, always, as it seemed to Darsie, having their eye upon him, to prevent any attempt to escape. He could see from time to time, when the straight line of the road, or the advantage of an ascent permitted him, that another troop of three or four riders followed them at about a quarter of a mile's distance, amongst whom he could discover the tall form of Redgauntlet, and the powerful action of his gallant black horse. He had little doubt that Green-Mantle made one of the party, though he was unable to distinguish her from the others.

In this manner they travelled from six in the morning until nearly ten of the clock, without Darsie's exchanging a word with any one; for he loathed the very idea of entering into conversation with Cristal Nixon, against whom he seemed to feel an instinctive aversion; nor was that domestic's saturnine and sullen disposition such as to have encouraged advances, had he thought of making them.

At length the party halted for the purpose of refreshment; but as they had hitherto avoided all villages and inhabited places upon their route, so they now stopped at one of those large ruinous Dutch barns, which are sometimes found in the fields, at a distance from the farm-houses to which they belong. Yet in this desolate place some preparations had been made for their reception. There were in the end of the barn, racks filled with provender for the horses, and plenty of provisions for the party were drawn from the trusses of straw, under which the baskets that contained them had been deposited. The choicest of these were selected and arranged apart by Cristal Nixon, while the men of the party threw themselves upon the rest, which he abandoned to their discretion. In a few minutes afterwards the rear-ward party arrived and dismounted, and Redgauntlet himself entered the barn with the green-mantled maiden by his side. He presented her to Darsie with these words:—

"It is time you two should know each other better. I promised you my confidence, Darsie, and the time is come for reposing it. But first we will have our breakfast; and then, when once more in the saddle, I will tell you that which it is necessary that you should know. Salute Lilias, Darsie."

The command was sudden, and surprised Latimer, whose confusion was increased by the perfect ease and frankness with which Lilias offered at once her cheek and her hand, and pressing his, as she rather took it than gave her own, said very frankly, "Dearest Darsie, how rejoiced I am that our uncle has at last permitted us to become acquainted!"

Darsie's head turned round; and it was perhaps well that Redgauntlet called on him to sit down, as even that movement served to hide his confusion. There is an old song which says—

——"when ladies are willing,
A man can but look like a fool;"

And on the same principle Darsie Latimer's looks at this unexpected frankness of reception, would have formed an admirable vignette for illustrating the passage. "Dearest Darsie," and such a ready, nay, eager salute of lip and hand!—It was all very gracious, no doubt—and ought to have been received with much gratitude; but, constituted as our friend's temper was, nothing could be more inconsistent with his tone of feeling. If a hermit had proposed to him to club for a pot of beer, the illusion of his reverend sanctity could not have been dispelled more effectually than the divine qualities of Green-Mantle faded upon the ill-imagined frank-heartedness of poor Lilias. Vexed with her forwardness, and affronted at having once more cheated himself, Darsie could hardly help muttering two lines of the song we have already quoted:

"The fruit that must fall without shaking
Is rather too mellow for me."

And yet it was pity of her too—she was a very pretty young woman—his fancy had scarce overrated her in that respect—and the slight derangement of the beautiful brown locks which escaped in natural ringlets from under her riding-hat, with the bloom which exercise had brought into her cheek, made her ev-

more than usually fascinating. Redgauntlet modified the sternness of his look when it was turned towards her, and, in addressing her, used a softer tone than his usual deep bass. Even the grim features of Cristal Nixon relaxed when he attended on her, and it was then, if ever, that his misanthropical visage expressed some sympathy with the rest of humanity.

"How can she," thought Latimer, "look so like an angel, yet be so mere a mortal after all?—How could so much seeming modesty have so much forwardness of manner, when she ought to have been most reserved? How can her conduct be reconciled to the grace and ease of her general deportment?"

The confusion of thoughts which occupied Darsie's imagination, gave to his looks a disordered appearance, and his inattention to the food which was placed before him, together with his silence and absence of mind, induced Lilias solicitously to inquire, whether he did not feel some return of the disorder under which he had suffered so lately. This led Mr. Redgauntlet, who seemed also lost in his own contemplations, to raise his eyes, and join in the same inquiry with some appearance of interest. Latimer explained to both, that he was perfectly well.

"It is well it is so," answered Redgauntlet; "for we have that before us which will brook no delay from indisposition—we have not, as Hotspur says, leisure to be sick."

Lilias, on her part, endeavoured to prevail upon Darsie to partake of the food which she offered him, with a kindly and affectionate courtesy, corresponding to the warmth of the interest she had displayed at their meeting; but so very natural, innocent, and pure in its character, that it would have been impossible for the vainest coxcomb to have mistaken it for coquetry, or a desire of captivating a prize so valuable as his affections. Darsie, with no more than the reasonable share of self-opinion common to most youths when they approach twenty-one, knew not how to explain her conduct.

Sometimes he was tempted to think that his own merits had, even during the short intervals when they had seen each other, secured such a hold of the affections of a young person, who had probably been bred up in ignorance of the world and its forms, that she was unable to conceal her partiality. Sometimes he suspected that she acted by her guardian's order, who, aware that he, Darsie, was entitled to a considerable fortune, might have taken this bold stroke to bring about a marriage betwixt him and so near a relative.

But neither of these suppositions was applicable to the character of the parties. Miss Lilias's manners, however soft and natural, displayed in their ease and versatility considerable acquaintance with the habits of the world, and in the few words she said during the morning repast, there were mingled a shrewdness and good sense, which could scarce belong to a Miss capable of playing the silly part of a love-smitten maiden so broadly. As for Redgauntlet, with his stately bearing, his fatal frown, his eye of threat and of command, it was impossible, Darsie thought, to suspect him of a scheme having private advantage for its object;—he could as soon have imagined Cassius picking Cæsar's pocket, instead of drawing his poniard on the Dictator.

While he thus mused, unable either to eat, drink, or answer to the courtesy of Lilias, she soon ceased to speak to him, and sat silent as himself.

They had remained nearly an hour in their halting-place, when Redgauntlet said aloud, "Look out, Cristal Nixon. If we hear nothing from Fairladies, we must continue our journey."

Cristal went to the door, and presently returned and said to his master, in a voice as harsh as his features, "Gilbert Gregson is coming, his horse as white with foam as if a fiend had ridden him."

Redgauntlet threw from him the plate on which he had been eating, and hastened towards the door of the barn, which the courier at that moment entered; a smart jockey with a black velvet hunting-cap, and a broad belt drawn tight round his waist, to which was secured his express-bag. The variety of mud with which he was splashed from cap to spur, showed he had had a rough and rapid ride. He delivered a letter to Mr. Redgauntlet, with an obeisance, and then retired to the end of the barn, where the other attendants were sitting or lying upon the straw, in order to get some refreshment.

Redgauntlet broke the letter open with haste, and read it with anxious and discomposed looks. On a second perusal, his displeasure seemed to increase, his brow darkened, and was distinctly marked with the fatal sign peculiar to his family and house. Darsie had never before observed his frown bear such a close resemblance to the shape which tradition assigned it.

Redgauntlet held out the open letter with one hand, and struck it with the forefinger of the other, as, in a suppressed and displeased tone, he said to Cristal Nixon, "Countermanded—ordered northward once more!—Northward, when all our hopes lie to the south—a second Derby direction, when we turned our back on glory, and marched in quest of ruin!"

Cristal Nixon took the letter and ran it over, then returned it to his master with the cold observation, "a female influence predominates."

"But it shall predominate no longer," said Redgauntlet; "it shall wane as ours rises in the horizon. Mean while, I will on before—and you, Cristal, will bring the party to the place assigned in the letter You may now permit the young persons to have unreserved communication together; only mark that you watch the young man closely enough to prevent his escape, if he should be idiot enough to attempt it, but not approaching so close as to watch their free conversation."

"I care naught about their conversation," said Nixon, surlily.

"You hear my commands, Lilias," said the Laird, turning to the young lady. "You may use my permission and authority to explain so much of our family matters as you yourself know. At our next meeting I will complete the task of disclosure, and I trust I shall restore one Redgauntlet more to the bosom of our ancient family. Let Latimer, as he calls himself, have a horse to himself; he must for some time retain his disguise.—My horse—my horse!"

In two minutes they heard him ride off from the door of the barn, followed at speed by two of the armed men of his party.

The commands of Cristal Nixon, in the mean while, put all the remainder of the party in motion, but the Laird himself was long out of sight ere they were in readiness to resume their journey. When at length they set out, Darsie was accommodated with a horse and side-saddle, instead of being obliged to resume his place on the pillion behind the detestable Nixon. He was obliged, however, to retain his riding skirt, and to reassume his mask. Yet notwithstanding this disagreeable circumstance, and although he observed that they gave him the heaviest and slowest horse of the party, and that, as a farther precaution against escape, he was closely watched on every side, yet riding in company with the pretty Lilias was an advantage which overbalanced these inconveniences.

It is true, that this society, to which that very morning he would have looked forward as a glimpse of heaven, had, now that it was thus unexpectedly indulged, something much less rapturous than he had expected.

It was in vain that, in order to avail himself of a situation so favourable for indulging his romantic disposition, he endeavoured to coax back, if I may so express myself, that delightful dream of ardent and tender passion; he felt only such a confusion of ideas at the difference between the being whom he had imagined, and her with whom he was now in contact, that it seemed to him like the effect of witchcraft. What most surprised him was, that this sudden flame should have died away so rapidly, notwithstanding that the maiden's personal beauty was even greater than he had expected—her demeanour, unless it should be deemed over kind towards himself, as graceful and becoming as he could have fancied it, even in his gayest dreams. It were judging hardly of him to suppose that the mere belief of his having attracted her affections more easily than he expected, was the cause of

his ungratefully undervaluing a prize too lightly won, or that his transient passion played around his heart with the flitting radiance of a wintry sunbeam flashing against an icicle, which may brighten it for a moment, but cannot melt it. Neither of these was precisely the case, though such fickleness of disposition might also have some influence in the change.

The truth is, perhaps, that the lover's pleasure, like that of the hunter, is in the chase; and that the brightest beauty loses half its merit, as the fairest flower its perfume, when the willing hand can reach it too easily. There must be doubt—there must be danger—there must be difficulty; and if, as the poet says, the course of ardent affection never does run smooth, it is perhaps because, without some intervening obstacle, that which is called the romantic passion of love, in its high poetical character and colouring, can hardly have an existence;—any more than there can be a current in a river, without the stream being narrowed by steep banks, or checked by opposing rocks.

Let not those, however, who enter into a union for life without those embarrassments which delight a Darsie Latimer, or a Lydia Languish, and which are perhaps necessary to excite an enthusiastic passion in breasts more firm than theirs, augur worse of their future happiness, because their own alliance is formed under calmer auspices. Mutual esteem, an intimate knowledge of each other's character, seen, as in their case, undisguised by the mists of too partial passion—a suitable proportion of parties in rank and fortune, in taste and pursuits—are more frequently found in a marriage of reason, than in a union of romantic attachment; where the imagination, which probably created the virtues and accomplishments with which it invested the beloved object, is frequently afterwards employed in magnifying the mortifying consequences of its own delusion, and exasperating all the stings of disappointment. Those who follow the banners of Reason are like the well-disciplined battalion which, wearing a more sober uniform, and making a less dazzling show, than the light troops commanded by Imagination, enjoy more safety, and even more honour, in the conflicts of human life. All this, however, is foreign to our present purpose.

Uncertain in what manner to address her whom he had been lately so anxious to meet with, and embarrassed by a *tête-à-tête* to which his own timid inexperience gave some awkwardness, the party had proceeded more than a hundred yards before Darsie assumed courage to accost, or even to look at, his companion. Sensible, however, of the impropriety of his silence, he turned to speak to her; and observing that, although she wore her mask, there was something like disappointment and dejection in her manner, he was moved by self-reproach for his own coldness, and hastened to address her in the kindest tone he could assume.

"You must think me cruelly deficient in gratitude, Miss Lilias, that I have been thus long in your company, without thanking you for the interest which you have deigned to take in my unfortunate affairs?"

"I am glad you have at length spoken," she said, "though I own it is more coldly than I expected.—*Miss* Lilias! *Deign* to take interest—In whom, dear Darsie, *can* I take interest but in you? and why do you put this barrier of ceremony betwixt us, whom adverse circumstances have already separated for such a length of time?"

Darsie was again confounded at the extra candour, if we may use the term, of this frank avowal—"One must love partridge very well," thought he, "to accept it when thrown in one's face—if this is not plain speaking, there is no such place as downright Dunstable in being!"

Embarrassed with these reflections, and himself of a nature fancifully, almost fastidiously, delicate, he could only in reply stammer forth an acknowledgment of his companion's goodness, and his own gratitude. She answered in a tone partly sorrowful and partly impatient, repeating, with displeased emphasis, the *only distinct words he had been able to bring forth*—"*Goodness—gratitude!—O Darsie, should these be the phrases between you and me?—Alas!* I am too sure you are displeased with me, though I cannot even guess on what account. Perhaps you think I have been too free in venturing upon my visit to your friend. But then remember it was in your behalf, and that I knew no better way to put you on your guard against the misfortunes and restraint which you have been subjected to, and are still enduring."

"Dear lady"—said Darsie, rallying his recollection, and suspicious of some error in apprehension,—a suspicion which his mode of address seemed at once to communicate to Lilias, for she interrupted him,—

"*Lady!* dear *lady!*—For whom, or for what, in Heaven's name, do you take me, that you address me so formally?"

Had the question been asked in that enchanted hall in Fairy-land, where all interrogations must be answered with absolute sincerity, Darsie had certainly replied that he took her for the most frank-hearted and ultra-liberal lass that had ever lived since Mother Eve eat the pippin without paring. But as he was still on middle-earth, and free to avail himself of a little polite deceit, he barely answered, that he believed he had the honour of speaking to the niece of Mr. Redgauntlet.

"Surely," she replied; "but were it not as easy for you to have said, to your own only sister?"

Darsie started in his saddle, as if he had received a pistol-shot.

"My sister!" he exclaimed.

"And you did *not* know it, then?" said she. "I thought your reception of me was cold and indifferent."

A kind and cordial embrace took place betwixt the relatives; and so light was Darsie's spirit, that he really felt himself more relieved, by getting quit of the embarrassments of the last half hour, during which he conceived himself in danger of being persecuted by the attachment of a forward girl, than disappointed by the vanishing of so many day-dreams as he had been in the habit of encouraging during the time when the green-mantled maiden was goddess of his idolatry. He had been already flung from his romantic Pegasus, and was too happy at length to find himself with bones unbroken, though with his back on the ground. He was, besides, with all his whims and follies, a generous, kind-hearted youth, and was delighted to acknowledge so beautiful and amiable a relative, and to assure her in the warmest terms of his immediate affection and future protection, so soon as they should be extricated from their present situation. Smiles and tears mingled on Lilias's cheeks, like showers and sunshine in April weather.

"Out on me," she said, "that I should be so childish as to cry at what makes me so sincerely happy! since, God knows, family-love is what my heart has most longed after, and to which it has been most a stranger. My uncle says that you and I, Darsie, are but half Redgauntlets, and that the metal of which our father's family was made, has been softened to effeminacy in our mother's offspring."

"Alas!" said Darsie, "I know so little of our family story, that I almost doubted that I belonged to the House of Redgauntlet, although the chief of the family himself intimated so much to me."

"The Chief of the family!" said Lilias. "You must know little of your own descent indeed, if you mean my uncle by that expression. You yourself, my dear Darsie, are the heir and representative of our ancient House, for our father was the elder brother—that brave and unhappy Sir Henry Darsie Redgauntlet, who suffered at Carlisle in the year 1746. He took the name of Darsie, in conjunction with his own, from our mother, heiress to a Cumberland family of great wealth and antiquity, of whose large estates you are the undeniable heir, although those of your father have been involved in the general doom of forfeiture. But all this must be necessarily unknown to you."

"Indeed I hear it for the first time in my life," answered Darsie.

"And you knew not that I was your sister?" said Lilias. "No wonder you received me so coldly What a strange, wild, forward young person you

have thought me—mixing myself in the fortunes of a stranger whom I had only once spoken to—corresponding with him by signs—Good Heaven! what can you have supposed me?"

"And how should I have come to the knowledge of our connexion?" said Darsie. "You are aware I was not acquainted with it when we danced together at Brokenburn."

"I saw that with concern, and fain I would have warned you," answered Lilias; "but I was closely watched, and before I could find or make an opportunity of coming to a full explanation with you on a subject so agitating, I was forced to leave the room. What I did say was, you may remember, a caution to leave the southern border, for I foresaw what has since happened. But since my uncle has had you in his power, I never doubted he had communicated to you our whole family history."

"He has left me to learn it from you, Lilias; and assure yourself that I will hear it with more pleasure from your lips than from his. I have no reason to be pleased with his conduct towards me."

"Of that," said Lilias, "you will judge better when you have heard what I have to tell you;" and the began her communication in the following manner.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

"THE House of Redgauntlet," said the young lady, "has for centuries been supposed to lie under a doom, which has rendered vain their courage, their talents, their ambition, and their wisdom. Often making a figure in history, they have been ever in the situation, of men striving against both wind and tide, who distinguish themselves by their desperate exertions of strength, and their persevering endurance of toil, but without being able to advance themselves upon their course, by either vigour or resolution. They pretend to trace this fatality to a legendary history, which I may tell you at a less busy moment."

Darsie intimated, that he had already heard the tragic story of Sir Alberick Redgauntlet.

"I need only say, then," proceeded Lilias, "that our father and uncle felt the family doom in its full extent. They were both possessed of considerable property, which was largely increased by our father's marriage, and were both devoted to the service of the unhappy House of Stewart; but (as our mother at least supposed) family considerations might have withheld her husband from joining openly in the affair of 1745, had not the high influence which the younger brother possessed over the elder, from his more decided energy of character, hurried him along with himself into that undertaking.

"When, therefore, the enterprise came to the fatal conclusion, which bereaved our father of his life, and consigned his brother to exile, Lady Redgauntlet fled from the north of England, determined to break off all communication with her late husband's family, particularly his brother, whom she regarded as having, by their insane political enthusiasm, been the means of his untimely death; and determined that you, my brother, an infant, and that I, to whom she had just given birth, should be brought up as adherents of the present dynasty. Perhaps she was too hasty in this determination—too timidly anxious to exclude, if possible, from the knowledge of the very spot where we existed, a relation so nearly connected with us as our father's only brother. But you must make allowance for what she had suffered. See, brother," she said, pulling her glove off, "these five blood-specks on my arm are a mark by which mysterious Nature has impressed, on an unborn infant, a record of its father's violent death and its mother's miseries."*

* Several persons have brought down to these days the impressions which Nature had thus recorded, when they were yet babes unborn. One lady of quality, whose father was long under sentence of death, previous to the rebellion, was marked on the back of the neck by the sign of a broad axe. Another, *whose kinsmen had been slain in battle, and died on the scaffold to the number of seven, bore a child spattered on the right shoulder, and down the arm, with scarlet drops, as if of blood. Many other instances might be quoted.*

"You were not then born when my father suffered?" said Darsie.

"Alas, no!" she replied; "nor were you a twelvemonth old. It was no wonder that my mother, after going through such scenes of agony, became irresistibly anxious for the sake of her children—of her son in particular; the more especially as the late Sir Henry, her husband, had, by a settlement of his affairs, confided the custody of the persons of her children, as well as the estates which descended to them, independently of those which fell under his forfeiture, to his brother Hugh, in whom he placed unlimited confidence."

"But my mother had no reason to fear the operation of such a deed, conceived in favour of an attainted man," said Darsie.

"True," replied Lilias; "but our uncle's attainder might have been reversed, like that of so many other persons, and our mother, who both feared and hated him, lived in continual terror that this would be the case, and that she should see the author, as she thought him, of her husband's death, come armed with legal powers, and in a capacity to use them, for the purpose of tearing her children from her protection. Besides, she feared, even in his incapacitated condition, the adventurous and pertinacious spirit of her brother-in-law, Hugh Redgauntlet, and felt assured that he would make some attempt to possess himself of the persons of the children. On the other hand, our uncle, whose proud disposition might, perhaps, have been soothed by the offer of her confidence, revolted against the distrustful and suspicious manner in which Lady Darsie Redgauntlet acted towards him. She basely abused, he said, the unhappy circumstances in which he was placed, in order to deprive him of his natural privilege of protecting and educating the infants, whom nature and law, and the will of their father, had committed to his charge, and he swore solemnly he would not submit to such an injury. Report of his threats was made to Lady Redgauntlet, and tended to increase those fears which proved but too well founded. While you and I, children at that time of two or three years old, were playing together in a walled orchard, adjacent to our mother's residence, which she had fixed somewhere in Devonshire, my uncle suddenly scaled the wall with several men, and I was snatched up and carried off to a boat which waited for them. My mother, however, flew to your rescue, and as she seized on and held you fast, my uncle could not, as he has since told me, possess himself of your person, without using unmanly violence to his brother's widow. Of this he was incapable; and, as people began to assemble upon my mother's screaming, he withdrew, after darting upon you and her one of those fearful looks, which, it is said, remain with our family, as a fatal bequest of Sir Alberick, our ancestor."

"I have some recollection of the scuffle which you mention," said Darsie; "and I think it was my uncle himself (since my uncle he is) who recalled the circumstance to my mind on a late occasion. I can now account for the guarded seclusion under which my poor mother lived—for her frequent tears, her starts of hysterical alarm, and her constant and deep melancholy. Poor lady! what a lot was hers, and what must have been her feelings when it approached to a close!"

"It was then that she adopted," said Lilias, "every precaution her ingenuity could suggest, to keep your very existence concealed from the person whom she feared—nay, from yourself; for she dreaded, as she is said often to have expressed herself, that the wildfire blood of Redgauntlet would urge you to unite your fortunes to those of your uncle, who was well known still to carry on political intrigues, which most other persons had considered as desperate. It was also possible that he, as well as others, might get his pardon, as government showed every year more lenity towards the remnant of the Jacobites, and then he might claim the custody of your person, as your legal guardian. Either of these events she considered as the direct road to your destruction."

"I wonder she had not claimed the protection of Chancery for me," said Darsie; "or confided me to the care of some powerful friend."

"She was on indifferent terms with her relations, on account of her marriage with our father," said Lilias, "and trusted more to secreting you from your uncle's attempts, than to any protection which law might afford against them. Perhaps she judged unwisely, but surely not unnaturally, for one rendered irritable by so many misfortunes and so many alarms. Samuel Griffiths, an eminent banker, and a worthy clergyman now dead, were, I believe, the only persons whom she intrusted with the execution of her last will; and my uncle believes that she made them both swear to observe profound secrecy concerning your birth and pretensions, until you should come to the age of majority, and, in the mean time to breed you up in the most private way possible, and that which was most likely to withdraw you from my uncle's observation."

"And I have no doubt," said Darsie, "that betwixt change of name and habitation, they might have succeeded perfectly, but for the accident—lucky or unlucky, I know not which to term it—which brought me to Brokenburn, and into contact with Mr. Redgauntlet. I see also why I was warned against England, for in England"——

"In England alone, if I understand rightly," said Miss Redgauntlet, "the claims of your uncle to the custody of your person could have been enforced, in case of his being replaced in the ordinary rights of citizenship, either by the lenity of the government or by some change in it. In Scotland, where you possess no property, I understand his authority might have been resisted, and measures taken to put you under the protection of the law. But, pray, think it not unlucky that you have taken the step of visiting Brokenburn—I feel confident that the consequences must be ultimately fortunate, for, have they not already brought us in contact with each other?"

So saying, she held out her hand to her brother, who grasped it with a fondness of pressure very different from the manner in which they first clasped hands that morning. There was a moment's pause, while the hearts of both were overflowing with a feeling of natural affection, to which circumstances had hitherto rendered them strangers.

At length Darsie broke silence: "I am ashamed," he said, "my dearest Lilias, that I have suffered you to talk so long about matters concerning myself only, while I remain ignorant of your story, and your present situation."

"The former is none of the most interesting, nor the latter the most safe or agreeable," answered Lilias; "but now, my dearest brother, I shall have the inestimable support of your countenance and affection; and were I but sure that we could weather the formidable crisis which I find so close at hand, I should have little apprehensions for the future."

"Let me know," said Darsie, "what our present situation is; and rely upon my utmost exertions both in your defence and my own. For what reason can my uncle desire to detain me a prisoner?—If in mere opposition to the will of my mother, she has long been no more; and I see not why he should wish, at so much trouble and risk, to interfere with the free will of one, to whom a few months will give a privilege of acting for himself, with which he will have no longer any pretence to interfere."

"My dearest Arthur," answered Lilias—"for that name, as well as Darsie, properly belongs to you—it is the leading feature in my uncle's character, that he has applied every energy of his powerful mind to the service of the exiled family of Stewart. The death of his brother, the dilapidation of his own fortunes, have only added to his hereditary zeal for the House of Stewart, a deep and almost personal hatred against the present reigning family. He is, in short, a political enthusiast of the most dangerous character, and proceeds in his agency with as much confidence, as if he felt himself the very Atlas, who is alone capable of supporting a sinking cause."

"And where or how did you, my Lilias, educated, doubtless, under his auspices, learn to have a different view of such subjects?"

"By a *singular chance*," replied Lilias, "in the *nunnery where my uncle placed me*. Although the *Abbess was a person exactly after his* own heart, my education as a pensioner devolved much on an excellent old mother who had adopted the tenets of the Jansenists, with perhaps a still further tendency towards the reformed doctrines, than those of Port-Royale. The mysterious secrecy with which she inculcated these tenets, gave them charms to my young mind, and I embraced them the rather that they were in direct opposition to the doctrines of the Abbess, whom I hated so much for her severity, that I felt a childish delight in setting her control at defiance, and contradicting in my secret soul all that I was openly obliged to listen to with reverence. Freedom of religious opinion brings on, I suppose, freedom of political creed; for I had no sooner renounced the Pope's infallibility, than I began to question the doctrine of hereditary and indefeasible right. In short, strange as it may seem, I came out of a Parisian convent, not indeed an instructed Whig and Protestant, but with as much inclination, to be so as if I had been bred up, like you, within the presbyterian sound of Saint Giles's chimes."

"More so, perhaps," replied Darsie; "for the nearer the church——the proverb is somewhat musty. But how did these liberal opinions of yours agree with the very opposite prejudices of my uncle?"

"They would have agreed like fire and water, answered Lilias, "had I suffered mine to become visible; but as that would have subjected me to constant reproach and upbraiding, or worse, I took great care to keep my own secret; so that occasional censures for coldness, and lack of zeal for the good cause, were the worst I had to undergo; and these were bad enough."

"I applaud your caution," said Darsie.

"You have reason," replied his sister; "but I got so terrible a specimen of my uncle's determination of character, before I had been acquainted with him for much more than a week, that it taught me at what risk I should contradict his humour. I will tell you the circumstances; for it will better teach you to appreciate the romantic and resolved nature of his character, than any thing which I could state of his rashness and enthusiasm."

"After I had been many a long year at the convent, I was removed from thence, and placed with a meager old Scottish lady of high rank, the daughter of an unfortunate person, whose head had in the year 1715 been placed on Temple-bar. She subsisted on a small pension from the French Court, aided by an occasional gratuity from the Stewarts; to which the annuity paid for my board formed a desirable addition. She was not ill-tempered, nor very covetous—neither beat me nor starved me—but she was so completely trammelled by rank and prejudices, so awfully profound in genealogy, and so bitterly keen, poor lady, in British politics, that I sometimes thought it pity that the Hanoverians, who murdered, as she used to tell me, her poor dear father, had left his dear daughter in the land of the living. Delighted, therefore, was I, when my uncle made his appearance, and abruptly announced his purpose of conveying me to England. My extravagant joy at the idea of leaving Lady Rachel Rougedragon, was somewhat qualified by observing the melancholy look, lofty demeanour, and commanding tone of my near relative. He held more communication with me on the journey, however, than consisted with his taciturn demeanour in general, and seemed anxious to ascertain my tone of character, and particularly in point of courage. Now, though I am a tamed Redgauntlet, yet I have still so much of our family spirit as enables me to be as composed in danger as most of my sex; and upon two occasions in the course of our journey—a threatened attack by banditti, and the overturn of our carriage—I had the fortune so to conduct myself, as to to convey to my uncle a very favourable idea of my intrepidity. Probably this encouraged him to put in execution the singular scheme which he had in agitation.

"Ere we reached London we changed our means of conveyance, and altered the route by which we approached the city, more than once; then, like a hare which doubles repeatedly at some distance from the seat she means to occupy, and at last leaps it

her form from a distance as great as she can clear by a spring, we made a forced march, and landed in private and obscure lodgings in a little old street in Westminster, not far distant from the Cloisters.

"On the morning of the day on which we arrived my uncle went abroad, and did not return for some hours. Mean time I had no other amusement than to listen to the tumult of noises which succeeded each other, or reigned in confusion together, during the whole morning. Paris I had thought the most noisy capital in the world, but Paris seemed midnight silence compared to London. Cannon thundered near and at a distance—drums, trumpets, and military music of every kind, rolled, flourished, and pierced the clouds, almost without intermission. To fill up the concert, bells pealed incessantly from a hundred steeples. The acclamations of an immense multitude were heard from time to time, like the roaring of a mighty ocean, and all this without my being able to glean the least idea of what was going on, for the windows of our apartment looked upon a waste backyard, which seemed totally deserted. My curiosity became extreme, for I was satisfied, at length, that it must be some festival of the highest order which called forth these incessant sounds.

"My uncle at length returned, and with him a man of an exterior singularly unprepossessing. I need not describe him to you, for—do not look round—he rides behind us at this moment."

"That respectable person, Mr. Cristal Nixon, I suppose?" said Darsie.

"The same," answered Lilias; "make no gesture that may intimate we are speaking of him."

Darsie signified that he understood her, and she pursued her relation.

"They were both in full dress, and my uncle, taking a bundle from Nixon, said to me, 'Lilias, I am come to carry you to see a grand ceremony—put on as hastily as you can the dress you will find in that parcel, and prepare to attend me.' I found a female dress, splendid and elegant, but somewhat bordering upon the antique fashion. It might be that of England, I thought, and I went to my apartment full of curiosity, and dressed myself with all speed.

"My uncle surveyed me with attention—'She may pass for one of the flower-girls,' he said to Nixon, who only answered with a nod.

"We left the house together, and such was their knowledge of the lanes, courts, and bypaths, that though there was the roar of a multitude in the broad streets, those which we traversed were silent and deserted; and the strollers whom we met, tired of gazing upon gayer figures, scarcely honoured us with a passing look, although, at any other time, we should, among these vulgar suburbs, have attracted a troublesome share of observation. We crossed at length a broad street, where many soldiers were at guard, while others, exhausted with previous duty, were eating, drinking, smoking, and sleeping beside their piled arms.

"'One day, Nixon,' whispered my uncle, 'we will make these redcoated gentry stand to their muskets more watchfully.'

"'Or it will be the worse for them,' answered his attendant, in a voice as unpleasant as his physiognomy.

"Unquestioned and unchallenged by any one, we crossed among the guards, and Nixon tapped thrice at a small postern door in a huge ancient building which was straight before us. It opened, and we entered without my perceiving by whom we were admitted. A few dark and narrow passages at length conveyed us into an immense Gothic hall, the magnificence of which baffles my powers of description.

"It was illuminated by ten thousand wax lights, whose splendour at first dazzled my eyes, coming as we did from these dark and secret avenues. But when my sight began to become steady, how shall I describe what I beheld! Beneath were huge ranges of tables, occupied by princes and nobles in their robes *of state—high officers of the crown*, wearing their *dresses and badges of authority*—reverend prelates *and judges, the sages of the church and law*, in their more sombre, yet not less awful robes—with others whose antique and striking costume announced their importance, though I could not even guess who they might be. But at length the truth burst on me at once—it was, and the murmurs around confirmed it, the Coronation Feast. At a table above the rest, and extending across the upper end of the hall, sat enthroned the youthful Sovereign himself, surrounded by the princes of the blood, and other dignitaries, and receiving the suit and homage of his subjects. Heralds and pursuivants, blazing in their fantastic yet splendid armorial habits, and pages of honour, gorgeously arrayed in the garb of other days, waited upon the princely banqueters. In the galleries with which this spacious hall was surrounded, shone all, and more than all, that my poor imagination could conceive, of what was brilliant in riches, or captivating in beauty. Countless rows of ladies, whose diamonds, jewels, and splendid attire, were their least powerful charms, looked down from their lofty seats on the rich scene beneath, themselves forming a show as dazzling and as beautiful as that of which they were spectators. Under these galleries, and behind the banqueting tables, were a multitude of gentlemen, dressed as if to attend a court, but whose garb, although rich enough to have adorned a royal drawing-room, could not distinguish them in such a high scene as this. Amongst these we wandered for a few minutes, undistinguished and unregarded. I saw several young persons dressed as I was, so was under no embarrassment from the singularity of my habit, and only rejoiced, as I hung on my uncle's arm, at the magical splendour of such a scene, and at his goodness for procuring me the pleasure of beholding it.

"By and by, I perceived that my uncle had acquaintances among those who were under the galleries, and seemed, like ourselves, to be mere spectators of the solemnity. They recognised each other with a single word, sometimes only with a gripe of the hand—exchanged some private signs, doubtless—and gradually formed a little group, in the centre of which we were placed.

"'Is it not a grand sight, Lilias?' said my uncle. 'All the noble, and all the wise, and all the wealthy of Britain, are there assembled.'

"'It is indeed,' said I, 'all that my mind could have fancied of regal power and splendour.'

"'Girl,' he whispered,—and my uncle can make his whispers as terribly emphatic as his thundering voice or his blighting look,—'all that is noble and worthy in this fair land are there assembled—but it is to bend like slaves and sycophants before the throne of a new usurper.'

"I looked at him, and the dark hereditary frown of our unhappy ancestor was black upon his brow.

"'For God's sake,' I whispered, 'consider where we are.'"

"'Fear nothing,' he said; 'we are surrounded by friends.'—As he proceeded, his strong and muscular frame shook with suppressed agitation.—'See,' he said, 'yonder bends Norfolk, renegade to his Catholic faith; there stoops the Bishop of ——, traitor to the Church of England; and,—shame of shames! yonder the gigantic form of Errol bows his head before the grandson of his father's murderer!' But a sign shall be seen this night amongst them—*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, shall be read on these walls, as distinctly as the spectral handwriting made them visible on those of Belshazzar!'

"'For God's sake,' said I, dreadfully alarmed, 'it is impossible you can meditate violence in such a presence!'

"'None is intended, fool,' he answered, 'nor can the slightest mischance happen, provided you will rally your boasted courage, and obey my directions. But do it coolly and quickly, for there are a hundred lives at stake.'

"'Alas! what can I do?' I asked in the utmost terror.

"'Only be prompt to execute my bidding,' said he, 'it is but to lift a glove—Here, hold this in your hand—throw the train of your dress over it, be firm, composed, and ready—or, at all events, I step forward myself.'

here is no violence designed,' I said, taking
ically, the iron glove he put into my hand.
uld not conceive his meaning; but, in the
state of mind in which I beheld him, I was
d that disobedience on my part would lead
wild explosion. I felt, from the emergency
ccasion, a sudden presence of mind, and re-
o do any thing that might avert violence and
d. I was not long held in suspense. A loud
of trumpets, and the voice of heralds, were
ith the clatter of horse's hoofs, while a cham-
ned at all points, like those I had read of in
a, attended by squires, pages, and the whole
f chivalry, pranced forward, mounted upon a
ıteed. His challenge, in defiance of all who
peach the title of the new sovereign, was
loud—once and again.
h in at the third sounding,' said my uncle to
ing me the parader's gage, and leave mine in
'
ld not see how this was to be done, as we
rounded by people on all sides. But, at the
nding of the trumpets, a lane opened as if by
command, betwixt me and the champion,
uncle's voice said, 'Now, Lilias, now!'
a swift and yet steady step, and with a pre-
mind for which I have never since been able to
I discharged the perilous commission. I was
en, I believe, as I exchanged the pledges of
d in an instant retired. 'Nobly done, my
id my uncle, at whose side I found myself,
l as I was before, by the interposition of the
rs. 'Cover our retreat, gentlemen,' he whis-
those around him.
n was made for us to approach the wall,
emed to open, and we were again involved in
passages through which we had formerly
In a small anteroom, my uncle stopped, and
nuffling me in a mantle which was lying
passed the guards—threaded the labyrinth
streets and courts, and reached our retired
without attracting the least attention."
've often heard," said Darsie, "that a female,
to be a man in disguise,—and yet, Lilias,
ot look very masculine,—had taken up the
n's gauntlet at the present King's Corona-
left in its place a gage of battle, with a paper,
to accept the combat, provided a fair field
allowed for it. I have hitherto considered
dle tale. I little thought how nearly I was
d in the actors of a scene so daring—How
have courage to go through with it?"*
I had leisure for reflection," answered his
should have refused, from a mixture of prin-
l of fear. But, like many people, who do
tions, I went on because I had not time to
think of retreating. The matter was little known, and it is said the King had commanded that it should not be farther inquired into;—from prudence, as I suppose, and lenity, though my uncle chooses to ascribe the forbearance of the Elector of Hanover, as he calls him, sometimes to pusillanimity, and sometimes to a presumptuous scorn of the faction who opposes his title."

"And have your subsequent agencies under this frantic enthusiast," said Darsie, "equalled this in danger?"

"No—nor in importance," replied Lilias; "though I have witnessed much of the strange and desperate machinations, by which, in spite of every obstacle, and in contempt of every danger, he endeavours to awaken the courage of a broken party. I have traversed, in his company, all England and Scotland, and have visited the most extraordinary and contrasted scenes; now lodging at the castles of the proud gentry of Cheshire and Wales, where the retired aristocrats, with opinions as antiquated as their dwellings and their manners, still continue to nourish jacobitical principles; and the next week, perhaps, spent among outlawed smugglers or Highland banditti. I have known my uncle often act the part of a hero, and sometimes that of a mere vulgar conspirator, and turn himself, with the most surprising flexibility, into all sorts of shapes to attract proselytes to his cause."

"Which, in the present day," said Darsie, "he finds, I presume, no easy task."

"So difficult," said Lilias, "that I believe he has, at different times, disgusted with the total falling away of some friends, and the coldness of others, been almost on the point of resigning his undertaking. How often have I known him affect an open brow and a jovial manner, joining in the games of the gentry, and even in the sports of the common people, in order to invest himself with a temporary degree of popularity; while, in fact, his heart was bursting to witness what he called the degeneracy of the times, the decay of activity among the aged, and the want of zeal in the rising generation. After the day has been passed in the hardest exercise, he has spent the night in pacing his solitary chamber, bewailing the downfall of the cause, and wishing for the bullet of Dundee, or the axe of Balmerino."

"A strange delusion," said Darsie; "and it is wonderful that it does not yield to the force of reality."

"Ah, but," replied Lilias, "realities of late have seemed to flatter his hopes. The general dissatisfaction with the peace—the unpopularity of the minister, which has extended itself even to the person of his master—the various uproars which have disturbed the quiet of the metropolis, and a general state of disgust and dissatisfaction, which seems to affect the body of the nation, have given unwonted encouragement to the expiring hopes of the Jacobites, and induced many, both at the Court of Rome, and, if it can be called so, of the Pretender, to lend a more favourable ear than they had hitherto done, to the insinuations of those, who, like my uncle, hope when hope is lost to all but themselves. Nay, I really believe that at this moment they meditate some desperate effort. My uncle has been doing all in his power, of late, to conciliate the affections of those wild communities that dwell on the Solway, over whom our family possessed a seigniorial interest before the forfeiture, and amongst whom, on the occasion of 1745, our unhappy father's interest, with his own, raised a considerable body of men. But they are no longer willing to obey his summons; and, as one apology among others, they allege your absence as their natural head and leader. This has increased his desire to obtain possession of your person, and, if he possibly can, to influence your mind, so as to obtain your authority to his proceedings."

"That he shall never obtain," answered Darsie; "my principles and my prudence alike forbid such a step. Besides, it would be totally unavailing to his purpose. Whatever these people may pretend, to evade your uncle's importunities, they cannot, at this time of day, think of subjecting their necks again to the feudal yoke, which was effectually broken by the

* rticulars here given are of course entirely imaginary; y have no other foundation than what might be sup- able, had such a circumstance actually taken place. rt to such an effect was long and generally current, w having wholly lost its lingering credit; those who rrency, if they did not originate it, being, with the tself, now mouldered in the dust. The attachment rtunate house of Stewart among its adherents, con- xist and to be fondly cherished, longer perhaps than lar case in any other country; and when reason was d all hope destroyed, by repeated frustration, the ne of imagination were summoned in to fill up the k, left in so many hearts. Of the many reports set l circulated from this cause, the tradition in question, ongst the least authenticated, is not the least stri- in excuse of what may be considered as a violent of probability in the foregoing chapter, the author is ecessity of quoting it. It was always said, though ittle appearance of truth, that upon the coronation II., when the Champion of England, Dymock, or his ive, appeared in Westminster Hall, and, in the lan- nivalry, solemnly wagered his body to defend in sin- the right of the young King to the crown of these the moment when he flung down his gauntlet as the le, an unknown female stepped from the crowd and ledge, leaving another gage in room of it, with a pa- ing, that if a fair field of combat should be allowed, r of rank and birth would appear with equal arms to claim of King George to the British kingdoms. The e have said, is probably one of the numerous fictions circulated to keep up the spirits of a sinking fac- incident was, however, possible, if it could be sup- attended by any motive adequate to the risk, and agined to occur to a person of Redgauntlet's enthu- ger.

act of 1748, abolishing vassalage and hereditary jurisdictions."

"Ay, but that my uncle considers as the act of a usurping government," said Lilias.

"Like enough *he* may think so," answered her brother, "for he is a superior, and loses his authority by the enactment. But the question is, what the vassals will think of it, who have gained their freedom from feudal slavery, and have now enjoyed that freedom for many years? However, to cut the matter short, if five hundred men would rise at the wagging of my finger, that finger should not be raised in a cause which I disapprove of, and upon that my uncle may reckon."

"But you may temporize," said Lilias, upon whom the idea of her uncle's displeasure made evidently a strong impression,—"you may temporize, as most of the gentry in this country do, and let the bubble burst of itself; for it is singular how few of them venture to oppose my uncle directly. I entreat you to avoid direct collision with him. To hear you, the head of the house of Redgauntlet, declare against the family of Stewart, would either break his heart, or drive him to some act of desperation."

"Yes, but, Lilias, you forget that the consequences of such an act of complaisance might be, that the House of Redgauntlet and I might lose both our heads at one blow."

"Alas!" said she, "I had forgotten that danger. I have grown familiar with perilous intrigues, as the nurses in a pest-house are said to become accustomed to the air around them, till they forget even that it is noisome."

"And yet," said Darsie, "if I could free myself from him without coming to an open rupture—Tell me Lilias, do you think it possible that he can have any immediate attempt in view?"

"To confess the truth," answered Lilias, "I cannot doubt that he has. There has been an unusual bustle among the Jacobites of late. They have hopes, as I told you, from circumstances unconnected with their own strength. Just before you came to the country, my uncle's desire to find you out, became, if possible, more eager than ever—he talked of men to be presently brought together, and of your name and influence for raising them. At this very time, your first visit to Brokenburn took place. A suspicion arose in my uncle's mind, that you might be the youth he sought, and it was strengthened by papers and letters which the rascal Nixon did not hesitate to take from your pocket. Yet a mistake might have occasioned a fatal explosion; and my uncle therefore posted to Edinburgh to follow out the clew he had obtained, and fished enough of information from old Mr. Fairford to make him certain that you were the person he sought. Mean while, and at the expense of some personal, and perhaps too bold exertion, I endeavoured, through your friend young Fairford, to put you on your guard."

"Without success," said Darsie, blushing under his mask, when he recollected, how he had mistaken his sister's meaning.

"I do not wonder that my warning was fruitless," said she; "the thing was doomed to be. Besides, your escape would have been difficult. You were dogged the whole time you were at the Shepherd's Bush and at Mount Sharon, by a spy who scarcely ever left you."

"The wretch little Benjie!" exclaimed Darsie. "I will wring the monkey's neck round, the first time we meet."

"It was he indeed who gave constant information of your motions to Cristal Nixon," said Lilias.

"And Cristal Nixon—I owe him, too, a day's work in harvest," said Darsie; "for I am mistaken if he is not the person that struck me down when I was made prisoner among the rioters."

"Like enough; for he has a head and hand for any villany. My uncle was very angry about it; for though the riot was made to have an opportunity of carrying you off in the confusion, as well as to put the fishermen at variance with the public law, it would have been his last thought to have injured a hair of *your head. But Nixon has* insinuated himself into all *my uncle's secrets, and some* of these are so dark and dangerous, that though there are few things he would *not* dare, I doubt if he dare quarrel with him.—And yet I know that of Cristal, would move my uncle to pass his sword through his body."

"What is it, for Heaven's sake?" said Darsie, "I have a particular desire for wishing to know."

"The old brutal desperado, whose face and mind are a libel upon human nature, has had the insolence to speak to his master's niece as one whom he was at liberty to admire; and when I turned on him with the anger and contempt he merited, the wretch grumbled out something, as if he held the destiny of our family in his hand."

"I thank you, Lilias," said Darsie, eagerly.—"I thank you with all my heart for this communication. I have blamed myself as a Christian man for the indescribable longing I felt from the first moment I saw that rascal, to send a bullet through his head; and now you have perfectly accounted for and justified this very laudable wish. I wonder my uncle, with the powerful sense you describe him to be possessed of, does not see through such a villain."

"I believe he knows him to be capable of much evil," answered Lilias—"selfish, obdurate, brutal, and a man-hater. But then he conceives him to possess the qualities most requisite for a conspirator—undaunted courage, imperturbable coolness and address, and inviolable fidelity. In the last particular he may be mistaken. I have heard Nixon blamed for the manner in which our poor father was taken after Culloden."

"Another reason for my innate aversion," said Darsie; "but I will be on my guard with him."

"See, he observes us closely," said Lilias. "What a thing is conscience!—He knows we are now speaking of him, though he cannot have heard a word that we have said."

It seemed as if she had guessed truly; for Cristal Nixon at that moment rode up to them, and said, with an affectation of jocularity, which sat very ill upon his sullen features, "Come, young ladies, you have had time enough for your chat this morning, and your tongues, I think, must be tired. We are going to pass a village, and I must beg you to separate—you, Miss Lilias, to ride a little behind—and you, Mrs., or Miss, or Master, which ever you choose to be called, to be jogging a little bit before."

Lilias checked her horse without speaking, but not until she had given her brother an expressive look, recommending caution; to which he replied by a signal, indicating that he understood and would comply with her request.

CHAPTER XIX

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

LEFT to his solitary meditations, Darsie (for we will still term Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet of that Ilk, by the name to which the reader is habituated) was surprised not only at the alteration of his own state and condition, but at the equanimity with which he felt himself disposed to view all these vicissitudes.

His fever-fit of love had departed like a morning's dream, and left nothing behind but a painful sense of shame, and a resolution to be more cautious ere he again indulged in such romantic visions. His station in society was changed from that of a wandering, unowned youth, in whom none appeared to take an interest, excepting the strangers by whom he had been educated, to the heir of a noble house, possessed of such influence and such property, that it seemed as if the progress or arrest of important political events were likely to depend upon his resolution. Even this sudden elevation, the more than fulfilment of those wishes which had haunted him ever since he was able to form a wish on the subject, was contemplated by Darsie, volatile as his disposition was, without more than a few thrills of gratified vanity.

It is true, there were circumstances in his present situation to counterbalance such high advantages. To be a prisoner in the hands of a man so determined as his uncle, was no agreeable consideration, when he was calculating how he might best dispute his

easure, and refuse to join him in the perilous enter-
ise which he seemed to meditate. Outlawed and
perate himself, Darsie could not doubt that his
ele was surrounded by men capable of any thing—
at he was restrained by no personal considerations
nd therefore what degree of compulsion he might
ply to his brother's son, or in what manner he
ght feel at liberty to punish his contumacy, should
disavow the Jacobite cause, must depend entirely
on the limits of his own conscience; and who was
answer for the conscience of a heated enthusiast,
o considers opposition to the party he has es-
used, as treason to the welfare of his country?
ter a short interval, Cristal Nixon was pleased to
ow some light upon the subject which agitated
n.

When that grim satellite rode up without ceremony
se to Darsie's side, the latter felt his very flesh
ep with abhorrence, so little was he able to endure
presence, since the story of Lilias had added to
instinctive hatred of the man. His voice, too,
nded like that of a screech-owl, as he said, "So,
young cock of the north, you now know it all,
d no doubt are blessing your uncle for stirring you
to such an honourable action."

'I will acquaint my uncle with my sentiments on
subject, before I make them known to any one
e," said Darsie, scarcely prevailing on his tongue
utter even these few words in a civil manner.

'Umph," murmured Cristal between his teeth.
'lose as wax, I see; and perhaps not quite so plia-
.—But take care, my pretty youth," he added,
rnfully; "Hugh Redgauntlet will prove a rough
t-breaker—he will neither spare whip-cord nor
r-rowel, I promise you."

'I have already said, Mr. Nixon," answered Dar-
, "that I will canvass those matters of which my
ter has informed me, with my uncle himself, and
h no other person."

'Nay, but a word of friendly advice would do you
harm, young master," replied Nixon. "Old Red-
ntlet is apter at a blow than a word—likely to bite
fore he barks—the true man for giving Scarbo-
gh warning, first knock you down, then bid you
nd.—So, methinks, a little kind warning as to con-
quences were not amiss, lest they come upon you
awares."

'If the warning is really kind, Mr. Nixon," said
young man, "I will hear it thankfully; and in-
d, if otherwise, I must listen to it whether I will or
, since I have at present no choice of company or
conversation."

'Nay, I have but little to say," said Nixon, affect-
; to give to his sullen and dogged manner the ap-
rance of an honest bluntness; "I am as little apt
throw away words as any one. But here is the
estion—Will you join heart and hand with your
ele, or no?"

'What if I should say Ay?" said Darsie, deter-
ned, if possible, to conceal his resolution from this
n.

'Why, then," said Nixon, somewhat surprised at
readiness of his answer, "all will go smooth,
course—you will take share in this noble undertak-
, and, when it succeeds, you will exchange your
n helmet for an Earl's coronet perhaps."

'And how if it fails?" said Darsie.

'Thereafter as it may be," said Nixon; "they who
y at bowls must meet with rubbers."

'Well, but suppose, then, I have some foolish ten-
ness for my windpipe, and that, when my uncle
poses the adventure to me, I should say No—how
n, Mr. Nixon?"

'Why, then, I would have you look to yourself,
ng master—There are sharp laws in France against
ractory pupils—*letters de cachet* are easily come by,
ien such men as we are concerned, with interest
mselves in the matter."

'But we are not in France," said poor Darsie,
ough whose blood ran a cold shivering at the idea
a French prison.

'A fast-*sailing lugger will soon bring* you there
ugh, *snug stowed under hatches*, like a cask of
nuight."

"But the French are at peace with us," said Dar-
sie, "and would not dare"——

"Why, who would ever hear of you?" interrupted
Nixon; "do you imagine that a foreign Court would
call you up for judgment, and put the sentence of
imprisonment in the *Courier de l' Europe*, as they
do at the Old Bailey?—No, no, young gentleman—
the gates of the Bastile, and of Mont Saint Michel,
and the Castle of Vincennes, move on d—d easy
hinges when they let folk in—not the least jar is
heard. There are cool cells there for hot heads—as
calm, and quiet, and dark, as you could wish in Bed-
lam—and the dismissal comes when the carpenter
brings the prisoner's coffin, and not sooner."

"Well, Mr. Nixon," said Darsie, affecting a cheer-
fulness which he was far from feeling, "mine is a
hard case—a sort of hanging choice, you will allow—
since I must either offend our own government here,
and run the risk of my life for doing so, or be doomed
to the dungeons of another country, whose laws I
have never offended, since I have never trod its soil—
Tell me what you would do if you were in my place."

"I'll tell you that when I *am* there," said Nixon,
and, checking his horse, fell back to the rear of the
little party.

"It is evident," thought the young man, "that the
villain believes me completely noosed, and perhaps
has the ineffable impudence to suppose that my sister
must eventually succeed to the possessions which
have occasioned my loss of freedom, and that his own
influence over the destinies of our unhappy family
may secure him possession of the heiress; but he
shall perish by my hand first!—I must now be on the
alert to make my escape, if possible, before I am
forced on shipboard—Blind Willie will not, I think,
desert me without an effort on my behalf, especially
if he has learned that I am the son of his late un-
happy patron.—What a change is mine! Whilst I
possessed neither rank nor fortune, I lived safely and
unknown, under the protection of the kind and re-
spectable friends whose hearts Heaven had moved
towards me—Now that I am the head of an honour-
able house, and that enterprises of the most daring
character wait my decision, and retainers and vassals
seem ready to rise at my beck, my safety consists
chiefly in the attachment of a blind stroller!"

While he was revolving these things in his mind,
and preparing himself for the interview with his
uncle, which could not but be a stormy one, he saw
Hugh Redgauntlet come riding slowly back to meet
them, without any attendants. Cristal Nixon rode
up as he approached, and, as they met, fixed on him
a look of inquiry.

"The fool, Crackenthorp," said Redgauntlet, "has
let strangers into his house. Some of his smuggling
comrades, I believe; we must ride slowly, to give him
time to send them packing."

"Did you see any of your friends?" said Cristal.

"Three, and have letters from many more. They
are unanimous on the subject you wot of—and the
point must be conceded to them, or far as the matter
has gone, it will go no farther."

"You will hardly bring the Father to stoop to his
flock," said Cristal, with a sneer.

"He must, and shall!" answered Redgauntlet,
briefly. "Go to the front, Cristal—I would speak
with my nephew.—I trust, Sir Arthur Redgauntlet,
you are satisfied with the manner in which I have
discharged my duty to your sister?"

"There can be no fault found to her manners or
sentiments," answered Darsie; "I am happy in know-
ing a relative so amiable."

"I am glad of it," answered Mr. Redgauntlet. "I
am no nice judge of women's qualifications, and my
life has been dedicated to one great object; so that
since she left France she has had but little opportu-
nity of improvement. I have subjected her, however,
as little as possible to the inconveniences and priva-
tions of my wandering and dangerous life. From
time to time she has resided for weeks and months
with families of honour and respectability, and I am
glad that she has, in your opinion, the manners and
behaviour which become her birth."

Darsie expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and

there was a little pause, which Redgauntlet broke by solemnly addressing his nephew.

"For you, my nephew, I also hoped to have done much. The weakness and timidity of your mother sequestered you from my care, or it would have been my pride and happiness to have trained up the son of my unhappy brother in those paths of honour in which our ancestors have always trod."

"Now comes the storm," thought Darsie to himself, and began to collect his thoughts, as the cautious master of a vessel furls his sails, and makes his ship snug, when he discerns the approaching squall.

"My mother's conduct, in respect to me, might be misjudged," he said, "but it was founded on the most anxious affection."

"Assuredly," said his uncle, "and I have no wish to reflect on her memory, though her mistrust has done so much injury, I will not say to me, but to the cause of my unhappy country. Her scheme was, I think, to have made you that wretched pettifogging being, which they still continue to call in derision by the once respectable name of a Scottish Advocate; one of those mongrel things, that must creep to learn the ultimate decision of his causes to the bar of a foreign Court, instead of pleading before the independent and august Parliament of his own native kingdom."

"I did prosecute the study of law for a year or two," said Darsie, "but I found I had neither taste nor talents for the science."

"And left it with scorn, doubtless," said Mr. Redgauntlet. "Well, I now hold up to you, my dearest nephew, a more worthy object of ambition. Look eastward—do you see a monument standing on yonder plain, near a hamlet?"

Darsie replied that he did.

"The hamlet is called Burgh-upon-sands, and yonder monument is erected to the memory of the tyrant Edward I. The just hand of Providence overtook him on that spot, as he was leading his bands to complete the subjugation of Scotland, whose civil dissensions began under his accursed policy. The glorious career of Bruce might have been stopped in its outset; the field of Bannockburn might have remained a bloodless turf, if God had not removed, in the very crisis, the crafty and bold tyrant who had so long been Scotland's scourge. Edward's grave is the cradle of our national freedom. It is within sight of that great landmark of our liberty that I have to propose to you an undertaking, second in honour and importance to none since the immortal Bruce stabbed the Red Comyn, and grasped, with his yet bloody hand, the independent crown of Scotland."

He paused for an answer; but Darsie, overawed by the energy of his manner, and unwilling to commit himself by a hasty explanation, remained silent.

"I will not suppose," said Hugh Redgauntlet, after a pause, "that you are either so dull as not to comprehend the import of my words—or so dastardly as to be dismayed by my proposal—or so utterly degenerate from the blood and sentiments of your ancestors, as not to feel my summons as the horse hears the war-trumpet."

"I will not pretend to misunderstand you, sir," said Darsie; "but an enterprise directed against a dynasty now established for three reigns requires strong arguments, both in point of justice and of expediency, to recommend it to men of conscience and prudence."

"I will not," said Redgauntlet, while his eyes sparkled with anger,—"I will not hear you speak a word against the justice of that enterprise, for which your oppressed country calls with the voice of a parent, entreating her children for aid—or against that noble revenge which your father's blood demands from his dishonoured grave. His skull is yet standing over the Rikargate,* and even its bleak and mouldered jaws command you to be a man. I ask you, in the name of God, and of your country, will you draw your sword, and go with me to Carlisle, *were it but to lay your father's head, now the perch of the obscene owl and carrion crow, and of every ribald clown, in consecrated earth, his long ancestry?*"

Darsie, unprepared to answer an appeal m so much passion, and not doubting a dire would cost him his liberty or life, was again

"I see," said his uncle, in a more compo "that it is not deficiency of spirit, but the habits of a confined education, among the rited class you were condemned to herd w keeps you silent. You scarce yet believe y Redgauntlet: your pulse has not yet learned uine throb that answers to the summons o and patriotism."

"I trust," replied Darsie, at last, "that I sh be found indifferent to the call of either; b swer them with effect—even were I convi they now sounded in my ear—I must see sonable hope of success in the desperate ent which you would involve me. I look aroun I see a settled government—an established —a born Briton on the throne—the very mountaineers, upon whom alone the trust iled family reposed, assembled into regimen act under the orders of the existing dynasty.* has been utterly dismayed by the tremendou of the last war, and will hardly provoke All without and within the kingdom is a encountering a hopeless struggle, and you seem willing to undertake a desperate enter

"And would undertake it were it ten ti desperate; and have agitated it when ten obstacles were interposed.—Have I forgot ther's blood?—Can I—dare I even now Pater Noster, since my enemies and the remain unforgiven?—Is there an art I have tised—a privation to which I have not sub bring on the crisis which I now behold a Have I not been a vowed and a devoted going every comfort of social life, renoun the exercise of devotion unless when I mi in prayer my prince and country, submittin thing to make converts to this noble cause done all this, and shall I now stop short? was about to interrupt him, but he pressed affectionately upon his shoulder, and enj rather imploring silence.—"Peace," he said my ancestor's fame—heir of all my hopes a —Peace, son of my slaughtered brother sought for thee, and mourned for thee, as for an only child. Do not let me again l the moment when you are restored to my h lieve me, I distrust so much my own impa per, that I entreat you, as the dearest boon, to awaken it at this crisis."

Darsie was not sorry to reply, that his the person of his relation would induce him to all which he had to apprize him of, before ed any definite resolution upon the weight of deliberation which he proposed to him.

"Deliberation!" repeated Redgauntlet, im "and yet it is not ill said.—I wish there more warmth in thy reply, Arthur; but I m lect were an eagle bred in a falcon's mew, a like a reclaimed hawk, he could not at steadily on the sun. Listen to me my deare The state of this nation no more implies than the florid colour of a feverish patient tom of health. All is false and hollow—the success of Chatham's administration ha the country deeper in debt than all the ba of Canada are worth, were they as fertile shire—the dazzling lustre of the victories o and Quebec have been dimmed by the disgr hasty peace—by the war, England, at imm pense, gained nothing but honour, and has gratuitously resigned. Many eyes, forr and indifferent, are now looking towards t our ancient and rightful monarchs, as the o

* *The northern gate of Carlisle was long garnished with the heads of the Scottish rebels executed in 1716.*

* The Highland regiments were first employed b brated Earl of Chatham, who assumed to himself n gree of praise for having called forth to the ser country and the government, the valour which w often directed against both.

e approaching storm—the rich are alarmed—the
ss are disgusted—the populace are inflamed—and
ed of patriots, whose measures are more safe that
r numbers are few, have resolved to set up King
ames's standard."
"But the military," said Darsie—"how can you,
a body of unarmed and disorderly insurgents,
ope to encounter a regular army? The High-
ers are now totally disarmed."
"To a great measure, perhaps," answered Red-
tlet; "but the policy which raised the Highland
ments has provided for that. We have already
ms in these corps; nor can we doubt for a mo-
what their conduct will be, when the white
ade is once more mounted. The rest of the
ing army has been greatly reduced since the
; and we reckon confidently on our standard
joined by thousands of the disbanded troops."
"Alas!" said Darsie, "and is it upon such vague
as these, the inconstant humour of a crowd,
a disbanded soldiery, that men of honour are
ed to risk their families, their property, their
?"
"Men of honour, boy," said Redgauntlet, his eyes
cing with impatience, "set life, property, family,
all at stake, when that honour commands it!
are not now weaker than when seven men, land-
in the wilds of Moidart, shook the throne of the
per till it tottered—won two pitched fields, besides
running one kingdom and the half of another,
d, but for treachery, would have achieved what
r venturous successors are now to attempt in their
n."
"And will such an attempt be made in serious ear-
st?" said Darsie. "Excuse me, my uncle, if I can
ce believe a fact so extraordinary. Will there
ly be found men of rank and consequence sufficient
renew the adventure of 1745?"
"I will not give you my confidence by halves, Sir
thur," replied his uncle—"Look at that scroll—
at say you to these names?—Are they not the
er of the Western shires—of Wales—of Scot-
d?"
The paper contains indeed the names of many that
great and noble," replied Darsie, after perusing it;
t"——
"But what?" asked his uncle impatiently; "do
doubt the ability of those nobles and gentlemen
rnish the aid in men and money, at which they
rated?"
"Not their ability certainly," said Darsie, "for of
I am no competent judge;—but I see in this
l the name of Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet
hat Ilk, rated at a hundred men and upwards—
rtainly am ignorant how he is to redeem that
ge."
"I will be responsible for the men," replied Hugh
gauntlet.
"But, my dear uncle," added Darsie, "I hope for
r sake, that the other individuals, whose names
here written, have had more acquaintance with
r plan than I have been indulged with."
"For thee and thine I can be myself responsible,"
Redgauntlet; "for if thou hast not the courage
ead the force of thy house, the leading shall pass
ther hands, and thy inheritance shall depart from
, like vigour and verdure from a rotten branch.
these honourable persons a slight condition there
hich they annex to their friendship—something so
ng that it is scarce worthy of mention. This boon
ted to them by him who is most interested, there
question they will take the field in the manner
e stated."
ain Darsie perused the paper, and felt himself
ess inclined to believe that so many men of family
fortune were likely to embark in an enterprise so
. It seemed as if some rash plotter had put down
venture the names of all whom common report
ted with Jacobitism; or if it was really the act of
individuals named, he suspected they must be
re of some mode of excusing themselves from com-
ce with its purport. It was impossible, he thought,
Englishmen, of *large fortune, who had failed to*
Charles when he broke into England at the head
of a victorious army, should have the least thoughts
of encouraging a descent when circumstances were so
much less propitious. He therefore concluded the en-
terprise would fall to pieces of itself, and that his best
way was, in the mean time, to remain silent, unless the
actual approach of a crisis (which might, however,
never arrive) should compel him to give a downright
refusal to his uncle's proposition; and if, in the inte-
rim, some door for escape should be opened, he re-
solved within himself not to omit availing himself
of it.

Hugh Redgauntlet watched his nephew's looks for
some time, and then, as if arriving from some other
process of reasoning at the same conclusion, he said,
"I have told you, Sir Arthur, that I do not urge your
immediate accession to my proposal; indeed the con-
sequences of a refusal would be so dreadful to your-
self, so destructive to all the hopes which I have
nursed, that I would not risk, by a moment's impa-
tience, the object of my whole life. Yes, Arthur, I
have been a self-denying hermit at one time—at an-
other, the apparent associate of outlaws and despera-
does—at another, the subordinate agent of men whom
I felt every way my inferiors—not for any selfish pur-
pose of my own, no, not even to win for myself the
renown of being the principal instrument in restoring
my King and freeing my country. My first wish on
earth is for that restoration and that freedom—my
next, that my nephew, the representative of my house,
and of the brother of my love, may have the advan-
tage and the credit of all my efforts in the good cause.
But," he added, darting on Darsie one of his withering
frowns, "if Scotland and my father's House cannot
stand and flourish together, then perish the very name
of Redgauntlet! perish the son of my brother, with
every recollection of the glories of my family, of the
affections of my youth, rather than my country's
cause should be injured in the tithing of a barleycorn!
The spirit of Sir Alberick is alive within me at this
moment," he continued, drawing up his stately form,
and sitting erect in his saddle, while he pressed his
finger against his forehead; "and if you yourself
crossed my path in opposition, I swear, by the mark
that darkens my brow, that a new deed should be
done—a new doom should be deserved!"

He was silent, and his threats were uttered in a tone
of voice so deeply resolute; that Darsie's heart sunk
within him, when he reflected on the storm of passion
which he must encounter, if he declined to join his
uncle in a project to which prudence and principle
made him equally adverse. He had scarce any hope
left but in temporizing until he could make his escape,
and resolved to avail himself for that purpose of the
delay which his uncle seemed not unwilling to grant.
The stern, gloomy look of his companion became re-
laxed by degrees, and presently afterwards he made a
sign to Miss Redgauntlet to join the party, and began
a forced conversation on ordinary topics; in the course
of which Darsie observed that his sister seemed to
speak under the most cautious restraint, weighing
every word before she uttered it, and always permitting
her uncle to give the tone to the conversation, though
of the most trifling kind. This seemed to him (such
an opinion had he already entertained of his sister's
good sense and firmness) the strongest proof he had
yet received of his uncle's peremptory character, since
he saw it observed with so much deference by a young
person whose sex might have given her privileges,
and who seemed by no means deficient either in spirit
or firmness.

The little cavalcade was now approaching the
house of Father Crackenthorp, situated, as the reader
knows, by the side of the Solway, and not far distan.
from a rude pier, near which lay several fishing-boats,
which frequently acted in a different capacity. The
house of the worthy publican was also adapted to the
various occupations which he carried on, being a
large scrambling assemblage of cottages attached to
a house of two stories, roofed with flags of sandstone
—the original mansion, to which the extension of
Master Crackenthorp's trade had occasioned his
making many additions. Instead of the single long
watering-trough, which usually distinguishes the front
of the English public-house of the second class, there

were three conveniences of that kind, for the use, as the landlord used to say, of the troop-horses, when the soldiers came to search his house; while a knowing leer and a nod, let you understand what species of troops he was thinking of. A huge ash-tree before the door, which had reared itself to a great size and height, in spite of the blasts from the neighbouring Solway, overshadowed, as usual, the ale-bench, as our ancestors called it, where, though it was still early in the day, several fellows, who seemed to be gentlemen's servants, were drinking beer and smoking. One or two of them wore liveries, which seemed known to Mr. Redgauntlet, for he muttered between his teeth, "Fools, fools! were they on a march to hell, they must have their rascals in livery with them, that the whole world might know who were going to be damned."

As he thus muttered, he drew bridle before the door of the place, from which several other lounging guests began to issue, to look with indolent curiosity, as usual, upon an *arrival*.

Redgauntlet sprung from his horse, and assisted his niece to dismount; but, forgetting, perhaps, his nephew's disguise, he did not pay him the attention which his female dress demanded.

The situation of Darsie was indeed something awkward; for Cristal Nixon, out of caution perhaps to prevent escape, had muffled the extreme folds of the riding-skirt with which he was accoutred, around his ankles and under his feet, and there secured it with large corking-pins. We presume that gentlemen-cavaliers may sometimes cast their eyes to that part of the person of the fair equestrians whom they chance occasionally to escort; and if they will conceive their own feet, like Darsie's, muffled in such a labyrinth of folds and amplitude of robe, as modesty doubtless induces the fair creatures to assume upon such occasions, they will allow that, on a first attempt, they might find some awkwardness in dismounting. Darsie, at least, was in such a predicament, for, not receiving adroit assistance from the attendant of Mr. Redgauntlet, he stumbled as he dismounted from the horse, and might have had a bad fall, had it not been broken by the gallant interposition of a gentleman, who probably was, on his part, a little surprised at the solid weight of the distressed fair one whom he had the honour to receive in his embrace. But what was his surprise to that of Darsie's, when the hurry of the moment, and of the accident, permitted him to see that it was his friend Alan Fairford in whose arms he found himself! A thousand apprehensions rushed on him, mingled with the full career of hope and joy, inspired by the unexpected appearance of his beloved friend, at the very crisis, it seemed, of his fate.

He was about to whisper in his ear, cautioning him at the same time to be silent; yet he hesitated for a second or two to effect his purpose, since, should Redgauntlet take the alarm from any sudden exclamation on the part of Alan, there was no saying what consequences might ensue.

Ere he could decide what was to be done, Redgauntlet, who had entered the house, returned hastily, followed by Cristal Nixon. "I'll release you of the charge of this young lady, sir;" he said, haughtily, to Alan Fairford, whom he probably did not recognise.

"I had no desire to intrude, sir," replied Alan; "the lady's situation seemed to require assistance—and—but have I not the honour to speak to Mr. Herries of Birrenswork?"

"You are mistaken, sir," said Redgauntlet, turning short off, and making a sign with his hand to Cristal, who hurried Darsie, however unwillingly, into the house, whispering in his ear, "Come, miss, let us have no making of acquaintance from the windows. Ladies of fashion must be private. Show us a room, Father Crackenthorp."

So saying, he conducted Darsie into the house interposing at the same time his person betwixt the supposed young lady and the stranger of whom he was so suspicious, as to make communication by signs impossible. As they entered, they heard the sound of a fiddle in the stone-floored and well sanded kitchen, through which they were about to follow their corpulent host, and where several people seemed engaged in dancing to its strains.

"D—n thee," said Nixon to Crackenthorp, "would you have the lady go through all the mob of the parish?—Hast thou no more private way to our sitting room?"

"None that is fit for my travelling," answered the landlord, laying his hand on his portly stomach. "I am not Tom Turnpenny, to creep like a lizard through keyholes."

So saying, he kept moving on through the revellers in the kitchen; and Nixon holding Darsie by his arm, as if to offer the lady support, but in all probability to frustrate any effort at escape, moved through the crowd, which presented a very motley appearance, consisting of domestic servants, country fellows, seamen, and other idlers, whom Wandering Willie was regaling with his music.

To pass another friend without intimation of his presence would have been actual pusillanimity; and just when they were passing the blind man's elevated seat, Darsie asked him, with some emphasis, whether he could not play a Scottish air?—The man's face had been the instant before devoid of all sort of expression, going through his performance like a clown through a beautiful country, too much accustomed to consider it as a task, to take any interest in the performance, and, in fact, scarce seeming to hear the noise that he was creating. In a word, he might at the time have made a companion to my friend Wilkie's inimitable blind crowder. But with Wandering Willie this was only an occasional, and a rare fit of dulness, such as will at times creep over all the professors of the fine arts, arising either from fatigue, or contempt of the present audience, or that caprice which so often tempts painters and musicians, and great actors, in the phrase of the latter, to *walk through* their part, instead of exerting themselves with the energy which acquired their fame. But when the performer heard the voice of Darsie, his countenance became at once illuminated, and showed the complete mistake of those who suppose that the principal point of expression depends upon the eyes. With his face turned to the point from which the sound came, his upper lip a little curved, and quivering with agitation, and with a colour which surprise and pleasure had brought at once into his faded cheek, he exchanged the humdrum hornpipe which he had been sawing out with reluctant and lazy bow, for the fine Scottish air,

"You're welcome, Charlie Stewart,"

which flew from his strings as if by inspiration, and after a breathless pause of admiration among the audience, was received with a clamour of applause, which seemed to show that the name and tendency, as well as the execution of the tune, was in the highest degree acceptable to all the party assembled.

In the mean time, Cristal Nixon, still keeping hold of Darsie, and following the landlord, forced his way with some difficulty through the crowded kitchen, and entered a small apartment on the other side of it, where they found Lilias Redgauntlet already seated. Here Nixon gave way to his suppressed resentment, and turning sternly on Crackenthorp, threatened him with his master's severest displeasure, because things were in such bad order to receive his family, when he had given such special advice that he desired to be private. But Father Crackenthorp was not a man to be brow-beaten.

"Why, brother Nixon, thou art angry this morning," he replied; "hast risen from thy wrong side, I think. You know, as well as I, that most of this mob is of the Squire's own making—gentlemen that come with their servants, and so forth, to meet him in the way of business, as old Tom Turnpenny says—the very last that came was sent down with Dick Gardener from Fairladies."

"But the blind scraping scoundrel yonder," said Nixon, "how dared you take such a rascal as that across your threshold at such a time as this?—If the Squire should dream you have a thought of poaching—I am only speaking for your good, Father Crackenthorp."

"Why, look ye, brother Nixon," said Crackenthorp, turning his quid with great composure, "the squire is a very worthy gentleman, and I'll never deny it; but I am neither his servant nor his tenant, and so he need send me none of his orders till he hears I have put on his livery. As for turning away folk from my door, I might as well plug up the ale-tap, and pull down the sign—and as for poaching, and such like, the Squire will find the folk here are as honest to the full as those he brings with him."

"How, you impudent lump of tallow," said Nixon, "what do you mean by that?"

"Nothing," said Crackenthorp, "but that I can hear out as well as another—you understand me—keep good lights in my upper story—know a thing or two more than most folk in this country. If folk will come to my house on dangerous errands, egad they shall not find Joe Crackenthorp a cat's-paw. I'll keep myself clear, you may depend on it, and let every man answer for his own actions—that's my way—any thing wanted, Master Nixon?"

"No—Yes—begone!" said Nixon, who seemed embarrassed with the landlord's contumacy, yet desirous to conceal the effect it produced on him.

The door was no sooner closed on Crackenthorp, than Miss Redgauntlet, addressing Nixon, commanded him to leave the room, and go to his proper place.

"How, madam?" said the fellow sullenly, yet with an air of respect, "Would you have your uncle pistol me for disobeying his orders?"

"He may perhaps pistol you for some other reason, if you do not obey mine," said Lilias, composedly.

"You abuse your advantage over me, madam—I really dare not go—I am on guard over this other Miss here; and if I should desert my post, my life were not worth five minutes' purchase."

"Then know your post, sir," said Lilias, "and watch on the outside of the door. You have no commission to listen to our private conversation, I suppose? Begone, sir, without further speech or remonstrance, or I will tell my uncle that which you would have reason to repent he should know."

The fellow looked at her with a singular expression of spite, mixed with deference. "You abuse your advantages, madam," he said, "and act as foolishly in doing so, as I did in affording you such a hank over me. But you are a tyrant; and tyrants have commonly short reigns."

So saying, he left the apartment.

"The wretch's unparalleled insolence," said Lilias to her brother, "has given me one great advantage over him. For, knowing that my uncle would shoot him with as little remorse as a woodcock, if he but guessed at his brazen-faced assurance towards me, he dares not since that time assume, so far as I am concerned, the air of insolent domination which the possession of my uncle's secrets, and the knowledge of his most secret plans, have led him to exert over others of his family."

"In the mean time," said Darsie, "I am happy to see that the landlord of the house does not seem so devoted to him as I apprehended; and this aids the hope of escape which I am nourishing for you and for myself. O, Lilias! the truest of friends, Alan Fairford, is in pursuit of me, and is here at this moment. Another humble, but, I think, faithful friend, is also within these dangerous walls."

Lilias laid her finger on her lips, and pointed to the door. Darsie took the hint, lowered his voice, and informed her in whispers of the arrival of Fairford, and that he believed he had opened a communication with Wandering Willie. She listened with the utmost interest, and had just begun to reply, when a loud noise was heard in the kitchen, caused by several contending voices, amongst which Darsie thought he could distinguish that of Alan Fairford.

Forgetting how little his own condition permitted him to become the assistant of another, Darsie flew to the door of the room, and finding it locked and bolted on the outside, rushed against it with all his force, and made the *most desperate efforts* to burst it open, *notwithstanding the entreaties of his sister* that he would compose himself, and recollect the condition in which he was placed. But the door, framed to withstand the attacks of excisemen, constables, and other personages, considered as worthy to use what are called the King's keys,* and there with to make lockfast places open and patent," set his efforts at defiance. Mean time the noise continued without, and we are to give an account of its origin in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

NARRATIVE OF DARSIE LATIMER, CONTINUED.

Joe Crackenthorp's public-house had never, since it first reared its chimneys on the banks of the Solway, been frequented by such a miscellaneous group of visiters as had that morning become its guests. Several of them were persons whose quality seemed much superior to their dresses and modes of travelling. The servants who attended them contradicted the inferences to be drawn from the garb of their masters, and, according to the custom of the knights of the rainbow, gave many hints that they were not people to serve any but men of first-rate consequence. These gentlemen, who had come thither chiefly for the purpose of meeting with Mr. Redgauntlet, seemed moody and anxious, conversed and walked together, apparently in deep conversation, and avoided any communication with the chance travellers whom accident brought that morning to the same place of resort.

As if Fate had set herself to confound the plans of the Jacobite conspirators, the number of travellers was unusually great, their appearance respectable, and they filled the public tap-room of the inn, where the political guests had already occupied most of the private apartments.

Amongst others, honest Joshua Geddes had arrived, travelling, as he said, in the sorrow of his soul, and mourning for the fate of Darsie Latimer as he would for his first-born child. He had skirted the whole coast of the Solway, besides making various trips into the interior, not shunning, on such occasions, to expose himself to the laugh of the scorner, nay, even to serious personal risk, by frequenting the haunts of smugglers, horse-jockeys, and other irregular persons, who looked on his intrusion with jealous eyes, and were apt to consider him as an excise-man in the disguise of a Quaker. All this labour and peril, however, had been undergone in vain. No search he could make obtained the least intelligence of Latimer, so that he began to fear the poor lad had been spirited abroad; for the practice of kidnapping was then not infrequent, especially on the western coasts of Britain, if indeed he had escaped a briefer and more bloody fate.

With a heavy heart, he delivered his horse, even Solomon, into the hands of the hostler, and walking into the inn, demanded from the landlord breakfast and a private room. Quakers, and such hosts as old Father Crackenthorp, are no congenial spirits; the latter looked askew over his shoulder, and replied, "If you would have breakfast here, friend, you are like to eat it where other folk eat theirs."

"And wherefore can I not," said the Quaker, "have an apartment to myself, for my money?"

"Because, Master Jonathan, you must wait till your betters be served, and then eat with your equals."

Joshua Geddes argued the point no farther, but sitting quietly down on the seat which Crackenthorp indicated to him, and calling for a pint of ale, with some bread, butter, and Dutch cheese, began to satisfy the appetite which the morning air had rendered unusually alert.

While the honest Quaker was thus employed, another stranger entered the apartment, and sat down near to the table on which his victuals were placed. He looked repeatedly at Joshua, licked his parched and chapped lips as he saw the good Quaker masticate his bread and cheese, and sucked up his thin chops when Mr. Geddes applied the tankard to his mouth, as if the discharge of these bodily functions by

* In common parlance, a crowbar and hatchet.

another had awakened his sympathies in an uncontrollable degree. At last, being apparently unable to withstand his longings, he asked, in a faltering tone, the huge landlord, who was tramping through the room in all corpulent impatience, "whether he could have a plack-pie?"

"Never heard of such a thing, master," said the landlord, and was about to trudge onward; when the guest, detaining him, said, in a strong Scottish tone, "Ye will maybe have nae whey then, nor buttermilk, nor ye couldna exhibit a souter's clod?"

"Can't tell what ye are talking about, master," said Crackenthorp.

"Then ye will have nae breakfast that will come within the compass of a shilling Scots?"

"Which is a penny sterling," answered Crackenthorp, with a sneer. "Why, no, Sawney, I can't say as we have—we can't afford it; but you shall have a bellyful for love, as we say in the bull-ring."

"I shall never refuse a fair offer," said the poverty-stricken guest; "and I will say that for the English, if they were deils, that they are a eeeveleesed people to gentlemen that are under a cloud."

Gentlemen!—humph!" said Crackenthorp—"not a bluecap among them but halts upon that foot." Then seizing on a dish which still contained a huge cantle of what had been once a princely mutton pasty, he placed it on the table before the stranger, saying, "There, master gentleman; there is what is worth all the black pies, as you call them, that were ever made of sheep's head."

"Sheep's head is a gude thing, for a' that," replied the guest; but not being spoken so loud as to offend his hospitable entertainer, the interjection might pass for a private protest against the scandal thrown out against the standing dish of Caledonia.

This premised, he immediately began to transfer the mutton and pie-crust from his plate to his lips, in such huge gobbets, as if he was refreshing after a three days' fast, and laying in provisions against a whole Lent to come.

Joshua Geddes in his turn gazed on him with surprise, having never, he thought, beheld such a gaunt expression of hunger in the act of eating. "Friend," he said, after watching him for some minutes, "if thou gorgest thyself in this fashion, thou wilt assuredly choke. Wilt thou not take a draught out of my cup to help down all that dry meat?"

"Troth," said the stranger, stopping and looking at the friendly propounder, "that's nae bad overture, as they say in the General Assembly. I have heard waur motions than that frae wiser counsel."

Mr. Geddes ordered a quart of home-brewed to be placed before our friend Peter Peebles; for the reader must have already conceived that this unfortunate litigant was the wanderer in question.

The victim of Themis had no sooner seen the flagon than he seized it with the same energy which he had displayed in operating upon the pie—puffed off the froth with such emphasis, that some of it lighted on Mr. Geddes's head—and then said, as if with a sudden recollection of what was due to civility, "Here's to ye, friend.—What! are ye ower grand to give me an answer, or are ye dull o' hearing?"

"I prithee drink thy liquor, friend," said the good Quaker; "thou meanest it in civility, but we care not for these idle fashions."

"What! ye are a Quaker, are ye?" said Peter; and without further ceremony, [illegible] the flagon to his head, from which he withdrew it not while a single drop of "barley-broo" remained.—"That's done you and me muckle gude," he said, sighing as he set down his pot; "but twa mutchkins o' yill between twa folk is a drappie ower little measure. What say ye to anither pot? or shall we cry in a blithe Scots pint at ance?—The yill is no amiss."

"Thou mayst call for what thou wilt on thine own charges, friend," said Geddes; "for myself, I willingly contribute to the quenching of thy natural thirst; but I fear it were no such easy matter to relieve thy acquired and artificial drouth."

"That is to say in plain terms, ye are for withdrawing your caution with the folk of the house? You Quaker folk are but fause comforters; but since ye have garred me drink sae muckle cauld yill—me that am no used to the like of it in the forenoon—I think ye might as weel have offered me a glass of brandy or usquebae—I'm nae nice body—I can drink ony think that's wet and toothsome."

"Not a drop at my cost, friend," quoth Geddes. "Thou art an old man, and hast, perchance, a heavy and long journey before thee. Thou art, moreover, my countryman, as I judge from thy tongue; and I will not give thee the means of dishonouring thy gray hairs in a strange land."

"Gray hairs, neighbour!" said Peter, with a wink to the bystanders,—whom this dialogue began to interest, and who were in hopes of seeing the Quaker played off by the crazed beggar, for such Peter Pebbles appeared to be,—"Gray hairs! The Lord mend your eyesight, neighbour, that disna ken gray hairs frae a tow wig!"

This jest procured a shout of laughter, and, what was still more acceptable than dry applause, a man who stood beside called out, "Father Crackenthorp, bring a nipperkin of brandy. I'll bestow a dram on this fellow, were it but for that very word."

The brandy was immediately brought by a wench who acted as bar-maid; and Peter, with a grin of delight, filled a glass, quaffed it off, and then saying, "God bless me! I was so unmannerly as not to drink to ye—I think the Quaker has smitten me wi' his ill-bred havings,"—he was about to fill another, when his hand was arrested by his new friend; who said, at the same time, "No, no, friend—fair play's a jewel—time about, if you please." And filling a glass for himself, emptied it as gallantly as Peter could have done. "What say you to that, friend?" he continued, addressing the Quaker.

"Nay, friend," answered Joshua, "it went down thy throat, not mine; and I have nothing to say about what concerns me not; but if thou art a man of humanity, thou wilt not give this poor creature the means of debauchery. Bethink thee that they will spurn him from the door, as they would do a houseless and masterless dog, and that he may die on the sands or on the common. And if he has through the means been rendered incapable of helping himself, thou shalt not be innocent of his blood."

"Faith, Broadbrim, I believe thou art right, and the old gentleman in the flaxen jazy shall have no more of the comforter—Besides, we have business in hand to-day, and this fellow, for as mad as he looks may have a nose on his face after all.—Hark ye, father,—what is your name, and what brings you into such an out-of-the-way corner?"

"I am not just free to condescend on my name," said Peter; "and as for my business—there is a wee dribble of brandy in the stoup—it would be wrang to leave it to the lass—it is learning her bad usages."

"Well, thou shalt have the brandy, and be d—d to thee, if thou wilt tell me what you art making here."

"Seeking a young advocate chap that they ca' Alan Fairford, that has played me a slippery trick, an ye maun ken, a' about the cause," said Peter.

"An advocate, man!" answered the Captain of the Jumping Jenny—for it was he, and no other, who had taken compassion on Peter's drought; "why, Lord help thee, thou art on the wrong side of the Frith to seek advocates, whom I take to be Scottish lawyers, not English."

"English lawyers, man!" exclaimed Peter, "the deil a lawyer's in a' England."

"I wish from my soul it were true," said Gwart; "but what the devil put that in your head?"

"Lord, man, I got a grip of ane of their attorneys in Carlisle, and he tauld me that there wasna a lawyer in England, ony mair than himself, that kend the nature of a multiplepoinding! And when I tauld him how this loopy lad, Alan Fairford, had served me, he said I might bring an action on the case—just as if the case hadna as mony actions already as one case can weel carry. By my word, it is a gude case, and muckle has it borne, in its day, of various procedure—but it's the barley-pickle breaks the naig's back, and wi' my consent it shall not hae ony mair burden laid upon it."

"But this Alan Fairford?" said Nanty—"some-

sip up the drop of brandy, man, and tell me some more about him, and whether you are seeking him for good or for harm."

"For my ain gude, and for his harm, to be sure," said Peter. "Think of his having left my cause in the dead-thraw between the tyneing and the winning, and capering off into Cumberland here, after a wild loup-the-tether lad they ca' Darsie Latimer."

"Darsie Latimer!" said Mr. Geddes, hastily; "do you know any thing of Darsie Latimer?"

"May be I do, and may be I do not," answered Peter; "I am not free to answer every body's interrogatory, unless it is put judicially, and by form of law—specially where folk think so much of a caup of sour yill, or a thimbleful of brandy. But as for this gentleman, that has shown himself a gentleman at breakfast, and will show himself a gentleman at the meridian, I am free to condescend upon any points in the cause that may appear to bear upon the question at issue."

"Why, all I want to know from you, my friend, is whether you are seeking to do this Mr. Alan Fairford good or harm; because if you come to do him good, I think you could maybe get speech of him—and if to do him harm, I will take the liberty to give you a cast across the Frith, with fair warning not to come back on such an errand, lest worse come of it."

The manner and language of Ewart were such, that Joshua Geddes resolved to keep cautious silence, till he could more plainly discover whether he was likely to aid or impede him in his researches after Darsie Latimer. He therefore determined to listen attentively to what should pass between Peter and the seaman, and to watch for an opportunity of questioning the former, so soon as he should be separated from his new acquaintance.

"I wad by no means," said Peter Peebles, "do any substantial harm to the poor lad Fairford, who has had mony a gowd guinea of mine, as weel as his father before him; but I wad hae him brought back to the minding of my business and his ain; and maybe I wadna insist farther in my action of damages against him, than for refounding the fees, and for some annual rent on the principal sum, due frae the day on which he should have recovered it for me, plack and bawbee, at the great advising; for, ye are aware, that is the least that I can ask *nomine damni;* and I have nae thought to break down the lad bodily and thegither—we maun live and let live—forgie and forget."

"The deuce take me, friend Broadbrim," said Nanty Ewart, looking to the Quaker, "if I can make out what this old scarecrow means. If I thought it was fitting that Master Fairford should see him, why perhaps it is a matter that could be managed. Do you know any thing about the old fellow?—you seemed to take some charge of him just now."

"No more than I should have done by any one in distress," said Geddes, not sorry to be appealed to; "but I will try what I can do to find out who he is, and what he is about in this country—But are we not a little too public in this open room?"

"It's well thought of," said Nanty; and at his command the bar-maid ushered the party into a side-booth, Peter attending them, in the instinctive hope that there would be more liquor drank among them before parting. They had scarce sat down in their new apartment, when the sound of a violin was heard in the room which they had just left.

"I'll awa back yonder," said Peter, rising up again; "yon's the sound of a fiddle, and where there is music, there's aye something ganging to eat or drink."

"I am just going to order something here," said the Quaker; "but, in the mean time, have you any objection, my good friend, to tell us your name?"

"None in the world, if you are wanting to drink to me by name and surname," answered Peebles; "but otherwise, I would rather evite your interrogatories."

"Friend," said the Quaker, "it is not for thine own health, seeing thou hast drunk enough already—however—Here, handmaiden—bring me a gill of sherry."

"Sherry's but shilpit drink, and a gill's a sma' measure for twa gentlemen to crack ower at their first acquaintance.—But let us see your sneaking gill of sherry," *said Poor Peter, thrusting forth his huge hand to seize on the diminutive pewter measure,* which, according to the fashion of the time, contained the generous liquor freshly drawn from the butt.

"Nay, hold, friend," said Joshua, "thou hast not yet told me what name and surname I am to call thee by."

"D—d sly in the Quaker," said Nanty, apart, "to make him to pay for his liquor before he gives it him. Now, I am such a fool, that I should have let him get too drunk to open his mouth, before I thought of asking him a question."

"My name is Peter Peebles, then," said the litigant, rather sulkily, as one who thought his liquor too sparingly meted out to him; "and what have you to say to that?"

"Peter Peebles?" repeated Nanty Ewart, and seemed to muse upon something which the words brought to his remembrance, while the Quaker pursued his examination.

"But I prithee, Peter Peebles, what is thy further designation?—Thou knowest, in our country, that some men are distinguished by their craft and calling, as cordwainers, fishers, weavers, or the like, and some by their titles as proprietors of lands, (which savours of vanity)—Now, how may you be distinguished from others of the same name?"

"As Peter Peebles of the great plea of Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstanes, *et per contra*—if I am laird of naething else, I am aye a *dominus litis.*"

"It's but a poor lairdship, I doubt," said Joshua.

"Pray, Mr. Peebles," said Nanty, interrupting the conversation abruptly, "were not you once a burgess of Edinburgh?"

"*Was* I a burgess!" said Peter, indignantly, "and *am* I not a burgess even now? I have done nothing to forfeit my right, I trow—once provost and aye my lord."

"Well, Mr. Burgess, tell me farther, have you not some property in the Gude Town?" continued Ewart.

"Troth have I—that is, before my misfortunes, I had twa or three bonny bits of mailings amang the closes and wynds, forby the shop and the story abune it. But Plainstanes has put me to the causeway now. Never mind though, I will be upsides with him yet."

"Had not you once a tenement in the Covenant Close?" again demanded Nanty.

"You have hit it, lad, though ye look not like a Covenanter," said Peter; "we'll drink to its memory—[Hout! the heart's at the mouth o' that ill-faur'd bit stoup already!]—it brought a rent, reckoning from the crawstep to the groundsill, that ye might ca' fourteen punds a-year, forby the laigh cellar that was let to Lucky Littleworth."

"And do you not remember that you had a poor old lady for your tenant, Mrs. Cantrips of Kittlebasket?" said Nanty, suppressing his emotion with difficulty.

"Remember! G—d, I have gude cause to remember her," said Peter, "for she turned a dyvour on my hands, the auld besom! and, after a' that the law could do to make me satisfied and paid, in the way of poinding and distrenzieing, and sae forth, as the law will, she ran away to the Charity Workhouse, a matter of twenty punds Scots in my debt—it's a great shame and oppression that Charity Workhouse, taking in bankrupt dyvours that canna pay their honest creditors."

"Methinks, friend," said the Quaker, "thine own rags might teach thee compassion for other people's nakedness."

"Rags!" said Peter, taking Joshua's words literally; "does ony wise body put on their best coat when they are travelling, and keeping company with Quakers, and such other cattle as the road affords?"

"The old lady *died*, I have heard," said Nanty, affecting a moderation which was belied by accents that faltered with passion.

"She might live or die, for what I care," answered Peter the Cruel; "what business have folk to do to live, that canna live as law will, and satisfy their just and lawful creditors?"

"And you—you that are now yourself trodden down in the very kennel, are you not sorry for what you have done? Do you not repent having occasioned the poor widow-woman's death?"

"What for should I repent?" said Peter; "the law was on my side—a decreet of the Bailies' followed by poinding, and an act of warding—a suspension intended, and the letters found orderly proceeded.—I followed the auld rudas through twa Courts—she cost me mair money than her lugs were worth."

"Now, by Heaven!" said Nanty, "I would give a thousand guineas, if I had them, to have you worth my beating! Had you said you repented, it had been between God and your conscience; but to hear you boast of your villany—Do you think it little to have reduced the aged to famine, and the young to infamy to have caused the death of one woman, the ruin of another, and to have driven a man to exile and despair? By Him that made me, I can scarce keep hands off you!"

"Off me?—I defy ye!" said Peter. "I take this honest man to witness, that if ye stir the neck of my collar, I will have my action for stouthreif, spulzie, oppression, assault and battery. Here's a bra' din, indeed, about an auld wife gaun to the grave, a young limmer to the close-heads and causeway, and a sticket stibbler* to the sea instead of the gallows!"

"Now, by my soul," said Nanty, "this is too much! and since you can feel no otherwise, I will try if I cannot beat some humanity into your head and shoulders."

He drew his hanger as he spoke, and although Joshua, who had in vain endeavoured to interrupt the dialogue, to which he foresaw a violent termination, now threw himself between Nanty and the old litigant, he could not prevent the latter from receiving two or three sound slaps over the shoulder with the flat side of the weapon.

Poor Peter Peebles, as inglorious in his extremity as he had been presumptuous in bringing it on, now ran and roared, and bolted out of the apartment and house itself, pursued by Nanty, whose passion became high in proportion to his giving way to its dictates, and by Joshua, who still interfered at every risk, calling upon Nanty to reflect on the age and miserable circumstances of the offender, and upon Poor Peter to stand and place himself under his protection. In front of the house, however, Peter Peebles found a more efficient protector than the worthy Quaker.

CHAPTER XXI.

NARRATIVE OF ALAN FAIRFORD.

Our readers may recollect, that Fairford had been conducted by Dick Gardener from the House of Fairladies, to the inn of old Father Crackenthorp, in order, as he had been informed by the mysterious Father Buonaventure, that he might have the meeting which he desired with Mr. Redgauntlet, to treat with him for the liberty of his friend Darsie. His guide, by the special direction of Mr. Ambrose, had introduced him into the public-house by a back-door, and recommended to the landlord to accommodate him with a private apartment, and to treat him with all civility; but in other respects to keep his eye on him, and even to secure his person, if he saw any reason to suspect him to be a spy. He was not, however, subjected to any direct restraint, but was ushered into an apartment, where he was requested to await the arrival of the gentleman with whom he wished to have an interview, and who, as Crackenthorp assured him with a significant nod, would be certainly there in the course of an hour. In the mean while, he recommended to him, with another significant sign, to keep his apartment, "as there were people in the house who were apt to busy themselves about other folk's matters."

Alan Fairford complied with the recommendation, so long as he thought it reasonable; but when, among a large party riding up to the house, he discerned Redgauntlet, whom he had seen under the name of Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, and whom, by his height and strength, he easily distinguished from the rest, he thought it proper to go down to the front *of the house, in hopes* that, by more closely reconnoitering the party, he might discover if his friend Darsie was among them.

The reader is aware that, by doing so, he had an opportunity of breaking Darsie's fall from his side-saddle, although his disguise and mask prevented his recognising his friend. It may be also recollected, that while Nixon hurried Miss Redgauntlet and her brother into the house, their uncle, somewhat chafed at an unexpected and inconvenient interruption, remained himself in parley with Fairford, who had already successively addressed him by the names of Herries and Redgauntlet; neither of which, any more than the acquaintance of the young lawyer, he seemed at the moment willing to acknowledge, though an air of haughty indifference, which he assumed, could not conceal his vexation and embarrassment.

"If we must needs be acquainted, sir," he said at last—"for which I am unable to see any necessity, especially as I am now particularly disposed to be private—I must entreat you will tell me at once what you have to say, and permit me to attend to matters of more importance."

"My introduction," said Fairford, "is contained in this letter,"—(delivering that of Maxwell.)—"I am convinced that, under whatever name it may be your pleasure for the present to be known, it is into your hands, and yours only, that it should be delivered."

Redgauntlet turned the letter in his hand—then read the contents—then again looked upon the letter and sternly observed, "The seal of the letter has been broken. Was this the case, sir, when it was delivered into your hand?"

Fairford despised a falsehood as much as any man, unless, perhaps, as Tom Turnpenny might have said, "in the way of business." He answered readily and firmly, "The seal was whole when the letter was delivered to me by Mr. Maxwell of Summertrees."

"And did you dare, sir, to break the seal of a letter addressed to me?" said Redgauntlet, not sorry, perhaps, to pick a quarrel upon a point foreign to the tenor of the epistle.

"I have never broken the seal of any letter committed to my charge," said Alan; "not from fear of those to whom such letter might be addressed, but from respect to myself."

"That is well worded," said Redgauntlet; "and yet, young Mr. Counsellor, I doubt whether your delicacy prevented your reading my letter, or listening to the contents as read by some other person after it was opened."

"I certainly did hear the contents read over," said Fairford; "and they were such as to surprise me a good deal."

"Now that," said Redgauntlet, "I hold to be pretty much the same, *in foro conscientiæ*, as if you had broken the seal yourself. I shall hold myself excused from entering upon farther discourse with a messenger so faithless; and you may thank yourself if your journey has been fruitless."

"Stay, sir," said Fairford; "and know that I became acquainted with the contents of the paper without my consent—I may even say against my will; for Mr. Buonaventure"—

"Who?" demanded Redgauntlet, in a wild and alarmed manner—"*Whom* was it you named?"

"Father Buonaventure," said Alan,—"a Catholic priest, as I apprehend, whom I saw at the Miss Arthurets' house, called Fairladies."

"Miss Arthurets!—Fairladies!—A Catholic priest!—Father Buonaventure!" said Redgauntlet, repeating the words of Alan with astonishment,—"Is it possible that human rashness can reach such a point of infatuation?—Tell me the truth, I conjure you, sir—I have the deepest interest to know whether this is more than an idle legend, picked up from hearsay about the country. You are a lawyer, and know the risk incurred by the Catholic clergy, whom the discharge of their duty sends to these bloody shores."

"I am a lawyer, certainly," said Fairford; "but my holding such a respectable condition in life warrants that I am neither an informer nor a spy. Here is sufficient evidence that I have seen Father Buonaventure."

He put Buonaventure's letter into Redgauntlet's

*A sextant of divinity who has not been able to complete his studies on theology.

hand, and watched his looks closely while he read it. "Double-dyed infatuation!" he muttered, with looks in which sorrow, displeasure, and anxiety were mingled. "'Save me from the indiscretion of my friends,' says the Spaniard; 'I can save myself from the hostility of my enemies.'"

He then read the letter attentively, and for two or three minutes was lost in thought, while some purpose of importance seemed to have gathered and sat brooding upon his countenance. He held up his finger towards his satellite, Cristal Nixon, who replied to his signal with a prompt nod; and with one or two of the attendants approached Fairford in such a manner as to make him apprehensive they were about to lay hold of him.

At this moment a noise was heard from withinside of the house, and presently rushed forth Peter Peebles, pursued by Nanty Ewart with his drawn hanger, and the worthy Quaker, who was endeavouring to prevent mischief to others, at some risk of bringing it on himself.

A wilder and yet a more absurd figure can hardly be imagined, than that of Poor Peter, clattering along as fast as his huge boots would permit him, and resembling nothing so much as a flying scarecrow; while the thin emaciated form of Nanty Ewart, with the hue of death on his cheek and the fire of vengeance glancing from his eye, formed a ghastly contrast with the ridiculous object of his pursuit.

Redgauntlet threw himself between them. "What extravagant folly is this?" he said. "Put up your weapon, Captain. Is this a time to indulge in drunken brawls, or is such a miserable object as that a fitting antagonist for a man of courage?"

"I beg pardon," said the Captain, sheathing his weapon—"I was a little bit out of the way, to be sure; but to know the provocation, a man must read my heart, and that I hardly dare to do myself. But the wretch is safe from me. Heaven has done its own vengeance on us both."

While he spoke in this manner, Peter Peebles, who had at first crept behind Redgauntlet in bodily fear, began now to reassume his spirits. Pulling his protector by the sleeve, "Mr. Herries—Mr. Herries," he whispered, eagerly, "ye have done me mair than ae gude turn, and if ye will but do me anither at this dead pinch, I'll forgie the girded keg of brandy that you and Captain Sir Harry Redgimlet drank out yon time. Ye sall hae an ample discharge and renunciation, and, though I should see you walking at the Cross of Edinburgh, or standing at the bar of the Court of Justiciary, no the very thumbikins themselves should bring to my memory that ever I saw you in arms yon day."

He accompanied this promise by pulling so hard at Redgauntlet's cloak, that he at last turned round. "Idiot! speak in a word what you want."

"Aweel, aweel. In a word then," said Peter Peebles, "I have a warrant on me to apprehend that man that stands there, Alan Fairford by name, and advocate by calling. I bought it from Maister Justice Foxley's clerk, Maister Nicholas Faggot, wi' the guinea that you gied me."

"Ha!" said Redgauntlet, "hast thou really such a warrant? let me see it.—Look sharp that no one escape. Cristal Nixon."

Peter produced a huge, greasy, leathern pocket-book, too dirty to permit its original colour to be visible, filled with scrolls of notes, memorials to counsel, and Heaven knows what besides. From amongst this precious mass he culled forth a paper, and placed it in the hands of Redgauntlet or Herries, as he continued to call him, saying, at the same time, "It's a formal and binding warrant, proceeding on my affidavy made, that the said Alan Fairford, being lawfully engaged in my service, had slipped the tether and fled over the Border, and was now lurking there and thereabouts, to elude and evite the discharge of his bounden duty to me; and therefore granting warrant to constables and others, to seek for, take, and apprehend him, that he may be brought before the Honourable Justice Foxley for *examination, and, if necessary, for commitment. Now, though a' this be fairly set down as I tell ye, yet where am I to get an officer to execute* this warrant in sic a country as this, where swords and pistols flee out at a word's speaking, and folk care as little for the peace of King George, as the peace of Auld King Coul?—There's that drunken skipper, and that wet Quaker, enticed me into the public this morning, and because I wadna gie them as much brandy as wad have made them blind-drunk, they baith fell on me, and were in the way of guiding me very ill."

While Peter went on in this manner, Redgauntlet glanced his eye over the warrant, and immediately saw that it must be a trick passed by Nicholas Faggot, to chent the poor insane wretch out of his solitary guinea. But the Justice had actually subscribed it, as he did whatever his clerk presented to him, and Redgauntlet resolved to use it for his own purposes.

Without making any direct answer, therefore, to Peter Peebles, he walked up gravely to Fairford, who had waited quietly for the termination of a scene, in which he was not a little surprised to find his client, Mr. Peebles, a conspicuous actor.

"Mr. Fairford," said Redgauntlet, "there are many reasons which might induce me to comply with the request, or rather the injunctions, of the excellent Father Buonaventure, that I should communicate with you upon the present condition of my ward, whom you know under the name of Darsie Latimer; but no man is better aware than you that the law must be obeyed, even in contradiction to our own feelings; now, this poor man has obtained a warrant for carrying you before a magistrate, and, I am afraid, there is a necessity of your yielding to it, although to the postponement of the business which you may have with me."

"A warrant against me!" said Alan, indignantly; "and at that poor miserable wretch's instance?—why, this is a trick, a mere and most palpable trick!"

"It may be so," replied Redgauntlet, with great equanimity; "doubtless you know best; only the writ appears regular, and with that respect for the law which has been," he said, with hypocritical formality, "a leading feature of my character through life, I cannot dispense with giving my poor aid to the support of a legal warrant. Look at it yourself, and be satisfied it is no trick of mine."

Fairford ran over the affidavit and the warrant, and then exclaimed once more, that it was an impudent imposition, and that he would hold those who acted upon such a warrant liable in the highest damages. "I guess at your motive, Mr. Redgauntlet," he said, "for acquiescing in so ridiculous a proceeding. But be assured you will find that, in this country, one act of illegal violence will not be covered or atoned for by practising another. You cannot, as a man of sense and honour, pretend to say you regard this as a legal warrant."

"I am no lawyer, sir," said Redgauntlet; "and pretend not to know what is or is not law—the warrant is quite formal, and that is enough for me."

"Did ever any ore hear," said Fairford, "of an advocate being compelled to return to his task, like a collier or a salter* who has deserted his master?"

"I see no reason why he should not," said Redgauntlet, dryly, "unless on the ground that the services of the lawyer are the most expensive and least useful of the two."

"You cannot mean this in earnest," said Fairford; "you cannot really mean to avail yourself of so poor a contrivance, to evade the word pledged by your friend, your ghostly father, in my behalf. I may have been a fool for trusting it too easily, but think what you must be if you can abuse my confidence in this

* The persons engaged in these occupations were at this time boadsmen; and in case they left the ground of the farm to which they belonged, and as pertaining to which their services were bought or sold, they were liable to be brought back by a summary process. The existence of this species of slavery being thought irreconcilable with the spirit of liberty, colliers and salters were declared free, and put upon the same footing with other servants, by the Act 15 Geo. III. chapter 28th. They were so far from desiring or prizing the blessing conferred on them, that they esteemed the interest taken in their freedom to be a mere decree on the part of the proprietors to get rid of what they called head and hairgald money, payable to them when a female of their number, by bearing a child, made an addition to the live stock of their master's property.

manner. I entreat you to reflect that this usage releases me from all promises of secrecy or connivance at what I am apt to think are very dangerous practices, and that"——

"Hark ye, Mr. Fairford," said Redgauntlet; "I must here interrupt you for your own sake. One word of betraying what you may have seen, or what you may have suspected, and your seclusion is like to have either a very distant or a very brief termination; in either case a most undesirable one. At present, you are sure of being at liberty in a very few days—perhaps much sooner."

"And my friend," said Alan Fairford, "for whose sake I have run myself into this danger, what is to become of him?—Dark and dangerous man!" he exclaimed, raising his voice, "I will not be again cajoled by deceitful promises"——

"I give you my honour that your friend is well," interrupted Redgauntlet; "perhaps I may permit you to see him, if you will but submit with patience to a fate which is inevitable."

But Alan Fairford, considering his confidence as having been abused, first by Maxwell, and next by the Priest, raised his voice, and appealed to all the King's lieges within hearing, against the violence with which he was threatened. He was instantly seized on by Nixon and two assistants, who holding down his arms, and endeavouring to stop his mouth, were about to hurry him away.

The honest Quaker, who had kept out of Redgauntlet's presence, now came boldly forward.

"Friend," said he, "thou dost more than thou canst answer. Thou knowest me well, and thou art aware, that in me thou hast a deeply injured neighbour, who was dwelling beside thee in the honesty and simplicity of his heart."

"Tush, Jonathan," said Redgauntlet; "talk not to me, man; it is neither the craft of a young lawyer, nor the *simplicity* of an old hypocrite, can drive me from my purpose."

"By my faith," said the Captain, coming forward in his turn, "this is hardly fair, General; and I doubt," he added, "whether the will of my owners can make me a party to such proceedings.—Nay, never fumble with your sword-hilt, but out with it like a man, if you are for a tilting."—He unsheathed his hanger, and continued.—"I will neither see my comrade Fairford, nor the old Quaker abused. D—n all warrants, false or true—curse the justice—confound the constable!—and here stands little Nanty Ewart to make good what he says against gentle and simple, in spite of horse-shoe or horseradish either."

The cry of "Down with all warrants!" was popular in the ears of the militia of the inn, and Nanty Ewart was no less so. Fishers, ostlers, seamen, smugglers, began to crowd to the spot. Crackenthorp endeavoured in vain to mediate. The attendants of Redgauntlet began to handle their firearms; but their master shouted to them to forbear, and, unsheathing his sword as quick as lightning, he rushed on Ewart in the midst of his bravade, and struck his weapon from his hand with such address and force, that it flew three yards from him. Closing with him at the same moment, he gave him a severe fall, and waved his sword over his head, to show he was absolutely at his mercy.

"There, you drunken vagabond," he said, "I give you your life—you are no bad fellow, if you could keep from brawling among your friends.—But we all know Nanty Ewart," he said to the crowd around, with a forgiving laugh, which, joined to the awe his prowess had inspired, entirely confirmed their wavering allegiance.

They shouted "The Laird for ever!" while poor Nanty, rising from the earth, on whose lap he had been stretched so rudely, went in quest of his hanger, lifted it, wiped it, and, as he returned the weapon to the scabbard, muttered between his teeth, "It is true they say of him, and the devil will stand his friend till his hour come; I will cross him no more."

So saying he slunk from the crowd, cowed and disheartened by his defeat.

"For you Joshua Geddes," said Redgauntlet, approaching the Quaker, who with lifted hands and eyes, had beheld the scene of violence, "I shall take the liberty to arrest thee for a breach of the peace, altogether unbecoming thy pretended principles; and I believe it will go hard with thee both in a Court of Justice and among thine own Society of Friends, as they call themselves, who will be but indifferently pleased to see the quiet tenor of their hypocrisy insulted by such violent proceedings."

"*I* violent!" said Joshua; "*I* do aught unbecoming the principles of the Friends! I defy thee, man, and I charge thee, as a Christian, to forbear vexing my soul with such charges: it is grievous enough to me to have seen violences which I was unable to prevent."

"Oh, Joshua, Joshua!" said Redgauntlet with a sardonic smile; "thou light of the faithful in the town of Dumfries and the places adjacent, wilt thou thus fall away from the truth? Hast thou not before us all, attempted to rescue a man from the warrant of law? Didst thou not encourage that drunken fellow to draw his weapon—and didst thou not thyself flourish thy cudgel in the cause? Think'st thou that the oaths of the injured Peter Peebles, and the conscientious Cristal Nixon, besides those of such gentlemen as look on this strange scene, who not only put on swearing as a garment, but to whom in Custom-House matters oaths are literally meat and drink,—dost thou not think, I say, that these men's oaths will go farther than thy Yea and Nay in this matter?"

"I will swear to any thing," said Peter. "All is fair when it comes to an oath *ad litem*."

"You do me foul wrong," said the Quaker undismayed by the general laugh. "I encouraged no drawing of weapons, though I attempted to move an unjust man by some use of argument—I brandished no cudgel, although it may be that the ancient Adam struggled within me, and caused my hand to grasp mine oaken staff firmer than usual, when I saw innocence borne down with violence.—But why talk I what is true and just to thee, who hast been a man of violence from thy youth upwards? Let me rather speak to thee such language as thou canst comprehend. Deliver these young men up to me," he said, when he had led Redgauntlet a little apart from the crowd, "and I will not only free thee from the heavy charge of damages which thou hast incurred by thine outrage upon my property, but I will add ransom for them and for myself. What would it profit thee to do the youths wrong, by detaining them in captivity?"

"Mr. Geddes," said Redgauntlet in a tone more respectful than he had hitherto used to the Quaker, "your language is disinterested, and I respect the fidelity of your friendship. Perhaps we have mistaken each other's principles and motives; but if so, we have not at present time for explanation. Make yourself easy. I hope to raise your friend Darsie Latimer to a pitch of eminence which you will witness with pleasure;—nay, do not attempt to answer me. The other young man shall suffer restraint a few days, probably only a few hours,—it is not more than due for his pragmatical interference in what concerned him not. Do you, Mr. Geddes, be so prudent as to take your horse and leave this place, which is growing every moment more unfit for the abode of a man of peace. You may wait the event in safety at Mount Sharon."

"Friend," replied Joshua, "I cannot comply with thy advice; I will remain here even as thy prisoner, as thou didst but now threaten, rather than leave the youth, who hath suffered by and through me and my misfortunes, in his present state of doubtful safety. Wherefore I will not mount my steed Solomon; neither will I turn his head towards Mount Sharon, until I see an end of this matter."

"A prisoner, then, you must be," said Redgauntlet. "I have no time to dispute the matter farther with you—but tell me for what you fix your eyes so attentively on yonder people of mine?"

"To speak the truth," said the Quaker, "I admire to behold among them a little wretch of a boy called Benjie, to whom I think Satan has given the power of transporting himself whereseever mischief is going forward; so that it may be truly said, there is no evil

in this land wherein he hath not a finger, if not a whole hand."

The boy, who saw their eyes fixed on him as they spoke, seemed embarrassed, and rather desirous of making his escape; but at a signal from Redgauntlet he advanced, assuming the sheepish look and rustic manner with which the jackanapes covered much acuteness and roguery.

"How long have you been with the party, sirrah," said Redgauntlet.

"Since the raid on the stake-nets," said Benjie, with his finger in his mouth.

"And what made you follow us?"

"I dauredna stay at hame for the constables," replied the boy.

"And what have you been doing all this time?"

"Doing, sir?—I dinna ken what ye ca' doing—I have been doing naething," said Benjie; then seeing something in Redgauntlet's eye which was not to be trifled with, he added, "Naething but waiting on Maister Cr.stal Nixon."

"Hum!—ay—indeed?" muttered Redgauntlet. "Must Master Nixon bring his own retinue into the field?—This must be seen to."

He was about to pursue his inquiry, when Nixon himself came to him with looks of anxious haste. "The Father is come," he whispered and the gentlemen are getting together in the largest room of the house, and they desire to see you. Yonder is your nephew, too, making a noise like a man in Bedlam."

"I will look to it all instantly," said Redgauntlet. "Is the Father lodged as I directed?"

Cristal nodded.

"Now, then, for the final trial," said Redgauntlet. He folded his hands—looked upwards—crossed himself—and after this act of devotion, (almost the first which any one had observed him make use of,) he commanded Nixon to keep good watch—have his horses and men ready for every emergence—look after the safe custody of the prisoners—but treat them at the same time well and civilly. And these orders given, he darted hastily into the house.

CHAPTER XXII.

NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

REDGAUNTLET's first course was to the chamber of his nephew. He unlocked the door, entered the apartment, and asked what he wanted, that he made so much noise.

"I want my liberty," said Darsie, who had wrought himself up to a pitch of passion in which his uncle's wrath had lost its terrors. "I desire my liberty, and to be assured of the safety of my beloved friend, Alan Fairford, whose voice I heard but now."

"Your liberty shall be your own within half an hour from this period—your friend shall be also set at freedom in due time—and you yourself be permitted to have access to his place of confinement."

"This does not satisfy me," said Darsie; "I must see my friend instantly; he is here, and he is here endangered on my account only—I have heard violent exclamations—the clash of swords. You will gain no point with me unless I have ocular demonstration of his safety."

"Arthur—dearest nephew," answered Redgauntlet, "drive me not mad! Thine own fate—that of thy house—that of thousands—that of Britain herself, are at this moment in the scales; and you are only occupied about the safety of a poor insignificant pettifogger!"

"He has sustained injury at your hands, then?" said Darsie, fiercely. "I know he has; but if so, not even our relationship shall protect you."

"Peace, ungrateful and obstinate fool!" said Redgauntlet. "Yet stay—Will you be satisfied if you see this Alan Fairford, the bundle of bombazine—this precious friend of yours—well and sound?—Will you, I say, be satisfied with seeing him in perfect safety, without attempting to speak to or converse with him?"—Darsie signified his assent. "Take hold of my arm, then," said Redgauntlet; "and do you, niece Lilias, take the *other; and beware, Sir Arthur, how you bear yourself.*"

Darsie was compelled to acquiesce, sufficiently aware that his uncle would permit him no interview with a friend whose influence would certainly be used against his present earnest wishes, and in some measure contented with the assurance of Fairford's personal safety.

Redgauntlet led them through one or two passages, (for the house, as we have before said, was very irregular, and built at different times,) until they entered an apartment, where a man with shouldered carabine kept watch at the door, but readily turned the key for their reception. In this room they found Alan Fairford and the Quaker, apparently in deep conversation with each other. They looked up as Redgauntlet and his party entered; and Alan pulled off his hat and made a profound reverence, which the young lady, who recognised him,—though, masked as she was, he could not know her,—returned with some embarrassment, arising probably from the recollection of the bold step she had taken in visiting him.

Darsie longed to speak, but dared not. His uncle only said, "Gentlemen, I know you are as anxious on Mr. Darsie Latimer's account as he is upon yours. I am commissioned by him to inform you, that he is as well as you are—I trust you will all meet soon. Mean time, although I cannot suffer you to be at large, you shall be as well treated as is possible under your temporary confinement."

He passed on, without pausing to hear the answers which the lawyer and the Quaker were hastening to prefer; and only waving his hand by way of adieu, made his exit, with the real and the seeming lady whom he had under his charge, through a door at the upper end of the apartment, which was fastened and guarded like that by which they entered.

Redgauntlet next led the way into a very small room; adjoining which, but divided by a partition, was one of apparently larger dimensions; for they heard the trampling of the heavy boots of the period, as if several persons were walking to and fro, and conversing in low and anxious whispers.

"Here," said Redgauntlet to his nephew, as he disencumbered him from the riding-skirt and the mask, "I restore you to yourself, and trust you will lay aside all effeminate thoughts with this feminine dress. Do not blush at having worn a disguise to which kings and heroes have been reduced. It is when female craft or female cowardice find their way into a manly bosom, that he who entertains these sentiments should take eternal shame to himself for thus having resembled womankind. Follow me, while Lilias remains here. I will introduce you to those whom I hope to see associated with you in the most glorious cause that hand ever drew sword in."

Darsie paused. "Uncle," he said, "my person is in your hands; but remember, my will is my own. I will not be hurried into any resolution of importance. Remember what I have already said—what I now repeat—that I will take no step of importance but upon conviction."

"But canst thou be convinced, thou foolish boy, without hearing and understanding the grounds on which we act?"

So saying, he took Darsie by the arm, and walked with him to the next room—a large apartment, partly filled with miscellaneous articles of commerce, chiefly connected with contraband trade; where, among bales and barrels, sat, or walked to and fro, several gentlemen, whose manners and looks seemed superior to the plain riding-dresses which they wore.

There was a grave and stern anxiety upon their countenances, when, on Redgauntlet's entrance, they drew from their separate coteries into one group around him, and saluted him with a formality, which had something in it of ominous melancholy. As Darsie looked around the circle, he thought he could discern in it few traces of that adventurous hope which urges men upon desperate enterprises; and began to believe that the conspiracy would dissolve of itself without the necessity of his placing himself in direct opposition to so violent a character as his uncle, and incurring the hazard with which such opposition must needs be attended.

Mr. Redgauntlet, however, did not, or would

see any such marks of depression of spirit amongst his coadjutors, but met them with cheerful countenance, and a warm greeting of welcome. "Happy to meet you here, my lord," he said, bowing low to a slender young man. "I trust you come with the pledges of your noble father, of B——, and all that loyal house.—Sir Richard, what news in the west? I am told you had two hundred men on foot to have joined when the fatal retreat from Derby was commenced. When the White Standard is again displayed, it shall not be turned back so easily, either by the force of its enemies, or the falsehood of its friends.—Doctor Grumball, I bow to the representative of Oxford, the mother of learning and loyalty.—Pengwinion, you Cornishchough, has this good wind blown you North?—Ay, my brave Cambro-Britons, when was Wales last in the race of honour?"

Such and such-like compliments he dealt around, which were in general answered by silent bows; but when he saluted one of his own countrymen by the name of MacKellar, and greeted Maxwell of Summertrees by that of Pate-in-Peril, the latter replied, "that if Pate were not a fool, he would be Pate-in-Safety;" and the former, a thin old gentleman, in tarnished embroidery, said bluntly, "Ay, troth, Redgauntlet, I am here just like yourself; I have little to lose—they that took my land the last time, may take my life this; and that is all I care about it."

The English gentlemen, who were still in possession of their paternal estates, looked doubtfully on each other, and there was something whispered among them of the fox which had lost his tail.

Redgauntlet hastened to address them. "I think, my lords and gentlemen," he said, "that I can account for something like sadness which has crept upon an assembly gathered together for so noble a purpose. Our numbers seem, when thus assembled, too small and inconsiderable to shake the firm-seated usurpation of a half century. But do not count us by what we are in thewe and muscle, but by what our summons can do among our countrymen. In this small party are those who have power to raise battalions, and those who have wealth to pay them. And do not believe our friends who are absent are cold or indifferent to the cause. Let us once light the signal, and it will be hailed by all who retain love for the Stewart, and by all—a more numerous body—who hate the Elector. Here I have letters from"——

Sir Richard Glendale interrupted the speaker. "We all confide, Redgauntlet, in your valour and skill—we admire your perseverance; and probably nothing short of your strenuous exertions, and the emulation awakened by your noble and disinterested conduct, could have brought so many of us, the scattered remnant of a disheartened party, to meet together once again in solemn consultation;—for I take it, gentleman," he said, looking round, "this is only a consultation."

"Nothing more," said the young lord.

"Nothing more," said Doctor Grumball, shaking his large academical peruke.

And "Only a consultation," was echoed by the others.

Redgauntlet bit his lip. "I had hopes," he said, "that the discourses I have held with the most of you, from time to time, had ripened into more maturity than your words imply, and that we were here to execute as well as to deliberate; and for this we stand prepared. I can raise five hundred men with my whistle."

"Five hundred men!" said one of the Welsh squires, 'Cot bless us! and, pray you, what cood could five hundred men do?"

"All that the priming does for the cannon, Mr. Meredith," answered Redgauntlet; "it will enable us to seize Carlisle, and you know what our friends have engaged for in that case."

"Yes—but," said the young nobleman, "you must not hurry us on too fast, Mr. Redgauntlet; we are all, I believe, as sincere and trueheartcd in this business as you are, but we will not be driven forward blindfold. *We owe caution to ourselves and our families, as well as to those whom we are empowered to represent on this occasion.*"

"Who hurries you my lord? Who is it that would drive this meeting forward blindfold? I do not understand your lordship," said Redgauntlet.

"Nay," said Sir Richard Glendale, "at least do not let us fall under our old reproach of disagreeing among ourselves. What my lord means, Redgauntlet, is, that we have this morning heard it is uncertain whether you could even bring that body of men whom you count upon; your countryman, Mr. MacKellar, seemed, just before you came in, to doubt whether your people would rise in any force, unless you could produce the authority of your nephew."

"I might ask," said Redgauntlet, "what right MacKellar, or any one, has to doubt my being able to accomplish what I stand pledged for?—But our hopes consist in our unity.—Here stands my nephew.—Gentlemen, I present to you my kinsman, Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet of that Ilk."

"Gentlemen," said Darsie, with a throbbing bosom, for he felt the crisis a very painful one, "Allow me to say, that I suspend expressing my sentiments on the important subject under discussion, until I have heard those of the present meeting."

"Proceed in your deliberations, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet; "I will show my nephew such reasons for acquiescing in the result, as will entirely remove any scruples which may hang around his mind."

Dr. Grumball now coughed, "shook his ambrosial curls," and addressed the assembly.

"The principles of Oxford," he said, "are well understood, since she was the last to resign herself to the Arch-Usurper—since she has condemned, by her sovereign authority, the blasphemous, atheistical, and anarchial tenets of Locke, and other deluders of the public mind. Oxford will give men, money, and countenance, to the cause of the rightful monarch. But we been often deluded by foreign powers, who have availed themselves of our zeal to stir up civil dissensions in Britain, not for the advantage of our blessed though banished monarch, but to engender disturbances by which they might profit, while we, their tools, are sure to be ruined. Oxford, therefore, will not rise, unless our Sovereign comes in person to claim our allegiance, in which case, God forbid we should refuse him our best obedience."

"It is a very cood advice," said Mr. Meredith.

"In troth," said Sir Richard Glendale, "it is the very keystone of our enterprise, and the only condition upon which I myself and others could ever have dreamt of taking up arms. No insurrection which has not Charles Edward himself at its head, will ever last longer than till a single foot-company of redcoats march to disperse it."

"This is my own opinion, and that of all my family," said the young nobleman already mentioned; "and I own I am somewhat surprised at being summoned to attend a dangerous rendezvous such as this, before something certain could have been stated to us on this most important preliminary point."

"Pardon me, my lord," said Redgauntlet; "I have not been so unjust either to myself or my friends—I had no means of communicating to our distant confederates (without the greatest risk of discovery) what is known to some of my honourable friends. As courageous, and as resolved, as when, twenty years since, he threw himself into the wilds of Moidart, Charles Edward has instantly complied with the wishes of his faithful subjects. Charles Edward is in this country—Charles Edward is in this house!—Charles Edward waits but your present decision, to receive the homage of those who have ever called themselves his loyal liegemen. He that would now turn his coat, and change his note, must do so under the eye of his sovereign."

There was a deep pause. Those among the conspirators whom mere habit, or a desire of preserving consistency, had engaged in the affair, now saw with terror their retreat cut off; and others, who at a distance had regarded the proposed enterprise as hopeful, trembled when the moment of actually embarking in it was thus unexpectedly and almost inevitably precipitated.

"How now, my lords and gentlemen?" said Red-

; "Is it delight and rapture that keep you
ent? where are the eager welcomes that
e paid to your rightful King, who a second
ntrusts his person to the care of his subjects,
ed by the hairbreadth escapes and severe
is of his former expedition? I hope there is
man here that is not ready to redeem, in his
presence, the pledge of fidelity which he offer-
absence?"
least," said the young nobleman, resolutely,
ng his hand on his sword, "will not be that
If Charles is come to these shores, I will
rst to give him welcome, and to devote my
fortune to his service."
re Cot," said Mr. Meredith, "I do not see
Redcantlet has left us any thing else to do."
," said Summertrees, "there is yet one
estion. Has he brought any of those Irish
s with him, who broke the neck of our last
affair?"
a man of them," said Redgauntlet.
st," said Dr. Grumball, "that there are no
priests in his company? I would not intrude
rivate conscience of my Sovereign, but, as
orthy son of the Church of England, it is my
onsider her security."
a Popish dog or cat is there, to bark or mew
s Majesty," said Redgauntlet. "Old Shaftes-
self could not wish a prince's person more
rom Popery—which may not be the worst
in the world, notwithstanding.—Any more
gentlemen? can no more plausible reasons
vered for postponing the payment of our duty,
harge of our oaths and engagements? Mean
r King waits your declaration—by my faith
but a frozen reception!"
auntlet," said Sir Richard Glendale, calmly,
proaches shall not goad me into any thing
my reason disapproves. That I respect
gement as much as you do, is evident, since
, ready to support it with the best blood in
s. But has the King really come hither en-
attended?"
as no man with him but young ——, as aid-
, and a single valet-de-chambre."
man;—but, Redgauntlet, as you are a gentle-
s he no *woman* with him?"
untlet cast his eyes on the ground and re-
am sorry to say—he has."
ompany looked at each other, and remained
r a moment. At length Sir Richard pro-
"I need not repeat to you, Mr. Redgaunt-
t is the well-grounded opinion of his Majes-
ds concerning that most unhappy connexion;
but one sense and feeling amongst us upon
ect. I must conclude that our humble re-
nces were communicated by you, sir, to the

ie same strong terms in which they were
," replied Redgauntlet. "I love his Majesty's
ore than I fear his displeasure."
apparently, our humble expostulation has
l no effect. This lady, who has crept into
m, has a sister in the Elector of Hanover's
nd yet we are well assured that every point
most private communication is placed in her
"
ium et mutabile semper femina," said Dr.
ll.
puts his secrets into her work-bag," said
l; "and out they fly whenever she opens
must hang, I would wish it to be in some-
better rope than the string of a lady's
,

you, too, turning dastard, Maxwell?" said
ntlet in a whisper.
I," said Maxwell; "let us fight for it, and let
n and wear us; but to be betrayed by a brim-
te that"——
emperate, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet; "the
f which you complain so heavily has always
at of kings and heroes; which I feel strongly
e the King will surmount, upon the humble
of his best servants, and when he sees them
ready to peril their all in his cause, upon the slight condition of his resigning the society of a female favourite, of whom I have seen reason to think he hath been himself for some time wearied. But let us not press upon him rashly with our well-meant zeal. He has a princely will, as becomes his princely birth, and we, gentlemen, who are royalists, should be the last to take advantage of circumstances to limit its exercise. I am as much surprised and hurt as you can be, to find that he has made her the companion of this journey, increasing every chance of treachery and detection. But do not let us insist upon a sacrifice so humiliating, while he has scarce placed a foot upon the beach of his kingdom. Let us act generously by our Sovereign; and when we have shown what we will do for him, we shall be able, with better face, to state what it is we expect him to concede."

"Indeed, I think it is but a pity," said MacKellar, "when so many pretty gentlemen are got together, that they should part without the flash of a sword among them."

"I should be of that gentleman's opinion," said Lord ——, "had I nothing to lose but my life; but I frankly own, that the conditions on which our family agreed to join having been, in this instance, left unfulfilled, I will not peril the whole fortunes of our house on the doubtful fidelity of an artful woman."

"I am sorry to see your lordship," said Redgauntlet, "take a course, which is more likely to secure your house's wealth than to augment its honours."

"How am I to understand your language, sir?" said the young nobleman, haughtily.

"Nay, gentlemen," said Dr. Grumball, interposing, "do not let friends quarrel; we are all zealous for the cause—but truly, although I know the license claimed by the great in such matters, and can, I hope, make due allowance, there is, I may say, an indecorum in a prince who comes to claim the allegiance of the Church of England, arriving on such an errand with such a companion—*si non castè, cautè, tamen*."

"I wonder how the Church of England came to be so heartily attached to his merry old namesake," said Redgauntlet.

Sir Richard Glendale then took up the question, as one whose authority and experience gave him right to speak with much weight.

"We have no leisure for hesitation," he said; "it is full time that we decide what course we are to hold. I feel as much as you, Mr. Redgauntlet, the delicacy of capitulating with our Sovereign in his present condition. But I must also think of the total ruin of the cause, the confiscation and bloodshed which will take place among his adherents, and all through the infatuation with which he adheres to a woman who is the pensionary of the present minister, as she was for years Sir Robert Walpole's. Let his Majesty send her back to the continent, and the sword on which I now lay my hand shall instantly be unsheathed, and, I trust, many hundred others at the same moment."

The other persons present testified their unanimous acquiescence in what Sir Richard Glendale had said.

"I see you have taken your resolutions, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet; "unwisely, I think, because I believe that, by softer and more generous proceedings, you would have been more likely to carry a point which I think as desirable as you do. But what is to be done if Charles should refuse, with the inflexibility of his grandfather, to comply with this request of yours? Do you mean to abandon him to his fate?"

"God forbid!" said Sir Richard, hastily; "and God forgive you, Mr. Redgauntlet, for breathing such a thought. No! I for one will, with all duty and humility, see him safe back to his vessel, and defend him with my life, against whoever shall assail him. But when I have seen his sails spread, my next act will be to secure, if I can, my own safety, by retiring to my house; or, if I find our engagement, as is too probable, has taken wind, by surrendering myself to the next Justice of Peace, and giving security

that hereafter I shall live quiet, and submit to the ruling powers."

Again the rest of the persons present, intimated their agreement in opinion with the speaker.

"Well, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet, "it is not for me to oppose the opinion of every one; and I must do you the justice to say, that the King has, in the present instance, neglected a condition of your agreement, which was laid before him in very distinct terms. The question now is, who is to acquaint him with the result of this conference? for I presume you would not wait on him in a body to make the proposal, that he should dismiss a person from his family as the price of your allegiance."

"I think Mr. Redgauntlet should make the explanation," said Lord ——. "As he has, doubtless, done justice to our remonstrances by communicating them to the King, no one can, with such propriety and force, state the natural and inevitable consequence of their being neglected."

"Now, I think," said Redgauntlet, "that those who make the objection should state it; for I am confident the King will hardly believe, on less authority than that of the heir of the loyal House of B——, that he is the first to seek an evasion of his pledge to join him."

"An evasion, sir!" repeated Lord ——, fiercely. "I have borne too much from you already, and this I will not endure. Favour me with your company to the downs yonder."

Redgauntlet laughed scornfully, and was about to follow the fiery young man, when Sir Richard again interposed. "Are we to exhibit," he said, "the last symptoms of the dissolution of our party, by turning our swords against each other?—Be patient Lord ——; in such conferences as this, much must pass unquestioned which might brook challenge elsewhere. There is a privilege of party as of parliament—men cannot, in emergency, stand upon picking phrases.—Gentlemen, if you will extend your confidence in me so far, I will wait upon his majesty, and I hope my Lord —— and Mr. Redgauntlet will accompany me. I trust the explanation of this unpleasant matter will prove entirely satisfactory, and that we shall find ourselves at liberty to render our homage to our Sovereign without reserve, when I for one will be the first to peril all in his just quarrel."

Redgauntlet at once stepped forward, "My lord," he said, "if my zeal made me say any thing in the slightest degree offensive, I wish it unsaid, and ask your pardon. A gentleman can do no more."

"I could not have asked Mr. Redgauntlet to do so much," said the young nobleman, willingly accepting the hand which Redgauntlet offered. "I know no man living from whom I could take so much reproof without a sense of degradation, as from himself."

"Let me then hope, my lord, that you will go with Sir Richard and me to the presence. Your warm blood will heat our zeal—our colder resolves will temper yours."

The young lord smiled, and shook his head. "Alas! Mr. Redgauntlet," he said, "I am ashamed to say, that in zeal you surpass us all. But I will not refuse this mission, provided you will permit Sir Arthur, your nephew, also to accompany us."

"My nephew?" said Redgauntlet, and seemed to hesitate, then added, "Most certainly.—I trust," he said, looking at Darsie, "he will bring to his Prince's presence such sentiments as fit the occasion."

It seemed however to Darsie, that his uncle would rather have left him behind, had he not feared that he might in that case have been influenced by, or might perhaps himself influence, the unresolved confederates with whom he must have associated during his absence.

"I will go," said Redgauntlet, "and request admission."

In a moment after he returned, and without speaking, motioned for the young nobleman to advance. He did so, followed by Sir Richard Glendale and Darsie, Redgauntlet himself bringing up the rear. A short passage and a few steps brought them to the *door of the temporary presence-chamber*, in which *the Royal Wanderer was to receive* their homage. It was the upper loft of one of those cottages which made additions to the Old Inn, poorly furnished, dusty, and in disorder; for rash as the enterprise might be considered, they had been still careful not to draw the attention of strangers by any particular attentions to the personal accommodation of the Prince. He was seated, when the deputies, as they might be termed, of his remaining adherents, entered; and as he rose, and came forward and bowed in acceptance of their salutation, it was with a dignified courtesy which at once supplied whatever was deficient in external pomp, and converted the wretched garret into a saloon worthy of the occasion.

"It is needless to add, that he was the same personage already introduced in the character of Father Buonaventure, by which name he was distinguished at Fairladies. His dress was not different from what he then wore, excepting that he had a loose riding-coat of camlet, under which he carried an efficient cut-and-thrust sword, instead of his walking rapier, and also a pair of pistols.

Redgauntlet presented to him successively the young Lord ——, and his kinsman, Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet, who trembled as, bowing and kissing his hand, he found himself surprised into what might be construed an act of high treason, which yet he saw no safe means to avoid.

Sir Richard Glendale seemed personally known to Charles Edward, who received him with a mixture of dignity and affection, and seemed to sympathize with the tears which rushed into that gentleman's eyes as he bid his Majesty welcome to his native kingdom.

"Yes, my good Sir Richard," said the unfortunate Prince, in a tone melancholy, yet resolved, "Charles Edward is with his faithful friends once more—not, perhaps, with his former gay hopes which undervalued danger, but with the same determined contempt of the worst which can befall him, in claiming his own rights and those of his country."

"I rejoice, sire—and yet, alas! I must also grieve, to see you once more on the British shores," said Sir Richard Glendale, and stopped short—a tumult of contradictory feelings preventing his farther utterance.

"It is the call of my faithful and suffering people which alone could have induced me to take once more the sword in my hand. For my own part, Sir Richard, when I have reflected how many of my loyal and devoted friends perished by the sword and by proscription, or died indigent and neglected in a foreign land, I have often sworn that no view to my personal aggrandizement should again induce me to agitate a title which has cost my followers so dear. But since so many men of worth and honour conceive the cause of England and Scotland to be linked with that of Charles Stewart, I must follow their brave example, and, laying aside all other considerations, once more stand forward as their deliverer. I am, however, come hither upon your invitation; and as you are so completely acquainted with circumstances to which my absence must necessarily have rendered me a stranger, I must be a mere tool in the hands of my friends. I know well I never can refer myself implicitly to more loyal hearts or wiser heads, than Herries Redgauntlet, and Sir Richard Glendale. Give me your advice, then, how we are to proceed, and decide upon the fate of Charles Edward."

Redgauntlet looked at Sir Richard, as if to say, "Can you press an additional or unpleasant condition at a moment like this?" And the other shook his head and looked down, as if his resolution was unaltered, and yet as feeling all the delicacy of the situation.

There was a silence, which was broken by the unfortunate representative of an unhappy dynasty, with some appearance of irritation. "This is strange, gentlemen," he said; "you have sent for me from the bosom of my family, to head an adventure of doubt and danger; and when I come, your own minds seem to be still irresolute. I had not expected this on the part of two such men."

"For me, sire," said Redgauntlet, "the steel of my sword is not truer than the temper of my mind."

"My Lord ——'s and mine are equally so," said

Sir Richard; "but you had in charge, Mr. Redgauntlet, to convey our request to his Majesty, coupled with certain conditions."

"And I discharged my duty to his Majesty and to you," said Redgauntlet.

"I looked at no condition, gentlemen," said their King, with dignity, "save that which called me here to assert my rights in person. *That* I have fulfilled at no common risk. Here I stand to keep my word, and I expect of you to be true to yours."

"There was, or should have been, something more than that in our proposal, please your Majesty," said Sir Richard. "There was a condition annexed to it."

"I saw it not," said Charles, interrupting him. "Out of tenderness towards the noble hearts of whom I think so highly, I would neither see nor read any thing which could lessen them in my love and my esteem. Conditions can have no part betwixt Prince and subject."

"Sire," said Redgauntlet, kneeling on one knee, "I see from Sir Richard's countenance he deems it my fault that your Majesty seems ignorant of what your subjects desired that I should communicate to your Majesty. For Heaven's sake! for the sake of all my past services and sufferings, leave not such a stain upon my honour! The note, Number D., of which this is a copy, referred to the painful subject to which Sir Richard again directs your attention."

"You press upon me, gentlemen," said the Prince, colouring highly, "recollections, which, as I hold them most alien to your character, I would willingly have banished from my memory. I did not suppose that my loyal subjects would think so poorly of me, as to use my depressed circumstances as a reason for forcing themselves into my domestic privacies, and stipulating arrangements with their King regarding matters, in which the meanest hinds claim the privilege of thinking for themselves. In affairs of state and public policy, I will ever be guided as becomes a prince, by the advice of my wisest counsellors; in those which regard my private affections, and my domestic arrangements, I claim the same freedom of will which I allow to all my subjects, and without which a crown were less worth wearing than a beggar's bonnet."

"May it please your Majesty," said Sir Richard Glendale, "I see it must be my lot to speak unwilling truths; but believe me, I do so with as much profound respect as deep regret. It is true, we have called you to head a mighty undertaking, and that your Majesty, preferring honour to safety, and the love of your country to your own ease, has condescended to become our leader. But we also pointed out as a necessary and indispensable preparatory step to the achievement of our purpose—and, I must say, as a positive condition of our engaging in it—that an individual, supposed,—I presume not to guess how truly,—to have your Majesty's more intimate confidence, and believed, I will not say on absolute proof, but upon the most pregnant suspicion, to be capable of betraying that confidence to the Elector of Hanover, should be removed from your royal household and society."

"This is too insolent, Sir Richard!" said Charles Edward. "Have you inveigled me into your power to bait me in this unseemly manner?—And you, Redgauntlet, why did you suffer matters to come to such a point as this, without making me more distinctly aware what insults were to be practised on me?"

"My gracious Prince," said Redgauntlet, "I am so far to blame in this, that I did not think so slight an impediment as that of a woman's society could have really interrupted an undertaking of this magnitude. I am a plain man, sire, and speak but bluntly; I could not have dreamt but what, within the first five minutes of this interview, either Sir Richard and his friends would have ceased to insist upon a condition so ungrateful to your Majesty, or that your Majesty would have sacrificed this unhappy attachment to the sound advice, or even to the over-anxious suspicions, of so many faithful subjects. I saw no entanglement in such a difficulty, which on either side might not have been *broken through like* a cobweb."

"*You were mistaken, sir,*" *said* Charles Edward, "entirely mistaken—as much so as you are at this moment, when you think in your heart my refusal to comply with this insolent proposition is dictated by a childish and romantic passion for an individual. I tell you, sir, I could part with that person to-morrow, without an instant's regret—that I have had thoughts of dismissing her from my court, for reasons known to myself; but that I will never betray my rights as a sovereign and a man, by taking this step to secure the favour of any one, or to purchase that allegiance, which, if you owe it to me at all, is due to me as my birthright."

"I am sorry for this," said Redgauntlet; "I hope both your Majesty and Sir Richard will reconsider your resolutions, or forbear this discussion in a conjuncture so pressing. I trust your Majesty will recollect that you are on hostile ground; that our preparations cannot have so far escaped notice as to permit us now with safety to retreat from our purpose; insomuch, that it is with the deepest anxiety of heart I foresee even danger to your own royal person, unless you can generously give your subjects the satisfaction, which Sir Richard seems to think they are obstinate in demanding."

"And deep indeed your anxiety ought to be," said the Prince. "Is it in these circumstances of personal danger in which you expect to overcome a resolution, which is founded on a sense of what is due to me as a man or a prince? If the axe and scaffold were ready before the windows of Whitehall, I would rather tread the same path with my great-grandfather, than concede the slightest point in which my honour is concerned."

He spoke these words with a determined accent, and looked around him on the company, all of whom (excepting Darsie, who saw, he thought, a fair period to a most perilous enterprise) seemed in deep anxiety and confusion. At length, Sir Richard spoke in a solemn and melancholy tone.

"If the safety," he said, "of poor Richard Glendale were alone concerned in this matter, I have never valued my life enough to weigh it against the slightest point of your Majesty's service. But I am only a messenger—a commissioner, who must execute my trust, and upon whom a thousand voices will cry Curse and wo, if I do it not with fidelity. All of your adherents, even Redgauntlet himself, see certain ruin to this enterprise—the greatest danger to your Majesty's person—the utter destruction of all your party and friends, if they insist not on the point, which, unfortunately, your Majesty is so unwilling to concede. I speak it with a heart full of anguish—with a tongue unable to utter my emotions—but it must be spoken—the fatal truth—that if your royal goodness cannot yield to us a boon which we hold necessary to our security and your own, your Majesty with one word disarms ten thousand men, ready to draw their swords in your behalf; or, to speak yet more plainly, you annihilate even the semblance of a royal party in Great Britain."

"And why do you not add," said the Prince, scornfully, "that the men who have been ready to assume arms in my behalf, will atone for their treason to the Elector, by delivering me up to the fate for which so many proclamations have destined me? Carry my head to St. James's, gentlemen; you will do a more acceptable and a more honourable action, than, having inveigled me into a situation which places me so completely in your power, to dishonour yourselves by propositions which dishonour me."

"My God, sire!" exclaimed Sir Richard, clasping his hands together, in impatience, "of what great and inexpiable crime can your Majesty's ancestors have been guilty, that they have been punished by the infliction of judicial blindness on their whole generation!—Come, my Lord ——, we must to our friends."

"By your leave, Sir Richard," said the young nobleman, "not till we have learned what measures can be taken for his Majesty's personal safety."

"Care not for me, young man," said Charles Edward; "when I was in the society of Highland robbers and cattle-drovers, I was safer than I now hold myself among the representatives of the best blood

in England.—Farewell, gentlemen—I will shift for myself."

"This must never be," said Redgauntlet. "Let me that brought you to the point of danger, at least provide for your safe retreat."

So saying, he hastily left the apartment, followed by his nephew. The Wanderer, averting his eyes from Lord ——and Sir Richard Glendale, threw himself into a seat at the upper end of the apartment, while they, in much anxiety, stood together at a distance from him, and conversed in whispers.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

WHEN Redgauntlet left the room, in haste and discomposure, the first person he met on the stair, and indeed so close by the door of the apartment that Darsie thought he must have been listening there, was his attendant Nixon.

"What the devil do you here?" he said abruptly and sternly.

"I wait your orders," said Nixon. "I hope all's right?—excuse my zeal."

"All is wrong, sir—Where is the seafaring fellow—Ewart—what do you call him?"

"Nanty Ewart, sir—I will carry your commands," said Nixon.

"I will deliver them myself to him," said Redgauntlet: "call him hither."

"But should your honour leave the presence?" said Nixon, still lingering.

"'Sdeath, sir, do you prate to me?" said Redgauntlet, bending his brows. "I, sir, transact my own business; you, I am told, act by a ragged deputy."

Without farther answer, Nixon departed, rather disconcerted, as it seemed to Darsie.

"That dog turns insolent and lazy," said Redgauntlet; "but I must bear with him for a while."

A moment after, Nixon returned with Ewart.

"Is this the smuggling fellow?" demanded Redgauntlet.

Nixon nodded.

"Is he sober now?—he was brawling anon."

"Sober enough for business," said Nixon.

"Well then, hark ye, Ewart—man your boat with your best hands, and have her by the pier—get your other fellows on board the brig—if you have any cargo left, throw it overboard; it shall be all paid, five times over—and be ready for a start to Wales or the Hebrides, or perhaps for Sweden or Norway."

Ewart answered sullenly enough, "Ay, ay, sir."

"Go with him, Nixon," said Redgauntlet, forcing himself to speak with some appearance of cordiality to the servant with whom he was offended; "see he does his duty."

Ewart left the house sullenly, followed by Nixon. The sailor was just in that species of drunken humour which made him jealous, passionate, and troublesome, without showing any other disorder than that of irritability. As he walked towards the beach he kept muttering to himself, but in such a tone that his companion lost not a word, "Smuggling fellow—Ay, smuggler—and, start your cargo into the sea—and be ready to start for the Hebrides, or Sweden—or the devil, I suppose.—Well, and what if I said in answer—Rebel, Jacobite—traitor—I'll make you and your d—d confederates walk the plank—I have seen better men do it—half-a-score of a morning—when I was across the Line."

"D—d unhandsome terms those Redgauntlet used to you, brother," said Nixon.

"Which do you mean?" said Ewart, starting, and recollecting himself. "I have been at my old trade of thinking aloud, have I?"

"No matter," answered Nixon, "none but a friend heard you. You cannot have forgotten how Redgauntlet disarmed you this morning?"

"Why, I would bear no malice about that—only he *is so cursedly high and saucy*," said Ewart.

"And then," said Nixon, "I know you for a true-hearted Protestant."

"That I am, by G—," said Ewart. "No, the Spaniards could never get my religion from me."

"And a friend to King George, and the Hanover line of succession," said Nixon, still walking and speaking very slow.

"You may swear I am, excepting in the way of business, as Turnpenny says. I like King George, but I can't afford to pay duties."

"You are outlawed, I believe?" said Nixon.

"Am I?—faith, I believe I am," said Ewart. "I wish I were *inlawed* again with all my heart—But come along, we must get all ready for our peremptory gentleman, I suppose."

"I will teach you a better trick," said Nixon. "There is a bloody pack of rebels yonder."

"Ay, we all know that," said the smuggler; "but the snowball's melting, I think."

"There is some one yonder, whose head is worth—thirty—thousand—pounds—of sterling money," said Nixon, pausing between each word, as if to enforce the magnificence of the sum.

"And what of that?" said Ewart, quickly.

"Only that if, instead of lying by the pier with your men on their oars, if you will just carry your boat on board just now, and take no notice of any signal from the shore, by G—d, Nanty Ewart, I will make a man of you for life!"

"Oh, ho! then the Jacobite gentry are not so safe as they think themselves?" said Nanty.

"In an hour or two," replied Nixon, "they will be made safer in Carlisle Castle."

"The devil they will!" said Ewart; "and you have been the informer, I suppose?"

"Yes; I have been ill paid for my service among the Redgauntlets—have scarce got dog's wages—and been treated worse than ever dog was used. I have the old fox and his cubs in the same trap now, Nanty; and we'll see how a certain young lady will look then. You see I am frank with you, Nanty."

"And I will be as frank with you," said the smuggler. "You are a d—d old scoundrel—traitor to the man whose bread you eat! Me help to betray poor devils, that have been so often betrayed myself!—Not if they were a hundred Popes, Devils, and Pretenders. I will back and tell them their danger—they are part of cargo—regularly invoiced—put under my charge by the owners—I'll back"——

"You are not stark mad?" said Nixon, who now saw he had miscalculated in supposing Nanty's wild ideas of honour and fidelity could be shaken even by resentment, or by his Protestant partialities. "You shall not go back—it is all a joke."

"I'll back to Redgauntlet, and see whether it is a joke he will laugh at."

"My life is lost if you do," said Nixon—"hear reason."

They were in a clump or cluster of tall furze at the moment they were speaking, about half way between the pier and the house, but not in a direct line, from which Nixon, whose object it was to gain time, had induced Ewart to diverge insensibly.

He now saw the necessity of taking a desperate resolution. "Hear reason," he said; and added, as Nanty still endeavoured to pass him, "Or else hear this!" discharging a pocket-pistol into the unfortunate man's body.

Nanty staggered, but kept his feet. "It has cut my back-bone asunder," he said "you have done me the last good office, and I will not die ungrateful."

As he uttered the last words, he collected his remaining strength, stood firm for an instant, drew his hanger, and fetching a stroke with both hands, cut Cristal Nixon down. The blow, struck with all the energy of a desperate and dying man, exhibited a force to which Ewart's exhausted frame might have seemed inadequate;—it cleft the hat which the wretch wore, though secured by a plate of iron within the lining, bit deep into his skull, and there left a fragment of the weapon, which was broke by the fury of the blow.

One of the seamen of the lugger, who strolled up, attracted by the firing of the pistol, though, being a small one, the report was very trifling, found both the unfortunate men stark dead. Alarmed at what

which he conceived to have been the conse-
if some unsuccessful engagement betwixt
ommander and a revenue officer, (for Nixon
not to be personally known to him,) the
stened back to the boat, in order to apprize
ades of Nanty's fate, and to advise them to
themselves and the vessel.
ime Redgauntlet, having, as we have seen,
nd Nixon for the purpose of securing a re-
he unfortunate Charles in case of extremity,
to the apartment where he had left the
r. He now found him alone.
Richard Glendale," said the unfortunate
with his young friend, has gone to consult
erents now in the house. Redgauntlet, my
will not blame you for the circumstances in
ind myself, though I am at once placed in
nd rendered contemptible. But you ought
tated to me more strongly the weight which
ntlemen attached to their insolent proposi-
n should have told me that no compromise
ave any effect—that they desired, not a
govern them, but one, on the contrary,
am, they were to exercise restraint on all
, from the highest affairs of the state, down
et intimate and closest concerns of his own
which the most ordinary men desire to keep
d sacred from interference."
knows," said Redgauntlet, in much agita-
acted for the best when I pressed your
o come hither—I never thought that your
at such a crisis, would have scrupled, when
n was in view, to sacrifice an attachment,

—

, sir!" said Charles; "it is not for you to
ny feelings upon such a subject."
ntlet coloured high, and bowed profoundly.
" he resumed, "I hoped that some middle
it be found, and it shall—and must—Come
nephew. We will to these gentlemen, and
nfident I shall bring back heart-stirring

do much to comply with them, Redgauntlet.
, having again set my foot on British land,
without a blow for my right. But this which
nd of me is a degradation, and compliance
ble."
ntlet, followed by his nephew, the unwilling
of this extraordinary scene, left once more
ment of the adventurous Wanderer, and
in the top of the stairs by Joe Crackenthorp.
re the other gentlemen?" he said.
r, in the west barrack," answered Joe;
ster Ingoldsby,"—that was the name by
dgauntlet was most generally known in
nd,—"I wished to say to you that I must
r folk together in one room."
folk?" said Redgauntlet, impatiently.
them prisoner stranger folk, as you bid
you look after. Lord love you! this is a
e enow, but we cannot have separate lock-
ks, as they have in Newgate or in Bedlam.
a mad beggar, that is to be a great man
wins a lawsuit, Lord help him!—Yon-
aker and a lawyer charged with a riot; and,
et shake one key and one lock keep them,
chokeful, and you have sent off old Nixon,
have given one some help in this confusion.
ey take up every one a room, and call for
n earth,—excepting the old man, who calls
ugh,—but he has not a penny to pay shot."
thou wilt with them," said Redgauntlet,
listened impatiently to his statement; "so
but keep them from getting out and making
n in the country, I care not."
aker and a lawyer!" said Darsie. "This
airford and Geddes.—Uncle, I must request

—

nephew," interrupted Redgauntlet, "this is
or asking questions. You shall yourself
n their fate in the course of an hour—no
ever is designed them."
ng, he hurried towards the place where the
outlaws were holding their council, and

Darsie followed him, in the hope that the obstacle which had arisen to the prosecution of their desperate adventure would prove insurmountable, and spare him the necessity of a dangerous and violent rupture with his uncle. The discussions among them were very eager; the more daring part of the conspirators, who had little but life to lose, being desirous to proceed at all hazards; while the others, whom a sense of honour and a hesitation to disavow long-cherished principles had brought forward, were perhaps not ill satisfied to have a fair apology for declining an adventure, into which they had entered with more of reluctance than zeal.

Mean while Joe Crackenthorp, availing himself of the hasty permission obtained from Redgauntlet, proceeded to assemble in one apartment those whose safe custody had been thought necessary; and without much considering the propriety of the matter, he selected for the common place of confinement, the room which Lilias had since her brother's departure occupied alone. It had a strong lock, and was double-hinged, which probably led to the preference assigned to it as a place of security.

Into this, Joe, with little ceremony, and a good deal of noise, introduced the Quaker and Fairford; the first descanting on the immorality, the other on the illegality, of his proceedings; and he turning a deaf ear both to the one and the other. Next he pushed in, almost in headlong fashion, the unfortunate litigant, who having made some resistance at the threshold, had received a violent thrust in consequence, and came rushing forward, like a ram in the act of charging, with such impetus, as must have carried him to the top of the room, and struck the cocked hat which sat perched on the top of his tow wig against Miss Redgauntlet's person, had not the honest Quaker interrupted his career by seizing him by the collar, and bringing him to a stand. "Friend," said he, with the real good-breeding which so often subsists independently of ceremonial, "thou art no company for that young person; she is, thou seest, frightened at our being so suddenly thrust in hither; and although that be no fault of ours, yet it will become us to behave civilly towards her. Wherefore come thou with me to this window, and I will tell thee what it concerns thee to know."

"And what for should I no speak to the leddy, friend?" said Peter, who was now about half seas over. "I have spoke to leddies before now, man—What for should she be frightened at me?—I am nae bogle, I ween.—What are ye pooin' me that gate for?—Ye will rive my coat, and I will have a good action for having myself made *earium atque tectum* at your expenses."

Notwithstanding this threat, Mr. Geddes, whose muscles were as strong as his judgment was sound and his temper sedate, led Poor Peter, under the sense of a control against which he could not struggle, to the farther corner of the apartment, where, placing him, whether he would or no, in a chair, he sat down beside him, and effectually prevented his annoying the young lady, upon whom he had seemed bent on conferring the delights of his society.

If Peter had immediately recognised his counsel learned in the law, it is probable that not even the benevolent efforts of the Quaker could have kept him in a state of restraint; but Fairford's back was turned towards his client, whose optics, besides being somewhat dazzled with ale and brandy, were speedily engaged in contemplating a half-crown which Joshua held between his finger and his thumb, saying, at the same time, "Friend, thou art indigent and improvident. This will, well employed, procure thee sustentation of nature for more than a single day; and I will bestow it on thee if thou wilt sit here and keep me company; for neither thou nor I, friend, are fit company for ladies."

"Speak for yourself, friend," said Peter, scornfully; "I was aye kend to be agreeable to the fair sex; and when I was in business I served the leddies wi' anither sort of decorum than Plainstanes, the d—d awkward scoundrel! It was one of the articles of ditty between us."

"Well, but, friend," said the Quaker, who observed

that the young lady still seemed to fear Peter's intrusion, "I wish to hear thee speak about this great lawsuit of thine, which has been matter of such celebrity."

"Celebrity?—Ye may swear that," said Peter, for the string was touched to which his crazy imagination always vibrated. "And I dinna wonder that folk that judge things by their outward grandeur, should think me something worth their envying. It's very true that it is grandeur upon earth to hear ane's name thundered out along the long-arched roof of the Outer-House,—'*Poor* Peter Peebles against Plainstanes, *et per contra*;' a' the best lawyers in the house flocing like eagles to the prey; some because they are in the cause, and some because they want to be thought engaged (for there are tricks in other trades by selling muslins)—to see the reporters mending their pens to take down the debate—the Lords themselves nodin' in their chairs, like folk sitting down to a gude dinner, and crying on the clerks for parts and pendicles of the process, who, puir bodies, can do little mair than cry on their closet-keepers to help them. To see a' this," continued Peter in a tone of sustained rapture, "and to ken that naething will be said or done amang a' thae grand folk, for maybe the feck of three hours, saving what concerns you and your business—O, man, nae wonder that ye judge this to be earthly glory!—And yet, neighbour, as I was saying, there be no unco drawbacks—I whiles think of my bit house, where dinner, and supper, and breakfast, used to come without the crying for, just as if fairies had brought it—and the gude bed at e'en—and the needfu' penny in the pouch.—And then to see a' ane's warldly substance capering in the air in a pair of weigh-bauks, now up, now down, as the breath of judge or counsel inclines it for pursuer or defender,—troth, man, there are times I rue having ever begun the plea wark, though may be, when ye consider the renown and credit I have by it, ye will hardly believe what I am saying."

"Indeed friend," said Joshua, with a sigh, "I am glad thou hast found any thing in the legal contention which compensates thee for poverty and hunger; but I believe, were other human objects of ambition looked upon as closely, their advantages would be found as chimerical as those attending thy protracted litigation."

"But never mind, friend," said Peter, "I'll tell you the exact state of the conjunct processes, and make you sensible that I can bring myself round with a wet finger, now I have my finger and my thumb on this loup-the-dike loon, the lad Fairford."

Alan Fairford was in the act of speaking to the masked lady, (for Miss Redgauntlet had retained her riding vizard,) endeavouring to assure her as he perceived her anxiety, of such protection as he could afford, when his own name, pronounced in a loud tone, attracted his attention. He looked round, and, seeing Peter Peebles, as hastily turned to avoid his notice, in which he succeeded, so earnest was Peter upon his colloquy with one of the most respectable auditors whose attention he had ever been able to engage. And by this little motion, momentary as it was, Alan gained an unexpected advantage; for while he looked round, Miss Lilias, I could never ascertain why, took the moment to adjust her mask, and did it so awkwardly, that when her companion again turned his head, he recognised as much of her features as authorized him to address her as his fair client, and to press his offers of protection and assistance with the boldness of a former acquaintance.

Lilias Redgauntlet withdrew the mask from her crimsoned cheek. "Mr. Fairford," she said, in a voice almost inaudible, "you have the character of a young gentleman of sense and generosity; but we have already met in one situation which you must think singular; and I must be exposed to misconstruction, at least for my forwardness, were it not in a cause in which my dearest affections were concerned."

"Any interest in my beloved friend, Darsie Latimer," said Fairford, stepping a little back, and putting a marked restraint upon his former advances, "gives *me a double right to be useful to*"—. He stopped short.

"*To his sister, your goodness would say*," answered Lilias.

"His sister, madam!" replied Alan, in the extr of astonishment—"Sister, I presume in affe only?"

"No, sir; my dear brother Darsie and I are nected by the bonds of actual relationship; and not sorry to be the first to tell this to the frie most values."

Fairford's first thought was on the violent pa which Darsie had expressed towards the fair unkn "Good God!" he exclaimed, "how did he ha discovery?"

"With resignation, I hope," said Lilias, sm "A more accomplished sister he might easily come by, but scarcely could have found one could love him more than I do."

"I meant—I only meant to say," said the counsellor, his presence of mind failing him instant—"that is, I meant to ask where L Latimer is at this moment."

"In this very house, and under the guardians his uncle, whom I belive you knew as a vis your father, under the name of Mr. Herries o renswerk."

"Let me hasten to him," said Fairford; "I sought him through difficulties and dangers—I see him instantly."

"You forget you are a prisoner," said the lady.

"True—true; but I cannot be long detained cause alleged is too ridiculous."

"Alas!" said Lilias, "our fate—my brother' mine, at least—must turn on the deliberations sp of less than an hour.—For you, sir, I believ apprehend nothing but some restraint; my u neither cruel nor unjust, though few will go f in the cause which he has adopted."

"Which is that of the Pretend—"

"For God's sake speak lower!" said Lilia proaching her hand, as if to stop him, "The may cost you your life. You do not know—i you do not—the terrors of the situation in whi at present stand, and in which I fear you al involved by your friendship for my brother."

"I do not indeed know the particulars of our tion," said Fairford; "but be the danger what it I shall not grudge my share of it for the sake friend; or," he added, with more timidity, "friend's sister. Let me hope," he said, "my Miss Latimer, that my presence may be of ser to you; and that it may be so, let me entreat a of your confidence which I am conscious I otherwise no right to ask."

He led her, as he spoke, towards the recess farther window of the room, and observing that, unhappily, he was particularly exposed to ruption from the mad old man whose entranc alarmed her, he disposed of Darsie Latimer's r skirt, which had been left in the apartment, ov back of two chairs, forming thus a sort of s behind which he ensconced himself with the r of the green mantle; feeling at the moment, th danger in which he was placed was almost co sated by the intelligence which permitted thos ings towards her to revive, which justice to his had induced him to stifle in the birth.

The relative situation of adviser and advised, tector and protected, is so peculiarly suited to t spective condition of man and woman, that progress towards intimacy is often made in very space; for the circumstances call for confidin the part of the gentleman, and forbid coyness o of the lady, so that the usual barriers against ea tercourse are at once thrown down.

Under these circumstances, securing themsel far as possible from observation, conversing in pers, and seated in a corner, where they were b into so close contact that their faces nearly to each other, Fairford heard from Lilias Redgaunt history of her family, particularly of her unc views upon her brother, and the agony which a least at that very moment he might succeed in eng Darsie in some desperate scheme, fatal to his fo and perhaps to his life.

Alan Fairford's acute understanding, matured

lected what he had heard with the circumstances he had witnessed at Fairladies. His first thought was, to attempt, at all risks, his instant escape, and procure assistance powerful enough to crush, in the very cradle, a conspiracy of such a determined character. This he did not consider as difficult; for, though the door was guarded on the outside, the window, which was not above ten feet from the ground, was open for escape, the common on which it looked was unenclosed, and profusely covered with furze. There would, he thought, be little difficulty in effecting his liberty, and in concealing his course after he had gained it.

But Lilias exclaimed against this scheme. Her uncle, she said, was a man, who, in his moments of enthusiasm, knew neither remorse nor fear. He was capable of visiting upon Darsie any injury which he might conceive Fairford had rendered him—he was her near kinsman also, and not an unkind one, and she deprecated any effort, even in her brother's favour, by which his life must be exposed to danger. Fairford himself remembered Father Buonaventure, and made little question but that he was one of the sons of the old Chevalier de Saint George; and with feelings which, although contradictory of his public duty, can hardly be much censured, his heart recoiled from being the agent by whom the last scion of such a long line of Scottish Princes should be rooted up. He then thought of obtaining an audience, if possible, of this devoted person, and explaining to him the utter hopelessness of his undertaking, which he judged it likely that the ardour of his partisans might have concealed from him. But he relinquished this design as soon as formed. He had no doubt, that any light which he could throw on the state of the country, would come too late to be serviceable to one who was always reported to have his own full share of the hereditary obstinacy which had cost his ancestors so dear, and who, in drawing the sword, must have thrown from him the scabbard.

Lilias suggested the advice which, of all others, seemed most suited to the occasion, that yielding, namely, to the circumstances of their situation, they should watch carefully when Darsie should obtain any degree of freedom, and endeavour to open a communication with him, in which case their joint flight might be effected, and without endangering the safety of any one.

Their youthful deliberation had nearly fixed in this point, when Fairford, who was listening to the low sweet whispering tones of Lilias Redgauntlet, rendered yet more interesting by some slight touch of foreign accent, was startled by a heavy hand which descended with full weight on his shoulder, while the discordant notes of Peter Peebles, who had at length broken loose from the well-meaning Quaker, exclaimed in the ear of his truant counsel—"Aha, lad! I think ye are catched—An' so ye are turned chamber-counsel, are ye?—And ye have drawn up wi' clients in scarfs and hoods? But bide a wee, billie, and see if I dinna sort ye when my petition and complaint comes to be discussed, with or without answers, under certification."

Alan Fairford had never more difficulty in his life to subdue a first emotion, than he had to refrain from knocking down the crazy blockhead who had broke in upon him at such a moment. But the length of Peter's address gave him time, fortunately perhaps for both parties, to reflect on the extreme irregularity of such a proceeding. He stood silent, however, with vexation, while Peter went on.

"Weel, my bonnie man, I see ye are thinking shame o' yourself, and nae great wonder. Ye maun leave this quean—the like of her is ower light company for you. I have heard honest Mr. Pest say, that the gown grees ill wi' the petticoat. But come awa hame to your puir father, and I'll take care of you the haill gate, and keep you company, and deil a word we will speak about, but just the state of the conjoined processes of the great cause of Poor Peebles against Plainstanes."

"If thod canst endure to hear as much of that suit, friend," *said the Quaker, "as I have heard out of mere compassion for thee, I think* verily thou wilt soon be at the bottom of the matter, unless it be altogether bottomless."

Fairford shook off, rather indignantly, the large bony hand which Peter had imposed upon his shoulder, and was about to say something peevish, upon so unpleasant and insolent a mode of interruption, when the door opened, a treble voice saying to the sentinel, "I tell you I maun be in, to see if Mr. Nixon's here;" and Little Benjie thrust in his mophead and keen black eyes. Ere he could withdraw it, Peter Peebles sprang to the door, seized on the boy by the collar, and dragged him forward into the room.

"Let me see it," he said, "ye ne'er-do-weel limb of Satan—I'll gar you satisfy the production, I trow—I'll hae first and second diligence against you, ye deevil's buckie!"

"What dost thou want?" said the Quaker, interfering; "why dost thou frighten the boy, friend Peebles?"

"I gave the bastard a penny to buy me snuff," said the pauper, "and he has rendered no account of his intromissions; but I'll gar him as gude."

So saying, he proceeded forcibly to rifle the pockets of Benjie's ragged jacket, of one or two snares for game, marbles, a half-bitten apple, two stolen eggs, (one of which Peter broke in the eagerness of his research,) and various other unconsidered trifles, which had not the air of being very honestly come by. The little rascal, under this discipline, bit and struggled like a fox-cub, but like that vermin, uttered neither cry nor complaint, till a note, which Peter tore from his bosom, flew as far as Lilias Redgauntlet, and fell at her feet. It was addressed to C. N.

"It is for the villain Nixon," she said to Alan Fairford; "open it without scruple; that boy is his emissary; we shall now see what the miscreant is driving at."

Little Benjie now gave up all farther struggle, and suffered Peebles to take from him, without resistance, a shilling, out of which Peter declared he would pay himself principal and interest, and account for the balance. The boy, whose attention seemed fixed on something very different, only said, "Maister Nixon will murder me!"

Alan Fairford did not hesitate to read the little scrap of paper, on which was written, "All is prepared—keep them in play until I come up—You may depend on your reward.—C. C."

"Alas, my uncle—my poor uncle!" said Lilias; "this is the result of his confidence! Methinks, to give him instant notice of his confidant's treachery, is now the best service we can render all concerned—if they break up their undertaking, as they must now do, Darsie will be at liberty."

In the same breath, they were both at the half-opened door of the room, Fairford entreating to speak with the Father Buonaventure, and Lilias, equally vehemently, requesting a moment's interview with her uncle. While the sentinel hesitated what to do, his attention was called to a loud noise at the door, where a crowd had been assembled in consequence of the appalling cry, that the enemy were upon them, occasioned, as it afterwards proved, by some stragglers having at length discovered the dead bodies of Nanty Ewart and of Nixon.

Amid the confusion occasioned by this alarming incident, the sentinel ceased to attend to his duty; and, accepting Alan Fairford's arm, Lilias found no opposition in penetrating even to the inner apartment, where the principal persons in the enterprise, whose conclave had been disturbed by this alarming incident, were now assembled in great confusion, and had been joined by the Chevalier himself.

"Only a mutiny among these smuggling scoundrels," said Redgauntlet.

"*Only* a mutiny, do you say?" said Sir Richard Glendale; "and the lugger, the last hope of escape for"—he looked towards Charles,—"stands out to sea under a press of sail!"

"Do not concern yourself about me," said the unfortunate Prince; "this is not the worst emergency in which it has been my lot to stand; and if it were, I fear it not. Shift for yourselves, my lords and gentlemen."

"No, never!" said the young Lord ——. "Our only hope now is in an honourable resistance."

"Most true," said Redgauntlet; "let despair renew the union amongst us which accident disturbed. I give my voice for displaying the royal banner instantly, and——How now!" he concluded, sternly, as Lilias, first soliciting his attention by pulling his cloak, put into his hand the scroll, and added, it was designed for that of Nixon.

Redgauntlet read—and, dropping it on the ground, continued to stare upon the spot where it fell, with raised hands and fixed eyes. Sir Richard Glendale lifted the fatal paper, read it, and saying, "Now all is indeed over," handed it to Maxwell, who said aloud, "Black Colin Campbell, by G—d! I heard he had come post from London last night."

As if in echo to his thoughts, the violin of the blind man was heard, playing with spirit, "The Campbells are coming," a celebrated clan-march.

"The Campbells are coming in earnest," said MacKellar; "they are upon us with the whole battalion from Carlisle."

There was a silence of dismay, and two or three of the company began to drop out of the room.

Lord —— spoke with the generous spirit of a young English nobleman. "If we have been fools, do not let us be cowards. We have one here more precious than us all, and come hither on our warranty—let us save him at least."

"True, most true," answered Sir Richard Glendale. "Let the King be first cared for."

"That shall be my business," said Redgauntlet; "if we have but time to bring back the brig, all will be well—I will instantly despatch a party in a fishing skiff to bring her to."—He gave his commands to two or three of the most active among his followers. —"Let him be once on board," he said, "and there are enough of us to stand to arms and cover his retreat."

"Right, right," said Sir Richard, "and I will look to points which can be made defensible; and the old powder-plot boys could not have made a more desperate resistance than we shall.—Redgauntlet," continued he, "I see some of our friends are looking pale; but methinks your nephew has more mettle in his eye now than when we were in cold deliberation, with danger at a distance."

"It is the way of our house," said Redgauntlet; "our courage ever kindles highest on the losing side. I, too, feel that the catastrophe I have brought on must not be survived by its author. Let me first," he said, addressing Charles, "see your Majesty's sacred person in such safety as can now be provided for it, and then"——

"You may spare all considerations concerning me, gentlemen," again repeated Charles; "yon mountain of Criffel shall fly as soon as I will."

Most threw themselves at his feet with weeping and entreaty; some one or two slunk in confusion from the apartment, and were heard riding off. Unnoticed in such a scene, Darsie, his sister, and Fairford, drew together, and held each other by the hands, as those who, when a vessel is about to founder in the storm, determine to take their chance of life and death together.

Amid this scene of confusion, a gentleman, plainly dressed in a riding-habit, with a black cockade in his hat, but without any arms except a *couteau-de-chasse*, walked into the apartment without ceremony. He was a tall, thin, gentlemanly man, with a look and bearing decidedly military. He had passed through their guards, if in the confusion they now maintained any, without stop or question, and now stood, almost unarmed, among armed men, who, nevertheless, gazed on him as on the angel of destruction.

"You look coldly on me, gentlemen," he said. "Sir Richard Glendale—my Lord ——, we were not always such strangers. Ha, Pate-in-Peril, how is it with you? and you, too, Ingoldsby—I must not call you by any other name—why do you receive an old friend so coldly? But you guess my errand.

"*And are prepared for it, General*," said Redgauntlet; "*we are not men to be penned up like sheep for the slaughter.*"

"Pshaw! you take it too seriously—let me speak but one word with you."

"No words can shake our purpose," said Redgauntlet, "were your whole command, as I suppose is the case, drawn round the house."

"I am certainly not unsupported," said the General, "but if you would hear me"——

"Hear *me*, sir," said the Wanderer, stepping forward; "I suppose I am the mark you aim at—I surrender myself willingly, to save these gentlemen's danger—let this at least avail in their favour."

An exclamation of "Never, never!" broke from the little body of partisans, who threw themselves round the unfortunate Prince, and would have seized or struck down Campbell, had it not been that he remained with his arms folded, and a look, rather indicating impatience because they would not hear him, than the least apprehension of violence at their hand.

At length he obtained a moment's silence. "I do not," he said, "know this gentleman"—(Making a profound bow to the unfortunate Prince)—"I do not wish to know him; it is a knowledge which would suit neither of us."

"Our ancestors, nevertheless, have been well acquainted," said Charles, unable to suppress, even in that hour of dread and danger, the painful recollections of fallen royalty.

"In one word, General Campbell," said Redgauntlet, "is it to be peace or war?—You are a man of honour, and we can trust you."

"I thank you, sir," said the General; "and I reply that the answer to your question rests with yourself. Come, do not be fools, gentlemen; there was perhaps no great harm meant or intended by your gathering together in this obscure corner, for a bear-bait or a cock-fight, or whatever other amusement you may have intended; but it was a little imprudent, considering how you stand with government, and it has occasioned some anxiety. Exaggerated accounts of your purpose have been laid before government by the information of a traitor in your own councils; and I was sent down post to take the command of a sufficient number of troops, in case these calumnies should be found to have any real foundation. I have come here, of course, sufficiently supported both with cavalry and infantry, to do whatever might be necessary; but my commands are—and I am sure they agree with my inclination—to make no arrests, nay, to make no farther inquiries of any kind, if this good assembly will consider their own interest so far as to give up their immediate purpose, and return quietly to their own houses."

"What!—all?" exclaimed Sir Richard Glendale—"all, without exception?"

"ALL, without one single exception," said the General; "such are my orders. If you accept my terms, say so, and make haste; for things may happen to interfere with his Majesty's kind purposes towards you all."

"His Majesty's kind purposes!" said the Wanderer, "Do I hear you aright, sir?"

"I speak the King's very words, from his very lips," replied the General. "'I will,' said his Majesty, 'deserve the confidence of my subjects by reposing my security in the fidelity of the millions who acknowledge my title—in the good sense and prudence of the few who continue, from the errors of education, to disown it.'—His Majesty will not even believe that the most zealous Jacobites who yet remain can nourish a thought of exciting a civil war, which must be fatal to their families and themselves, besides spreading bloodshed and ruin through a peaceful land. He cannot even believe of his kinsman, that he would engage brave and generous, though mistaken men, in an attempt which must ruin all who have escaped former calamities; and he is convinced, that, did curiosity or any other motive lead that person to visit this country, he would soon see it was his wisest course to return to the continent; and his Majesty compassionates his situation too much to offer any obstacle to his doing so."

"Is this real?" said Redgauntlet. "Can you mean this?—Am I—are all, are any of these gentlemen

t liberty, without interruption, to embark in yonder ng, which, I see, is now again approaching the hore?"

"You, sir—all—any of the gentlemen present," said e General,—"all whom the vessel can contain, are t liberty to embark uninterrupted by me; but I ad- se none to go off who have not powerful reasons, nconnected with the present meeting, for this will be nemembered against no one."

"Then, gentlemen," said Redgauntlet, clasping his ands together as the words burst from him, "the ause is lost for ever!"

General Campbell turned away to the window, as to avoid hearing what they said. Their consultation as but momentary; for the door of escape which as opened was as unexpected as the exigence was reatening.

"We have your word of honour for our protection," id Sir Richard Glendale, "if we dissolve our meet- g in obedience to your summons?"

"You have, Sir Richard," answered the General.

"And I also have your promise," said Redgauntlet, hat I may go on board yonder vessel, with any iend whom I may choose to accompany me?"

"Not only that, Mr. Ingoldsby—or I *will* call you edgauntlet once more—you may stay in the offing r a tide, until you are joined by any person who may emain at Fairladies. After that, there will be a sloop f war on the station, and I need not say your condi- ion will then become perilous."

"Perilous it should not be, General Campbell," said edgauntlet, "or more perilous to others than to us, others thought as I do even in this extremity."

"You forget yourself, my friend," said the unhappy dventurer; "you forget that the arrival of this gentle- an only puts the cope-stone on our already adopted esolution to abandon our bull-fight, or by whatever ther wild name this headlong enterprise may be amed. I bid you farewell, unfriendly friends—I bid ou farewell," (bowing to the General,) "my friendly ost—I leave this strand as I landed upon it, alone, and o return no more!"

"Not alone," said Redgauntlet, "while there is lood in the veins of my father's son."

"Not alone," said the other gentlemen present, rung with feelings which almost overpowered the etter reasons under which they had acted. "We will not disown our principles, or see your person ndangered."

"If it be only your purpose to see the gentle- an to the beach," said General Campbell, "I will myself go with you. My presence among you, un- rmed, and in your power, will be a pledge of my iendly intentions, and will overawe, should such e offered, any interruption on the part of officious ersons."

"Be it so," said the Adventurer, with the air of a rince to a subject; not of one who complied with the equest of an enemy too powerful to be resisted.

They left the apartment—they left the house—an unutterable and dubious, but appalling, sensation f terror had already spread itself among the inferior tainers, who had so short time before strutted, and ustled, and thronged the doorway and the passages. report had arisen, of which the origin could not be raced, of troops advancing towards the spot in con- iderable numbers; and men who, for one reason or ther, were most of them amenable to the arm of ower, had either shrunk into stables or corners, or ed the place entirely. There was solitude on the andscape, excepting the small party which now oved towards the rude pier, where a boat lay man- ed, agreeably to Redgauntlet's orders previously iven.

The last heir of the Stewarts leant on Redgauntlet's rm as they walked towards the beach; for the ground as rough, and he no longer possessed the elasticity f limb and of spirit which had, twenty years before, arried him over many a Highland hill, as light as ne of their native deer. His adherents followed, ooking on the ground, their feelings struggling against he dictates of their reason.

General Campbell *accompanied them with an air of apparent ease and indifference, but watching*, at the same time, and no doubt with some anxiety, the changing features of those who acted in this extraordinary scene.

Darsie and his sister naturally followed their uncle, whose violence they no longer feared, while his character attracted their respect; and Alan Fairford accompanied them from interest in their fate, unnoticed in a party where all were too much occupied with their own thoughts and feelings, as well as with the impending crisis, to attend to his presence.

Half way betwixt the house and the beach, they saw the bodies of Nanty Ewart and Cristal Nixon blackening in the sun.

"That was your informer?" said Redgauntlet, looking back to General Campbell, who only nodded his assent.

"Caitiff wretch!" exclaimed Redgauntlet;—"and yet the name were better bestowed on the fool who could be misled by thee."

"That sound broadsword cut," said the General, "has saved us the shame of rewarding a traitor."

They arrived at the place of embarkation. The Prince stood a moment with folded arms, and looked around him in deep silence. A paper was then slipped into his hands—he looked at it, and said, "I find the two friends I have left at Fairladies are apprized of my destination, and propose to embark from Bowness. I presume this will not be an infringement of the conditions under which you have acted?"

"Certainly not," answered General Campbell; "they shall have all facility to join you."

"I wish, then," said Charles, "only another companion.—Redgauntlet, the air of this country is as hostile to you as it is to me. These gentlemen have made their peace, or rather they have done nothing to break it. But you—come you, and share my home where chance shall cast it. We shall never see these shores again; but we will talk of them, and of our disconcerted bull-fight."

"I follow you, Sire, through life," said Redgauntlet, "as I would have followed you to death. Permit me one moment."

The Prince then looked round, and seeing the abashed countenances of his other adherents bent upon the ground, he hastened to say, "Do not think that you, gentlemen, have obliged me less because your zeal was mingled with prudence, entertained, I am sure, more on my own account, and on that of your country, than from selfish apprehensions."

He stepped from one to another, and, amid sobs and bursting tears, received the adieus of the last remnant which had hitherto supported his lofty pretensions, and addressed them individually with accents of tenderness and affection.

The General drew a little aloof, and signed to Redgauntlet to speak with him while this scene proceeded. "It is now all over," he said, "and Jacobite will be henceforward no longer a party name. When you tire of foreign parts, and wish to make your peace, let me know. Your restless zeal alone has impeded your pardon hitherto."

"And now I shall not need it," said Redgauntlet. "I leave England for ever; but I am not displeased that you should hear my family adieus.—Nephew, come hither. In presence of General Campbell, I tell you, that though to breed you up in my own political opinions has been for many years my anxious wish, I am now glad that it could not be accomplished. You pass under the service of the reigning Monarch without the necessity of changing your allegiance—a change, however," he added, looking around him, "which sits more easy on honourable men than I could have anticipated; but some wear the badge of their loyalty on the sleeve, and others in the heart.—You will, from henceforth, be uncontrolled master of all the property of which forfeiture could not deprive your father—of all that belonged to him—excepting this, his good sword," (laying his hand on the weapon he wore) "which shall never fight for the House of Hanover; and as my hand will never draw weapon more, I shall sink it forty fathoms deep in the wide ocean. Bless you, young man! If I have dealt harshly with you, forgive me. I had set my whole desires on one point,—God knows, with no selfish purpose; and

I am justly punished by this final termination of my views, for having been too little scrupulous in the means by which I pursued them. Niece, farewell, and may God bless you also!"

"No, sir," said Lilias, seizing his hand eagerly. "You have been hitherto my protector,—you are now in sorrow, let me be your attendant and your comforter in exile!"

"I thank you, my girl, for your unmerited affection; but it cannot and must not be. The curtain here falls between us. I go to the house of another—If I leave it before I quit the earth, it shall be only for the House of God. Once more, farewell both!—The fatal doom," he said, with a melancholy smile, "will, I trust, now depart from the House of Redgauntlet, since its present representative has adhered to the winning side. I am convinced he will not change it, should it in turn become the losing one."

The unfortunate Charles Edward had now given his last adieus to his downcast adherents. He made a sign with his hand to Redgauntlet, who came to assist him into the skiff. General Campbell also offered his assistance; the rest appearing too much affected by the scene which had taken place to prevent him.

"You are not sorry, General, to do me this last act of courtesy," said the Chevalier; "and, on my part, I thank you for it. You have taught me the principle on which men on the scaffold feel forgiveness and kindness even for their executioner.—Farewell!"

They were seated in the boat, which presently pulled off from the land. The Oxford divine broke out into a loud benediction, in terms which General Campbell was too generous to criticise at the time, or to remember afterwards;—nay, it is said that, Whig and Campbell as he was, he could not help joining in the universal Amen! which resounded from the shore.

CONCLUSION,

BY DR. DRYASDUST,

IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLY.

I AM truly sorry, my worthy and much respected sir, that my anxious researches have neither, in the form of letters, nor of diaries, or other memoranda, been able to discover more than I have hitherto transmitted, of the history of the Redgauntlet family. But I observe in an old newspaper called the Whitehall Gazette, of which I fortunately possess a file for several years, that Sir Arthur Darsie Redgauntlet was presented to his late Majesty at the drawingroom, by Lieutenant-General Campbell—upon which the Editor observes, in the way of comment, that we were going, *remis atque velis*, into the interests of the Pretender, since a Scot had presented a Jacobite at Court. I am sorry I have not room (the frank being only uncial) for his farther observations, tending to show the apprehensions entertained by many well-instructed persons of the period, that the young King might himself be induced to become one of the Stewarts' faction,—a catastrophe from which it has pleased Heaven to preserve these kingdoms.

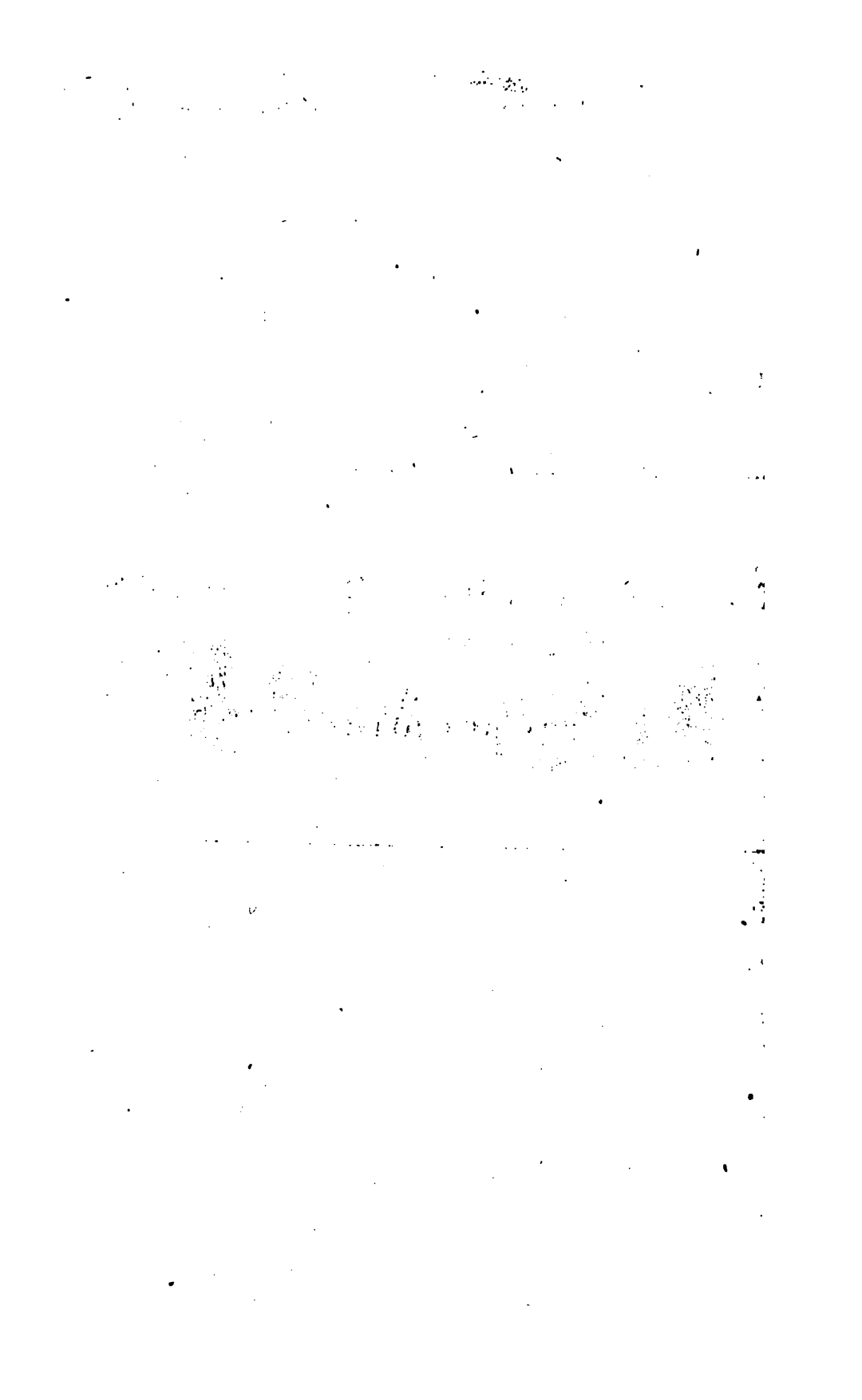
I perceive also, by a marriage contract in the family repositories, that Miss Lilias Redgauntlet of Redgauntlet, about eighteen months after the transactions you have commemorated, intermarried with Alan Fairford, Esq. Advocate, of Clinkdollar, who, I think, we may not unreasonably conclude to be the same person whose name occurs so frequently in the pages of your narration. In my last excursion to Edinburgh, I was fortunate enough to discover an old cadie, from whom, at the expense of a bottle of whisky, and half a pound of tobacco, I extracted the important information, that he knew Peter Peebles very well, and had drunk many a mutchkin [illegible] Cadie Fraser's time. He said that he liv[illegible] after King George's accession, in the mo[illegible] pectation of winning his cause every day [illegible] sion time, and every hour in the day, an[illegible] down dead, in what my informer called a [illegible] fit," upon a proposal for a composition b[illegible] him in the Outer-House. I have chosen [illegible] informer's phrase, not being able justly t[illegible] whether it is a corruption of the word [illegible] my friend Mr. Oldbuck supposes, or the m[illegible] peculiar disorder incidental to those who h[illegible] in the Courts of Law, as many calling[illegible] tions of men have diseases appropriate to [illegible] The same cadie also remembered Blind [illegible] venson, who was called Wandering Will[illegible] ended his days "unco beinly, in Sir Arthu[illegible] let's ha' neuk." "He had done the f[illegible] good turn," he said, "specially when [illegible] Argyle gentlemen was coming down on [illegible] them that had the 'auld leaven' about th[illegible] hae taen every man of them, and nae lea[illegible] and hanged them. But Willie, and a frie[illegible] called Robin the Rambler, gae them [illegible] playing tunes such as, 'the Campbells [illegible] and the like, whereby they got timeous [illegible] take the wing." I need not point out to [illegible] ness, my worthy sir, that this seems to [illegible] inaccurate account of the transactions [illegible] seem so much interested.

Respecting Redgauntlet, about whose [illegible] history you are more particularly inquis[illegible] learned from an excellent person who wa[illegible] the Scottish Monastery of Ratisbon, bef[illegible] pression, that he remained for two or th[illegible] the family of the Chevalier, and only left [illegible] consequence of some discords in that [illegible] household. As he had hinted to Gener[illegible] he exchanged his residence for the cloist[illegible] played in the latter part of his life a str[illegible] the duties of religion, which in his ear[illegible] had too much neglected, being altogethe[illegible] political speculations and intrigues. He [illegible] situation of Prior, in the house which he [illegible] and which was of a very strict order of r[illegible] sometimes received his countrymen, wh[illegible] brought to Ratisbon, and curiosity induce[illegible] Monastery of ——. But it was remarked, [illegible] he listened with interest and attention, w[illegible] or particularly Scotland, became the sub[illegible] versation, he never either introduced o[illegible] the subject, never used the English lan[illegible] inquired about English affairs, and, abov[illegible] mentioned his own family. His strict ob[illegible] the rules of his order gave him, at the [illegible] death, some pretensions to be chosen a s[illegible] brethren of the Monastery of —— made [illegible] for that effect, and brought forward so[illegible] proofs of miracles. But there was a c[illegible] which threw a doubt over the subject, a[illegible] the consistory from acceding to the w[illegible] worthy brethren. Under his habit, and [illegible] small silver box, he had worn perpetuall[illegible] neck a lock of hair, which the fathers av[illegible] a relic. But the Avocato del Diablo, i[illegible] (as was his official duty) the pretensions [illegible] didate for sanctity, made it at least equa[illegible] that the supposed relic was taken from t[illegible] brother of the deceased Prior, who had be[illegible] for adherence to the Stewart family in [illegible] the motto, *Haud obliviscendum*, seemed [illegible] a tone of mundane feeling and recolle[illegible] juries, which made it at least doubtful w[illegible] in the quiet and gloom of the cloister, F[illegible] had forgotten the sufferings and injuries o[illegible] of Redgauntlet.

THE END OF REDGAUNTLET.

TALES OF THE CRUSADERS.

THE BETROTHED.



INTRODUCTION TO THE BETROTHED

Tales of the Crusaders was determined upon as the title following series of these novels, rather by the advice of r friends whom death has now rendered still fewer, than author's own taste. Not but that he saw plainly enough erest which might be excited by the very name of the es, but he was conscious at the same time that that is- vas of a character which it might be more easy to create satisfy, and that by the mention of so magnificent a each reader might be induced to call up to his imagina- sketch so extensive and so grand, that it might not be in ver of the author to fill it up, who would thus stand in dicament of the dwarf bringing with him a standard to s his own stature, and showing himself, therefore, says "a dwarf more ways than one."

fact, if it were worth while to examine it, that the pub- and author, however much their general interests are the may be said to differ so far as title pages are concerned; a secret of the tale-telling art, if it could be termed a worth knowing, that a taking title, as it is called, best s the purpose of the bookseller, since it often goes far to is risk, and sells an edition not unfrequently before the have well seen it. But the author ought to seek more ent fame, and wish that his work, when its leaves are t open, should be at least fairly judged of. Thus many best novelists have been anxious to give their works such render it out of the reader's power to conjecture their ts, until they should have an opportunity of reading them. is did not prevent the Tales of the Crusaders from be- title fixed on; and the celebrated year of projects (eight- ndred and twenty-five) being the time of publication, an ection was prefixed according to the humour of the day. first tale of this series was influenced in its structure, ra- the wish to avoid the general expectations which might ed from the title, than to comply with any one of them, disappoint the rest. The story was, therefore, less an it belonging to the Crusades, than one which was occa- by the singular cast of mind introduced and spread wide e memorable undertakings. The confusion among fa- was not the least concomitant evil of the extraordinary derance of this superstition. It was no unusual thing rusader, returning from his long toils of war and pilgrim- find his family augmented by some young off-shoot, of the deserted matron could give no very accurate account, aps to find his marriage-bed filled, and that, instead of ing nurse to an old man, his household dame had pre- being the lady-love of a young one. Numerous are the of this kind told in different parts of Europe; and the d knight or baron, according to his temper, sat down aturedly contented with the account which his lady gave abitful matter, or called in blood and fire to vindicate his , which, after all, had been endangered chiefly by his ing his household gods to seek adventures in Palestine. tish tradition, quoted, I think, in some part of the Bor- nstreley, ascribes to the clan of Tweedie, a family once nd warlike, a descent which would not have misbecome of antiquity. A baron, somewhat elderly we may sup- ad wedded a buxom young lady, and some months after nion he left her to ply the distaff alone in his old tower, the mountains of the county of Peebles, near the sources Tweed. He returned after seven or eight years, no un- on space for a pilgrimage to Palestine, and found his had not been lonely in his absence, the lady having been d by the arrival of a stranger, (of whose approach she give the best account of any one,) who hung on her skirts, illed her mammy, and was just such as the baron would ueged to call his son, but that he could by no means make e correspond, according to the doctrine of civilians, with n departure for Palestine. He applied to his wife, there- or the solution of this dilemma. The lady, after many of tears, which she had reserved for the occasion, in- l the honest gentleman, that, walking one day alone by nks of the infant river, a human form arose from a deep still known and termed Tweed-pool, who deigned to in- her that he was the tutelar genius of the stream, and, , *ergo*, became the father of the sturdy fellow, whose ance had so much surprised her husband. This story, er suitable to Pagan times, would have met with full ce from few of the baron's contemporaries, but the wife oung and beautiful, the husband old and in his dotage; mily (the Frasers, it is believed) were powerful and war- nd the baron had had fighting enough in the holy wars. vent was, that he believed, or seemed to believe, the tale, mained contented with the child with whom his wife e Tweed had generously presented him. The only cir- ance which preserved the memory of the incident was, he youth retained the name of Tweed, or Tweedie. The , meanwhile, could not, as the old Scotch song says, p the cradle rowing," and the Tweed apparently thought atural son was family enough for a decent Presbyterian ; and so little gall had the baron in his composition, that g bred up the young Tweed as his heir while he lived, he im in that capacity when he died, and the son of the ri- d founded the family of Drummelzier and others, from i have flowed, *in the phrase of the Ettrick Shepherd, y a brave fellow, and many a bauld feat.*"

The tale of the noble Moringer is somewhat of the same nature—it exists in a collection of German popular songs, entitled, Sammlung Deutschen Volkslieder, Berlin, 1807; published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen. The song is supposed to be extracted from a manuscript chronicle of Nicolas Thomann, chaplain to St. Leonard in Wiessenhorn, and dated 1533. The ballad, which is popular in Germany, is supposed, from the language, to have been composed in the fifteenth century. The Noble Moringer, a powerful baron of Germany, about to set out on a pilgrimage to the land of St. Thomas, with the geography of which we are not made acquainted, resolves to commit his castle, dominions, and lady, to the vassal who should pledge him to keep watch over them till the seven years of his pilgrimage were accomplished. His chamberlain, an elderly and a cautious man, declines the trust, observing, that seven days, instead of seven years, would be the utmost space to which he would consent to pledge himself for the fidelity of any woman. The esquire of the Noble Moringer confidently accepts the trust refused by the chamberlain, and the baron departs on his pilgrimage. The seven years are now elapsed, all save a single day and night, when, behold, a vision descends on the noble pilgrim as he sleeps in the land of the stranger.

"It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the Baron's slumbering sense a boding vision crept,
And whispered in his ear a voice, 'Tis time, Sir Knight, to wake—
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

"'Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train;
And she, the lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night, within thy father's hall, she weds Marstetten's heir.'"

The Moringer starts up and prays to his patron St. Thomas, to rescue him from the impending shame, which his devotion to his patron had placed him in danger of incurring. St. Thomas, who must have felt the justice of the imputation, performs a miracle. The Moringer's senses were drenched in oblivion, and when he waked he lay in a well-known spot of his own domain; on his right the Castle of his fathers, and on his left the mill, which, as usual, was built not far distant from the Castle.

"He leaned upon his pilgrim's staff, and to the mill he drew—
So altered was his goodly form that none their master knew.
The baron to the miller said, 'Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor pilgrim, in your land, what tidings may there be?'

"The miller answered him again—'He knew of little news,
Save that the lady of the land did a new bridegroom choose;
Her husband died in distant land, much is the constant word,
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy lord.

"'Of him I hold the little mill, which wins me living free—
God rest the baron in his grave, he aye was kind to me!
And when St. Martin's tide comes round, sad millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shall have both cope and stole.'"

The baron proceeds to the Castle gate, which is bolted to prevent intrusion, while the inside of the mansion rung with preparations for the marriage of the lady. The pilgrim prayed the porter for entrance, conjuring him by his own sufferings, and for the sake of the late Moringer; by the orders of his lady, the warder gave him admittance.

"Then up the hall paced Moringer, his step was sad and slow;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none seemed their lord to know.
He sat him on a lowly bench, oppressed with woe and wrong;
Short, while he sat, but ne'er to him seemed little space so long.

"Now spent was day, and feasting o'er, and come was evening hour
The time was nigh when new made brides retire to nuptial bower.
'Our Castle's wont,' a bride's man said, 'hath been both firm and long
No guest to harbour in our halls till he shall chant a song.'"

When thus called upon, the disguised baron sung the following melancholy ditty:—

"'Chill flow the lays of frozen age,' 'twas thus the pilgrim sung
'Nor golden meed, nor garment gay, unlocks his heavy tongue.
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride, with all her charms, was mine.

"'But time traced furrows on my face, and I grew silver-haired,
For locks of brown and cheeks of youth, one left this brow and beard
Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen age.'"

The lady, moved at the doleful recollections which the palmer's song recalled, sent to him a cup of wine. The palmer, having exhausted the goblet, returned it, and having first dropped in the cup his nuptial ring, requested the lady to pledge her venerable guest.

"The ring hath caught the lady's eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, 'The Moringer is here!'
Then might you see her start from seat, while tears in torrents fell,
But if she wept for joy or woe, the ladies best can tell.

"Full loud she uttered thanks to Heaven, and every saintly power
That had restored the Moringer before the midnight hour;
And loud she uttered vow on vow, that never was there bride,
That had like her preserved her troth, or been so surely tried.

"'Yes, here I claim the praise,' she said, 'in constant matrons dear,
Who keep the troth that they have plight so steadfastly and true;
For count the term how'er you will, so that you count aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll twelve to-night.

"It was Maretetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneeled before the Moringer, and down his weapon threw;
'My oath and knightly faith are broke,' these were the words he said;
'Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy vassal's head.'

"The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
'He gathers wisdom that hath roamed seven twelvemonths and a day;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her sweet and fair;
I give her for the bride you lose, and name her for my heir.

"'The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old bridegroom the
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually were told; [old,
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late.'"

There is also, in the rich field of German romance, another edition of this story, which has been converted by M. Tieck (whose labours of that kind have been so remarkable) into the subject of one of his romantic dramas. It is, however, unnecessary to detail it, as the present author adopted his idea of the tale chiefly from the edition preserved in the mansion of Haighhall, of old the mansion-house of the family of Bradshaigh, now possessed by their descendants on the female side, the Earls of Balcarras. The story greatly resembles that of the Noble Moringer, only there is no miracle of St. Thomas to shock the belief of good Protestants. I am permitted, by my noble friends, the lord and lady of Haighhall, to print the following extract from the family genealogy.

Sir Wm Bradshaghe 2d & Mabell daughter and
Sone to Sr Iohn was A & Sole peire of Hugh
great traueller and A & Noris de Maghe and
Souldyer and married & Blackrode & had issue
To & IN. 8. H 2.

of this Mabell is a story by tradition of undouted verity that in Sr William Bradshage's absence (beinge 10 yeares away in the warres) she married a welch kt. Sr William retorninge from the warres came in a Palmers habit amongst the Poore to haghe. Who when she saw & congetringe that he labourd her former husband wept, for which the kt chastised her at wch Sr William went and made him selfe Knawne to his Tennants in wch space the kt fled. but neare to Newton Parke Sr William ouertooke him and slue him. The said Dame Mabell was enioyned by her confessor to doe Peinnances by going onest euery week barefoot and bare legg'd to a Crosse ner Wigan from the haghe wllest she liued & is called Mabb's to this day; & ther monument Lyes in wigan Church as you see ther Portrd.

An: Dom: 1315.

There were many vestiges around Haighhall, both of the Catholic penances of the Lady Mabel, and of this melancholy transaction in particular; the whole history was within the memory of man portrayed upon a glass window in the hall, where unfortunately it has not been preserved. Mab's Cross is still extant. An old decayed building is said to have been the place where the Lady Mabel was condemned to render penance, by walking hither from Haighhall barefooted and barelegged for the performance of her devotions. This relic, to which an anecdote so curious is annexed, is now unfortunately ruinous. Time and whitewash, says Mr. Roby, have altogether defaced the effigies of the knight and lady on the tomb. The particulars are preserved in Mr. Roby's Traditions of Lancashire * to which the reader is referred for further particulars. It does not appear that Sir William Bradshaigh was irreparably offended against the too hasty Lady Mabel, although he certainly showed himself of a more fiery mould than the Scottish and German barons who were heroes of the former tales. The tradition, which the author knew very early in life, was told to him by the late Lady Balcarras. He was so much struck with it, that being at that time profuse of legendary lore, he inserted it in the shape of a note to Waverley,† the first of his romantic of fences. Had he then known, as he now does, the value of such a story, it is likely that, as directed in the inimitable receipt for making an epic poem, prescribed in the Guardian, he would have kept it for some future opportunity.

As, however, the tale had not been completely told, and was a very interesting one, and as it was sufficiently interwoven with the Crusades, the wars between the Welsh and the Norman lords of the Marches were selected as a period when all freedoms might be taken with the strict truth of history without encountering any well-known fact, which might render the narrative improbable. Perhaps, however, the period which vindicates the probability of the tale, will, with its wars and murders, be best found described in the following passage of Gryffyth Ap Edwin's wars.

"This prince, in conjunction with Algar, Earl of Chester, who had been banished from England as a traitor, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, marched into Herefordshire and wasted all that fertile country with fire and sword, to revenge the death of his brother Rhees, whose head had been brought to Edward in pursuance of an order sent by that King on account of the depredations which he had committed against the English on the borders. To stop these ravages the Earl of Hereford, who was nephew to Edward, advanced with an army, not of English alone, but of mercenary Normans and French, whom he had entertained in his service, against Gryffyth and Algar. He met them near Hereford, and offered them battle, which the Welsh monarch, who had won five pitched battles before, and never had fought without conquering, joyfully accepted. The earl had commanded his English forces to fight on horseback, in imitation of the Normans, against their usual custom; but the Welsh making a furious and desperate charge, that nobleman himself, and the foreign cavalry led by him, were so daunted at the view of them, that they shamefully fled without fighting; which being seen by the English, they also turned their backs on the enemy, who, having killed or wounded as many of them as they could come up with in their flight, entered triumphantly into Hereford, spoiled and fired the city, razed the walls to the ground, slaughtered some of the citizens, led many of them captive, and (to use the words of the Welsh Chronicle) left nothing in the town but blood and ashes. After this exploit they immediately returned into Wales, undoubtedly from a desire of securing their prisoners, and the rich plunder they had gained. The King of England hereupon commanded Earl Harold to collect a great army from all parts of the kingdom, and assembling them at Gloucester, advanced from thence to invade the dominions of Gryffyth in North Wales. He performed his orders, and penetrated into that country without resistance from the Welsh; Gryffyth and Algar retiring into some parts of South Wales. What were their reasons for this conduct we are not well informed; nor why Harold did not pursue his advantage against them; but it appears that he thought it more advisable at this time to treat with, than subdue, them; for he left North Wales, and employed himself in rebuilding the walls of Hereford, while negotiations were carrying on with Gryffyth, which soon after produced the restoration of Algar, and a peace with that king, not very honourable to England, as he made no satisfaction for the mischief he had done in the war, nor any submissions to Edward. Harold must doubtless have had some private and forcible motives to conclude such a treaty. The very next year the Welsh monarch, upon what quarrel we know not, made a new incursion into England, and killed the Bishop of Hereford, the sheriff of the county, and many more of the English, both ecclesiastics and laymen. Edward was counselled by Harold, and Leofrick, Earl of Mercia, to make peace with him again; which he again broke: nor could he be restrained by any means, from these barbarous inroads, before the year one thousand and sixty-three; when Edward, whose patience and pacific disposition had been too much abused, commissioned Harold to assemble the whole strength of the kingdom, and make war upon him in his own country, till he had subdued or destroyed him. That general acted so vigorously, and with so much celerity, that he had like to have surprised him in his palace: but just before the English forces arrived at his gate, having notice of the danger that threatened him, and seeing no other means of safety, he threw himself with a few of his household into one of his ships, which happened at the instant to be ready to sail, and put to sea."—LYTTLETON'S *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 230.

This passage will be found to bear a general resemblance to the fictitious tale told in the Romance.

* A very elegant work, 2 vols. 1829. By J. Roby, M. R. S. L.
† Waverley, Chap. iv. p. 24. and note.

INTRODUCTION.

MINUTES

OF SEDERUNT OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHARE-HOLDERS DESIGNING TO FORM A JOINT-STOCK COMPANY, UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF WRITING AND PUBLISHING THE CLASS OF WORKS CALLED THE WAVERLEY NOVELS, HELD IN THE WATERLOO TAVERN, REGENT'S BRIDGE, *Edinburgh*, 1st *June*, 1825.

[THE reader must have remarked, that the various editions of the proceedings at this meeting were given in the public papers, with rather more than usual inaccuracy. The cause of this was no ill-timed delicacy on the part of the gentlemen of the press to assert their privilege of universal presence wherever a few are met together, and to commit to the public prints whatever may then and there pass of the most private nature. But very unusual and arbitrary methods were resorted to on the present occasion to prevent the reporters using a right which is generally conceded to them by almost all meetings, whether of a political or commercial description. Our own reporter, indeed, was bold enough to secrete himself under the Secretary's table, and was not discovered till the meeting was well-nigh over. We are sorry to say, he suffered much in person from fists and toes, and two or three principal pages were torn out of his note-book, which occasions his report to break off abruptly. We cannot but consider this behaviour as more particularly illiberal on the part of men who are themselves a kind of gentlemen of the press; and they ought to consider themselves as fortunate that the misused reporter has sought no other vengeance than from the tone of acidity with which he has seasoned his account of their proceedings.—*Edinburgh Newspaper.*]

A MEETING of the gentlemen and others interested in the celebrated publications called the Waverley Novels, having been called by public advertisement, the same was respectably attended by various literary characters of eminence. And it being in the first place understood that individuals were to be denominated by the names assigned to them in the publications in question, the Sidelook, or image of the author, was unanimously called to the chair, and Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq. of Monkbarns, was requested to act as Secretary.

The Press then then addressed the meeting to the following purpose:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"I need scarce remind you, that we have a joint interest in the valuable property which has accumulated under our common labours. While the public have been idly engaged in ascribing to one individual or another the immense mass of various matter which the labours of many had accumulated, you, gentlemen, well know, that every person in this numerous assembly has had his share in the honours and profits of our common success. It is, indeed, to me a mystery how the sharp-sighted could suppose so huge a mass of sense and nonsense, jest and earnest, humorous and pathetic, good, bad, and indifferent, amounting to scores of volumes, could be the work of one hand, when we know the doctrine so well laid down by the immortal Adam Smith, concerning the division of labour. Were those who entertained an opinion so strange, not wise enough to know that it requires twenty pairs of hands to make a thing so trifling as a pin—twenty couple of dogs to kill an animal so insignificant as a fox?"—

"Hoot, man!" said a stout countryman, "I have a grew-bitch at hame will worry the best tod in Pomoragrains, before ye could say dumpling."

"Who is that person?" said the Press, with some warmth, as it appeared to us.

"A son of Dandy Dinmont's," answered the unabashed rustic. "God, ye may mind him, I think!—ane o' the best in your ought, I reckon. And, ye see, I am come into the farm, and maybe something mair, and a wheen shares in this buik-trade of yours."

"Well, well," replied the Press, "peace, I pray thee, peace.—Gentlemen, when thus interrupted, I was on the point of introducing the business of this meeting, being, as is known to most of you, the discussion of a proposition now on your table, which I myself had the honour to suggest at last meeting, namely, that we do apply to the Legislature for an Act of Parliament as ordinary, to associate us into a corporate body, and give us a *persona standi in judicio*, with full power to prosecute and bring to conviction all encroachers upon our exclusive privilege, in the manner therein to be made and provided. In a letter from the ingenious Mr. Dousterswivel which I have received"——

Cl'buck, warmly—"I object to that fellow's name being mentioned; he is a common swindler."

"For shame, Mr. Oldbuck," said the Press, "to use such terms respecting the ingenious inventor of the great patent machine erected at Groningen, *where they put in raw* hemp at one end, *and take out ruffled shirts at the other*, without the aid of *hackle or rippling-comb, loom, shuttle, or* weaver, scissors, *needle, or seamstress. He had just* completed it, by the addition of a piece of machinery to perform the work of the laun dress; but when it was exhibited before his honour the burgomaster, it had the inconvenience of heating the smoothing-irons red hot: excepting which, the experiment was entirely satisfactory. He will become as rich as a Jew."

"Well," added Mr. Oldbuck, "if the scoundrel"——

"Scoundrel, Mr. Oldbuck," said the Press, "is a most unseemly expression, and I must call you to order. Mr. Dousterswivel is only an eccentric genius."

"Pretty much the same in the Greek," muttered Mr. Oldbuck; and then said aloud, "and if this eccentric genius has work enough in singeing the Dutchman's linen, what the devil has he to do here?"

"Why, he is of opinion, that at the expense of a little mechanism, some part of the labour of composing these novels might be saved by the use of steam."

There was a murmur of disapprobation at this proposal, and the words, "Blown up," and "Bread taken out of our mouths," and "They might as well construct a steam parson," were whispered. And it was not without repeated calls to order, that the Press obtained an opportunity of resuming his address.

"Order!—Order! Pray, support the chair! Hear, hear, hear the chair!"

"Gentlemen, it is to be premised, that this mechanical operation can only apply to those parts of the narrative which are at present composed out of commonplaces, such as the love-speeches of the hero, the description of the heroine's person, the moral observations of all sorts, and the distribution of happiness at the conclusion of the piece. Mr. Dousterswivel has sent me some drawings, which go far to show, that, by placing the words and phrases technically employed on these subjects in a sort of framework, like that of the Sage of Laputa, and changing them by such a mechanical process as that by which weavers of damask alter their patterns, many new and happy combinations cannot fail to occur, while the author, tired of pumping his own brains, may have an agreeable relaxation in the use of his fingers."

"I speak for information, Mr. Press," said the Rev. Mr. Lawrence Templeton; "but I am inclined to suppose the late publication of Walladmor to have been the work of Dousterswivel, by the help of the steam-engine."*

"For shame, Mr. Templeton," said the Press; "there are good things in Walladmor, I assure you, had the writer known any thing about the country in which he laid the scene."

"Or had he had the wit, like some of ourselves, to lay the scene in such a remote or distant country that nobody should be able to back-speer† him," said Mr. Oldbuck.

"Why, as to that," said the Press, "you must consider the thing was got up for the German market, where folks are no better judges of Welsh manners than of Welsh erw."‡

"I make it my prayer that this be not found the fault of our own next venture," said Dr. Dryasdust, pointing to some books which lay on the table. "I fear the manners expressed in that 'Betrothed' of ours, will scarce meet the approbation of the Cymmerodion; I could have wished that Llhuyd had been looked into—that Powell had been consulted—that Lewis's History had been quoted, the preliminary dissertations particularly, in order to give due weight to the work."

"Weight!" said Captain Clutterbuck; "by my soul, it is heavy enough already, Doctor."

"Speak to the chair," said the Press, rather peevishly.

"To the chair, then, I say it," said Captain Clutterbuck, "that 'The Betrothed' is heavy enough to break down the chair of John of Gaunt, or Cador-Edris itself. I must add, however, that, in my poor mind, 'The Talisman' goes more trippingly off."§

"It is not for me to speak," said the worthy minister of Saint Ronan's Well; "but yet I must say, that being so long engaged upon the Siege of Ptolemais, my work ought to have been brought out, humble though it be, before any other upon a similar subject at least."

"Your Siege, Parson!" said Mr. Oldbuck, with great contempt; "will you speak of your paltry prose-doings in my presence, whose great Historical Poem, in twenty books, with notes in proportion, has been postponed *ad Graras Kalendas*?"

The Press, who appeared to suffer a great deal during this discussion, now spoke with dignity and determination. "Gentlemen," he said, "this sort of discussion is highly irregular. There is a question before you, and to that, gentlemen, I must confine your attention. Priority of publication, let me remind you, gentlemen, is always referred to the Committee of Criticism, whose determination on such subjects is without appeal. I declare I will leave the chair, if any more extraneous matter

* A Romance, by the Author of Waverley, having been expected about this time at the great commercial mart of literature, the Fair of Leipsic, an ingenious gentleman of Germany, finding that none such appeared, was so kind as to supply its place with a work, in three volumes, called Walladmor, to which he prefixed the Christian and surname at full length. The character of this work is given with tolerable fairness in the text.

† Scottish for cross-examine him.

‡ The ale of the ancient British is called erw in their native language.

§ This was an opinion universally entertained among the friends of the author.

be introduced.—And now, gentlemen, that we are once more in order, I would wish to have some gentleman speak upon the question, whether, as associated to carry on a joint-stock trade in fictitious narrative, in prose and verse, we ought not to be incorporated by Act of Parliament? What say you, gentlemen, to the proposal? *Vis unita fortior*, is an old and true adage."

"*Societas mater discordiarum*, is a brocard as ancient and as veritable," said Oldbuck, who seemed determined, on this occasion, to be pleased with no proposal that was countenanced by the chair.

"Come, Monkbarns," said the Preses, in his most coaxing manner, "you have studied the monastic institutions deeply, and know there must be a union of persons and talents to do any thing respectable, and attain a due ascendance over the spirit of the age. *Tres faciunt collegium*—it takes three monks to make a convent."

"And nine tailors to make a man," replied Oldbuck, not in the least softened in his opposition; "a quotation as much to the purpose as the other."

"Come, come," said the Preses, 'you know the Prince of Orange said to Mr. Seymour, "Without an association, we are a rope of sand.'"

"I know," replied Oldbuck, "it would have been as seemly that none of the old leaven had been displayed on this occasion, though you be the author of a Jacobite novel. I know nothing of the Prince of Orange after 1688; but I have heard a good deal of the immortal William the Third."

"And, to the best of my recollection," said Mr. Templeton, whispering Oldbuck, "it was Seymour made the remark to the Prince, not the Prince to Seymour. But this is a specimen of our friend's accuracy, poor gentleman: He trusts too much to his memory! of late years—failing fast, sir—breaking up."

"And breaking down too," said Mr. Oldbuck. "But what can you expect of a man too fond of his own hasty and flashy compositions, to take the assistance of men of reading and of solid parts?"

"No whispering—no caballing—no private business, gentlemen," said the unfortunate Preses,—who reminded us somewhat of a Highland drover, engaged in gathering and keeping in the straight road his excursive black cattle.

"I have not yet heard," he continued, "a single reasonable objection to applying for the Act of Parliament, of which the draught lies on the table. You must be aware that the extremes of rude and of civilised society are, in these our days, on the point of approaching to each other. In the patriarchal period, a man is his own weaver, tailor, butcher, shoemaker, and so forth; and, in the age of Stock-companies, as the present may be called, an individual may be said, in one sense, to exercise the same plurality of trades. In fact, a man who has dipped largely into these speculations, may combine his own expenditure with the improvement of his own income, just like the ingenious hydraulic machine, which, by its very waste, raises its own supplies of water. Such a person buys his bread from his own Baking Company, his milk and cheese from his own Dairy Company, takes off a new coat for the benefit of his own Clothing Company, illuminates his house to advance his own Gas Establishment, and drinks an additional bottle of wine for the benefit of the General Wine Importation Company, of which he is himself a member. Every act, which would otherwise be one of mere extravagance, is, to such a person, seasoned with the *odor lucri*, and reconciled to prudence. Even if the price of the article consumed be extravagant, and the quality indifferent, the person, who is in a manner his own customer, is only imposed upon for his own benefit. Nay, if the Joint-stock Company of Undertakers shall unite with the Medical Faculty, as proposed by the late facetious Doctor G——, under the firm of Death and the Doctor, the shareholder might contrive to secure to his heirs a handsome slice of his own death-bed and funeral expenses. In short, Stock-Companies are the fashion of the age, and an Incorporating Act will, I think, be particularly useful in bringing back the body, over whom I have the honour to preside, to a spirit of subordination, highly necessary to success in every enterprise where joint wisdom, talent, and labour, are to be employed. It is with regret that I state, that, besides several differences amongst yourselves, I have not myself, for some time, been treated with that deference among you which circumstances entitled me to expect.

"*Hinc illæ lachrymæ*," muttered Mr. Oldbuck.

"But," continued the Chairman, "I see other gentlemen impatient to deliver their opinions, and I desire to stand in no man's way. I therefore—my place in this chair forbidding me to originate the motion—beg some gentleman may move a committee for revising the draught of the bill now upon the table, and which has been duly circulated among those having interest, and take the necessary measures to bring it before the House early next session."

There was a short murmur in the meeting, and at length Mr. Oldbuck again rose. "It seems, sir," he said, addressing the chair, "that no one present is willing to make the motion you point at. I am sorry no more qualified person has taken upon him to show any reasons in the contrair, and that it has fallen on me, as we Scotsmen say, to bell-the-cat with you: anent whilk phrase, Pitscottie hath a pleasant jest of the great Earl of Angus"——

Here a gentleman whispered to the speaker, "Have a care of Pitscottie!" and Mr. Oldbuck, as if taking the hint, went on.

"But that's neither here nor there—Well, gentlemen, to be short, I think it unnecessary to enter into the general reasonings whilk have this day been delivered, as I may say, *ex cathedra*; nor will I charge our worthy Preses with an attempt to obtain over us, *per ambages*, and under colour of an Act of Parliament, a despotic authority, inconsistent with our freedom: But this I will say, that times are so much changed above stairs, that whereas last year you might have obtained an act incorporating a Stock Company for riddling ashes, you will not be able to procure one this year for gathering pearls. What signifies, then, wasting the time of the meeting, by inquiring whether or not we ought to go in at a door which we know to be bolted and barred in our face, and in the face of all the companies for fire or air, land or water, which we have of late seen blighted?"

Here there was a general clamour, seemingly of approbation, in which the words might be distinguished, "Needless to think of it"—"Money thrown away"—"Lost before the committee," &c. &c. &c. But above the tumult, the voices of two gentlemen, in different corners of the room, answered each other clear and loud, like the blows of the two figures on Saint Dunstan's clock; and although the Chairman, in much agitation, endeavoured to silence them, his interruption had only the effect of cutting their words up into syllables, thus,—

First Voice. "The Lord Chan"——
Second Voice. "The Lord Lau"——
Chairman, (loudly.) "Scandalum magnatum!"
First Voice. "The Lord Chancel"——
Second Voice. "The Lord Lauder"——
Chairman, (louder yet.) "Breach of Privilege!"
First Voice. "The Lord Chancellor"——
Second Voice. "My Lord Lauderdale"——
Chairman, (at the highest pitch of his voice.) "Called before the House!"
Both Voices together. "Will never consent to such a bill."

A general assent seemed to follow this last proposition, which was propounded with as much emphasis as could be contributed by the united clappers of the whole meeting, joined to those of the voices already mentioned.

Several persons present seemed to consider the business of the meeting as ended, and were beginning to handle their hats and canes, with a view to departure, when the Chairman, who had thrown himself back in his chair with an air of manifest mortification and displeasure, again drew himself up, and commanded attention. All stopped, though some shrugged their shoulders, as if under the predominating influence of what is called a *bore*. But the tenor of his discourse soon excited anxious attention.

"I perceive, gentlemen," he said, "that you are like the young birds, who are impatient to leave their mother's nest—take care your own pen-feathers are strong enough to support you; since, as for my part, I am tired of supporting on my wing such a set of ungrateful gulls. But it signifies nothing speaking—I will no longer avail myself of such weak ministers as you—I will discard you—I will unbeget you, as Sir Anthony Absolute says—I will leave you and your whole hacked stock in trade—your caverns and your castles—your modern antiques, and your antiquated moderns—your confusion of times, manners, and circumstances—your properties, as player-folk say of scenery and dresses—the whole of your exhausted expedients, to the fools who choose to deal with them. I will vindicate my own fame with my own right hand, without appealing to such halting assistants,

'Whom I have used for sport, rather than need.

—I will lay my foundations better than on quicksands—I will rear my structure of better materials than painted cards; in a word, I will write HISTORY!"

There was a tumult of surprise, amid which our reporter detected the following expressions:—"The devil you will!"—"You, my dear sir, *you*?"—"The old gentleman forgets that he is the greatest liar since Sir John Mandeville."

"Not the worse historian for that," said Oldbuck, "since history, you know, is half fiction."

"I'll answer for that half being forthcoming," said the former speaker; "but for the scantling of truth which is necessary after all, Lord help us!—Geoffrey of Monmouth will be Lord Clarendon to him."

As the confusion began to abate, more than one member of the meeting was seen to touch his forehead significantly, while Captain Clutterbuck humm'd,

Be by your friends advised,
Too rash, too hasty, dad,
Maugre your bolts and wise head,
The world will think you mad.

"The world, and you, gentlemen, may think what you please," said the Chairman, elevating his voice; "but I intend to write the most wonderful book which the world ever read—a book in which every incident shall be incredible, yet strictly true—a work recalling recollections with which the ears of this generation once tingled, and which shall be read by our children with an admiration approaching to incredulity. Such shall be the life of NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, by the AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY!"

In the general start and exclamation which followed this annunciation, Mr. Oldbuck dropped his snuff-box; and the Scottish rappee, which dispersed itself in consequence, had effects upon the nasal organs of our reporter, ensconced as he was under the secretary's table, which occasioned his being discovered and extruded in the illiberal and unhandsome manner we have mentioned, with threats of farther damage to his nose, ears, and other portions of his body, on the part especially of Captain Clutterbuck. Undismayed by these threats, which indeed those of his profession are accustomed to hold at defiance, our young man hovered about the door of the tavern, but could only bring us the farther intelligence, that the meeting had broken up in about a quarter of an hour after his expulsion in much-admired disorder."

TALES OF THE CRUSADERS.

TALE I.

THE BETROTHED.

CHAPTER I.

these dayes were hotte wars upon the Marches of
LEWIS's *History.*

hronicles, from which this narrative is ex-
sssure us, that during the long period when
sh princes maintained their independence,
1187 was peculiarly marked as favourable to
twixt them and their warlike neighbours,
le Marchers, who inhabited those formidable
n the frontiers of the ancient British, on the
which the traveller gazes with wonder. This
time when Baldwin, Archbishop of Canter-
companied by the learned Giraldus de Barri,
de Bishop of Saint David s, preached the
from castle to castle, from town to town;
d the inmost valleys of his native Cambria
call to arms for recovery of the Holy Sepul-
d, while he deprecated the feuds and wars of
n men against each other, held out to the
spirit of the age a general object of ambition,
me of adventure, where the favour of Hea-
vell as of earthly renown, was to reward the
l champions.
e British chieftains, among the thousands
his spirit-stirring summons called from their
nd to a distant and perilous expedition, had
the best excuse for declining the summons.
erior skill of the Anglo-Norman knights,
e engaged in constant inroads on the Welsh
and who were frequently detaching from it
tions, which they fortified with castles, thus
good what they had won, was avenged,
ut not compensated, by the furious inroads
ttish, who, like the billows of a retiring tide,
successively, with noise, fury, and devasta-
t, on each retreat, yielded ground insensibly
nvaders.
n among the native princes might have op-
trong and permanent barrier to the encroach-
the strangers; but they were, unhappily, as
discord among themselves as they were with
mans, and were constantly engaged in pri-
r with each other, of which the common
ad the sole advantage.
vitation to the Crusade promised something
of novelty to a nation peculiarly ardent in
per; and it was accepted by many, regard-
he consequences which must ensue to the
which they left defenceless. Even the most
d enemies of the Saxon and Norman race
le their enmity against the invaders of their
to enrol themselves under the banners of the

gst these was reckoned Gwenwyn, (or more
Gwenwynwen, though we retain the briefer
ve,) a British prince who continued exercising
ious sovereignty over such parts of Powys-
had not been subjugated by the Mortimers,
Latimers, FitzAlans, and other Norman nobles, who, under various pretexts, and sometimes contemning all other save the open avowal of superior force, had severed and appropriated large portions of that once extensive and independent principality, which, when Wales was unhappily divided into three parts on the death of Roderick Mawr, fell to the lot of his youngest son, Mervyn. The undaunted resolution and stubborn ferocity of Gwenwyn, descendant of that prince, had long made him beloved among the "Tall men," or Champions of Wales; and he was enabled, more by the number of those who served under him, attracted by his reputation, than by the natural strength of his dilapidated principality, to retaliate the encroachments of the English by the most wasteful inroads.

Yet even Gwenwyn on the present occasion seemed to forget his deeply sworn hatred against his dangerous neighbours. The Torch of Pengwern (for so Gwenwyn was called, from his frequently laying the province of Shrewsbury in conflagration) seemed at present to burn as calmly as a taper in the bower of a lady; and the Wolf of Plinlimmon, another name with which the bards had graced Gwenwyn, now slumbered as peacefully as the shepherd's dog on the domestic hearth.

But it was not alone the eloquence of Baldwin or of Girald which had lulled into peace a spirit so restless and fierce. It is true, their exhortations had done more towards it than Gwenwyn's followers had thought possible. The Archbishop had induced the British Chief to break bread, and to mingle in silvan sports, with his nearest, and hitherto one of his most determined enemies, the old Norman warrior Sir Raymond Berenger, who, sometimes beaten, sometimes victorious, but never subdued, had, in spite of Gwenwyn's hottest incursions, maintained his Castle of Garde Doloureuse, upon the marches of Wales; a place strong by nature, and well fortified by art, which the Welsh prince had found it impossible to conquer, either by open force or by stratagem, and which, remaining with a strong garrison in his rear, often checked his incursions by rendering his retreat precarious.

On this account, Gwenwyn of Powys-Land had a hundred times avowed the death of Raymond Berenger, and the demolition of his castle; but the policy of the sagacious old warrior, and his long experience in all warlike practice, were such as, with the aid of his more powerful countrymen, enabled him to defy the attempts of his fiery neighbour. If there was a man, therefore, throughout England, whom Gwenwyn hated more than another, it was Raymond Berenger; and yet the good Archbishop Baldwin could prevail on the Welsh prince to meet him as a friend and ally in the cause of the Cross. He even invited Raymond to the autumn festivities of his Welsh palace, where the old knight, in all honourable courtesy, feasted and hunted for more than a week in the dominions of his hereditary foe.

To requite this hospitality, Raymond invited the Prince of Powys, with a chosen but limited train, during the ensuing Christmas, to the Garde Dolourcuse, which some antiquaries have endeavoured to identify with the Castle of Colune, on the river of the same name. But the length of time, and some geographical difficulties throw doubts upon this ingenious conjecture.

As the Welshman crossed the drawbridge, he was observed by his faithful bard to shudder with involuntary emotion; nor did Cadwallon, experienced as he was in life, and well acquainted with the character of his master, make any doubt that he was at that moment strongly urged by the apparent opportunity, to seize upon the strong fortress which had been so long the object of his cupidity, even at the expense of violating his good faith.

Dreading lest the struggle of his master's conscience and his ambition should terminate unfavourably for his fame, the bard arrested his attention by whispering in their native language, that "the teeth which bite hardest are those which are out of sight;" and Gwenwyn, looking around him, became aware that, though only unarmed squires and pages appeared in the court-yard, yet the towers, and battlements connecting them were garnished with archers and men-at-arms.

They proceeded to the banquet, at which Gwenwyn, for the first time, beheld Eveline Berenger, the sole child of the Norman castellane, the inheritor of his domains and of his supposed wealth, aged only sixteen, and the most beautiful damsel upon the Welsh marches. Many a spear had already been shivered in maintenance of her charms; and the gallant Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester, one of the most redoubted warriors of the time, had laid at Eveline's feet the prize which his chivalry had gained in a great tournament held near that ancient town. Gwenwyn considered these triumphs as so many additional recommendations to Eveline; her beauty was incontestable, and she was heiress of the fortress which he so much longed to possess, and which he began now to think might be acquired by means more smooth than those with which he was in the use of working out his will.

Again, the hatred which subsisted between the British and their Saxon and Norman invaders; his long and ill-extinguished feud with this very Raymond Berenger; a general recollection that alliances between the Welsh and English had rarely been happy; and a consciousness that the measure which he meditated would be unpopular among his followers, and appear a dereliction of the systematic principles on which he had hitherto acted, restrained him from speaking his wishes to Raymond or his daughter. The idea of the rejection of his suit did not for a moment occur to him; he was convinced he had but to speak his wishes, and that the daughter of a Norman castellane, whose rank or power were not of the highest order among the nobles of the frontiers, must be delighted and honoured by a proposal for allying his family with that of the sovereign of a hundred mountains.

There was indeed another objection, which in later times would have been of considerable weight—Gwenwyn was already married. But Brengwain was a childless bride; sovereigns (and among sovereigns the Welsh prince ranked himself) marry for lineage, and the Pope was not likely to be scrupulous, where the question was to oblige a prince who had assumed the Cross with such ready zeal, even although, in fact, his thoughts had been much more on the Garde Dolourcuse than on Jerusalem. In the mean while, if Raymond Berenger (as was suspected) was not liberal enough in his opinions to permit Eveline to hold the temporary rank of concubine, which the manners of Wales warranted Gwenwyn to offer as an interim arrangement, he had only to wait for a few months, and sue for a divorce through the Bishop of Saint David's, or some other intercessor at the Court of Rome.

Agitating these thoughts in his mind, Gwenwyn *prolonged his residence at the* Castle of Berenger, *from Christmas till Twelfth-day*; and endured the presence of the Norman cavaliers who resorted to Raymond's festal halls, although, regarding themselves, in virtue of their rank of knighthood, equal to the most potent sovereigns, they made small account of the long descent of the Welsh prince, who, in their eyes, was but the chief of a semi-barbarous province; while he, on his part, considered them little better than a sort of privileged robbers, and with the utmost difficulty restrained himself from manifesting his open hatred, when he beheld them careering in the exercises of chivalry, the habitual use of which rendered them such formidable enemies to his country. At length, the term of feasting was ended, and knight and squire departed from the castle, which once more assumed the aspect of a solitary and guarded frontier fort.

But the Prince of Powys-Land, while pursuing his sports on his own mountains and valleys, found that even the abundance of the game, as well as his release from the society of the Norman chivalry, who affected to treat him as an equal, profited him nothing, so long as the light and beautiful form of Eveline, on her white palfrey, was banished from the train of sportsmen. In short, he hesitated no longer, but took into his confidence his chaplain, an able and sagacious man, whose pride was flattered by his patron's communication, and who, besides, saw in the proposed scheme some contingent advantages for himself and his order. By his counsel, the proceedings for Gwenwyn's divorce were prosecuted under favourable auspices, and the unfortunate Brengwain was removed to a nunnery, which perhaps she found a more cheerful habitation than the lonely retreat in which she had led a neglected life, ever since Gwenwyn had despaired of her bed being blessed with issue. Father Einion also dealt with the chiefs and elders of the land, and represented to them the advantage which in future wars they were certain to obtain by the possession of the Garde Dolourcuse, which had for more than a century covered and protected a considerable tract of country, rendered their advance difficult, and their retreat perilous, and, in a word, prevented their carrying their incursions as far as the gates of Shrewsbury. As for the union with the Saxon damsel, the fetters which it was to form might not (the good father hinted) be found more permanent than those which had bound Gwenwyn to her predecessor, Brengwain.

These arguments, mingled with others adapted to the views and wishes of different individuals, were so prevailing, that the chaplain in the course of a few weeks was able to report to his princely patron, that his proposed match would meet with no opposition from the elders and nobles of his dominions. A golden bracelet, six ounces in weight, was the instant reward of the priest's dexterity in negotiation, and he was appointed by Gwenwyn to commit to paper those proposals, which he doubted not were to throw the Castle of Garde Dolourcuse, notwithstanding its melancholy name, into an ecstasy of joy. With some difficulty the chaplain prevailed on his patron to say nothing in this letter upon his temporary plan of concubinage, which he wisely judged might be considered as an affront both by Eveline and her father. The matter of the divorce he represented as almost entirely settled, and wound up his letter with a moral application, in which were many allusions to Vashti, Esther, and Ahasuerus.

Having despatched this letter by a swift and trusty messenger, the British prince opened in all solemnity the feast of Easter, which had come round during the course of these *external* and *internal* negotiations.

Upon the approaching Holy-tide, to propitiate the minds of his subjects and vassals, they were invited in large numbers to partake a princely festivity at Castell-Coch, or the Red Castle, as it was then called, since better known by the name of Powys-Castle, and in latter times the princely seat of the Duke of Beaufort. The architectural magnificence of this noble residence is of a much later period than that of Gwenwyn, whose palace, at the time we speak of, was a long, low-roofed edifice of red stone, whence the castle derived its name; while a ditch and palisade were, in addition to the commanding situation, its most important defences.

CHAPTER II.

In Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
With rapid clangour hurried far;
Each hill and dale the note rebounds,
But when return the sons of war!
Thou, born of stern Necessity,
Dull Peace! the valley yields to thee.
And owns thy melancholy sway.—*Welsh Poem.*

feasts of the ancient British princes usually ted all the rude splendour and liberal indulgence ntain hospitality, and Gwenwyn was, on the t occasion, anxious to purchase popularity by an unusual display of profusion; for he was le that the alliance which he meditated might be tolerated, but could not be approved, by his ts and followers.

following incident, trifling in itself, confirmed prehensions. Passing one evening, when it ecome nearly dark, by the open window of a room, usually occupied by some few of his celebrated soldiers, who relieved each other in ing his palace, he heard Morgan, a man distin- d for strength, courage, and ferocity, say to the nion with whom he was sitting by the watch- Gwenwyn is turned to a priest, or a woman! was it before these last months, that a follower was obliged to gnaw the meat from the bone ely, as I am now peeling the morsel which I my hand?"*

sit but a while," replied his comrade, "till the an match be accomplished; and so small will prey we shall then drive from the Saxon churls, e may be glad to swallow, like hungry dogs, y bones themselves."

nwyn heard no more of their conversation; is was enough to alarm his pride as a soldier, is jealousy as a prince. He was sensible, that ople over whom he ruled were at once fickle in lisposition, impatient of long repose, and full red against their neighbours; and he almost d the consequences of the inactivity to which a ruce might reduce them. The risk was now ed, however; and to display even more than nted splendour and liberality, seemed the best f reconciling the wavering affections of his ts.

Norman would have despised the barbarous ficence of an entertainment, consisting of kine eep roasted whole, of goats' flesh and deers' eethed in the skins of the animals themselves; e Normans piqued themselves on the quality than the quantity of their food, and, eating delicately than largely, ridiculed the coarser f the Britons, although the last were in their ets much more moderate than were the Saxons; ould the oceans of *Crwo* and hydromel, which helmed the guests like a deluge, have made up, r opinion, for the absence of the more elegant ntly beverage which they had learnt to love in uth of Europe. Milk prepared in various ways, nother material of the British entertainment, would not have received their approbation, gh a nutriment which, on ordinary occasions, supplied the want of all others among the t inhabitants, whose country was rich in flocks rds, but poor in agricultural produce.

banquet was spread in a long low hall, built g wood lined with shingles, having a fire at nd, the smoke of which, unable to find its way h the imperfect chimneys in the roof, rolled in billows above the heads of the revellers, who low seats, purposely to avoid its stifling fumes.† ien and appearance of the company assembled rild, and, even in their social hours, almost terrific. Their prince himself had the gigantic port and fiery eye fitted to sway an unruly people, whose delight was in the field of battle; and the long mustaches which he and most of his champions wore, added to the formidable dignity of his presence. Like most of those present, Gwenwyn was clad in a simple tunic of white linen cloth, a remnant of the dress which the Romans had introduced into provincial Britain; and he was distinguished by the Endorchawg, or chain of twisted gold links, with which the Celtic tribes always decorated their chiefs. The collar, indeed, representing in form the species of links made by children out of rushes, was common to chieftains of inferior rank, many of whom bore it in virtue of their birth, or had won it by military exploits; but a ring of gold, bent around the head, intermingled with Gwenwyn's hair—for he claimed the rank of one of three diademed princes of Wales, and his armlets and anklets of the same metal, were peculiar to the Prince of Powys, as an independent sovereign. Two squires of his body, who dedicated their whole attention to his service, stood at the Prince's back; and at his feet sat a page, whose duty it was to keep them warm by chafing and by wrapping them in his mantle. The same right of sovereignty, which assigned to Gwenwyn his golden crownlet, gave him a title to the attendance of the foot-bearer, or youth who lay on the rushes, and whose duty it was to cherish the Prince's feet in his lap or bosom.*

Notwithstanding the military disposition of the guests, and the danger arising from the feuds into which they were divided, few of the feasters wore any defensive armour except the light goat-skin buckler, which hung behind each man's seat. On the other hand, they were well provided with offensive weapons; for the broad, sharp, short, two-edged sword was another legacy of the Romans. Most added a wood-knife or poniard; and there were store of javelins, darts, bows and arrows, pikes, halberds, Danish axes, and Welsh hooks and bills; so in case of ill-blood arising during the banquet, there was no lack of weapons to work mischief.

But although the form of the feast was somewhat disorderly, and that the revellers were unrestrained by the stricter rules of good-breeding which the laws of chivalry imposed, the Eastern banquet of Gwenwyn possessed, in the attendance of twelve eminent bards, one source of the most exalted pleasure, in a much higher degree than the proud Normans could themselves boast. The latter, it is true had their minstrels, a race of men trained to the profession of poetry, song and music; but although those arts were highly honoured, and the individual professors, when they attained to eminence, were often richly rewarded, and treated with distinction, the order of minstrels, as such, was held in low esteem, being composed chiefly of worthless and dissolute strollers, by whom the art was assumed, in order to escape from the necessity of labour, and to have the means of pursuing a wandering and dissipated course of life. Such, in all times, has been the censure upon the calling of those who dedicate themselves to the public amusement; among whom those distinguished by individual excellence are sometimes raised high in the social circle, while far the more numerous professors, who only meet mediocrity, are sunk into the lower scale. But such was not the case with the order of bards in Wales, who succeeding to the dignity of the Druids, under whom they had originally formed a subordinate fraternity had many immunities, were held in the highest reverence and esteem, and exer-

* See Madoc for this literal *foot page's* office and duties Mr. Southey's notes inform us: "The foot-bearer shall hold the feet of the King in his lap, from the time he reclines at the board till he goes to rest, and he shall chafe them with a towel; and during all that time shall watch that no harm befalls the King. He shall eat of the same dish from which the King takes his food: he shall light the first candle before the King." Such are the instructions given for this part of royal ceremonial in the laws of Howell Dha. It may be added, that probably upon this Celtic custom was founded one of those absurd and incredible representations which were propagated at the time of the French Revolution, to stir up the peasants against their feudal superiors. It was pretended that some feudal seigneurs asserted their right to kill and disembowel a peasant, in order to put their own feet within the expiring body, and so recover them from the chill.

† said in Highland tradition, that one of the Macdonalds ales, who had suffered his broadsword to remain sheathed ne months after his marriage with a beautiful woman, rred to a sudden and furious expedition against the main- hearing conversation to the above purpose among his ard.

a Welsh houses, like those of the cognate tribes in Ire- d in the Highlands of Scotland, were very imperfectly d with chimneys. Hence, in the History of the Gwydir , the striking expression of a Welsh chieftain, who, the ing assaulted and set on fire by his enemies, exhorted ade to stand to their defence, saying he had seen as much the hall upon a Christmas even.

cised much influence with their countrymen. Their power over the public mind even rivalled that of the priests themselves, to whom indeed they bore some resemblance; for they never wore arms, were initiated into their order by secret and mystic solemnities, and homage was rendered to their *Awen*, or flow of poetic inspiration, as if it had been indeed marked with a divine character. Thus possessed of power and consequence, the bards were not unwilling to exercise their privileges, and sometimes, in doing so, their manners frequently savoured of caprice.

This was perhaps the case with Cadwallon, the chief bard of Gwenwyn, and who, as such, was expected to have poured forth the tide of song in the banqueting-hall of his prince. But neither the anxious and breathless expectation of the assembled chiefs and champions—neither the dead silence which stilled the roaring hall, when his harp was reverently placed before him by his attendant—nor even the commands or entreaties of the prince himself—could extract from Cadwallon more than a short and interrupted prelude upon the instrument, the notes of which arranged themselves into an air inexpressibly mournful, and died away in silence. The Prince frowned darkly on the bard, who was himself far too deeply lost in gloomy thought, to offer any apology, or even to observe his displeasure. Again he touched a few wild notes, and raising his looks upward, seemed to be on the very point of bursting forth into a tide of song similar to those with which this master of his art was wont to enchant his hearers. But the effort was in vain—he declared that his right hand was withered, and pushed the instrument from him.

A murmur went round the company, and Gwenwyn read in their aspects that they received the unusual silence of Cadwallon on this high occasion as a bad omen. He called hastily on a young and ambitious bard, named Caradoc of Menwygent, whose rising fame was likely soon to vie with the established reputation of Cadwallon, and summoned him to sing something which might command the applause of his sovereign and the gratitude of the company. The young man was ambitious, and understood the arts of a courtier. He commenced a poem, in which, although under a feigned name, he drew such a poetical picture of Eveline Berenger, that Gwenwyn was enraptured; and while all who had seen the beautiful original at once recognised the resemblance, the eyes of the Prince confessed at once his passion for the subject, and his admiration of the poet. The figures of Celtic poetry, in themselves highly imaginative, were scarce sufficient for the enthusiasm of the ambitious bard, rising in his tone as he perceived the feelings which he was exciting. The praises of the Prince mingled with those of the Norman beauty; and "as a lion," said the poet, "can only be led by the hand of a chaste and beautiful maiden, so a chief can only acknowledge the empire of the most virtuous, the most lovely of her sex. Who asks of the noon-day sun, in what quarter of the world he was born? and who shall ask of such charms as hers, to what country they owe their birth?"

Enthusiasts in pleasure as in war, and possessed of imaginations which answered readily to the summons of their poets, the Welsh chiefs and leaders united in acclamations of applause; and the song of the bard went farther to render popular the intended alliance of the Prince, than had all the graver arguments of his priestly precursor in the same topic.

Gwenwyn, himself, in a transport of delight, tore off the golden bracelets which he wore, to bestow them upon a bard whose song had produced an effect so desirable; and said, as he looked at the silent and sullen Cadwallon, "The silent harp was never strung with golden wires."

"Prince," answered the bard, whose pride was at least equal to that of Gwenwyn himself, "you pervert the proverb of Taliessin—it is the flattering harp which never lacked golden strings."

Gwenwyn, turning sternly towards him, was about to make an angry answer, when the sudden appearance of Jorworth, the messenger whom he had despatched to Raymond Berenger, arrested his purpose. This rude envoy entered the hall barelegged, excepting the sandals of goat-skin which he wore, and having on his shoulder a cloak of the same, and a short javelin in his hand. The dust on his garments, and the flush on his brow, showed with what hasty zeal his errand had been executed. Gwenwyn demanded of him eagerly, "What news from Garde Doloureuse, Jorworth ap Jevan?"

"I bear them in my bosom," said the son of Jevan; and, with much reverence, he delivered to the Prince a packet, bound with silk, and sealed with the impression of a swan, the ancient cognizance of the House of Berengor. Himself ignorant of writing or reading, Gwenwyn, in anxious haste, delivered the letter to Cadwallon, who usually acted as secretary when the chaplain was not in presence, as chanced then to be the case. Cadwallon, looking at the letter, said briefly, "I read no Latin. Ill betide the Norman, who writes to a Prince of Powys in other language than that of Britain! and well was the hour, when that noble tongue alone was spoken from Tintadgel to Cairleoil!"

Gwenwyn only replied to him with an angry glance.

"Where is Father Einion?" said the impatient Prince.

"He assists in the church," replied one of his attendants, "for it is the feast of Saint"——

"Were it the feast of Saint David," said Gwenwyn "and were the pyx between his hands, he must come hither to me instantly!"

One of the chief henchmen sprung off, to command his attendance, and, in the mean time, Gwenwyn eyed the letter containing the secret of his fate, but which it required an interpreter to read, with such eagerness and anxiety, that Caradoc, elated by his former success, threw in a few notes to divert, if possible, the tenor of his patron's thoughts during the interval. A light and lively air, touched by a hand which seemed to hesitate, like the submissive voice of an inferior, fearing to interrupt his master's meditations, introduced a stanza or two applicable to the subject.

"And what though thou, O scroll," he said, apostrophizing the letter, which lay on the table before his master, "dost speak with the tongue of the stranger? Hath not the cuckoo a harsh note, and yet she tells us of green buds and springing flowers? What if thy language be that of the stoled priest, is it not the same which binds hearts and hands together at the altar? And what though thou delayest to render up thy treasures, are not all pleasures most sweet, when enhanced by expectation? What were the chase, if the deer dropped at our feet the instant he started from the cover—or what value were there in the love of the maiden, were it yielded without coy delay?"

The song of the bard was here broken short by the entrance of the priest, who, hasty in obeying the summons of his impatient master, had not tarried to lay aside even the stole, which he had worn in the holy service; and many of the elders thought it was no good omen, that, so habited, a priest should appear in a festive assembly, and amid profane minstrelsy.

The priest opened the letter of the Norman Baron, and, struck with surprise at the contents, lifted his eyes in silence.

"Read it!" exclaimed the fierce Gwenwyn.

"So please you," replied the more prudent chaplain, "a smaller company were a fitter audience."

"Read it aloud!" repeated the Prince, in a still higher tone; "there sit none here who respect not the honour of their prince, or who deserve not his confidence. Read it, I say, aloud! and by Saint David, if Raymond the Norman hath dared"——

He stopped short, and, reclining on his seat, composed himself to an attitude of attention; but it was easy for his followers to fill up the breach in his exclamation which prudence had recommended.

The voice of the chaplain was low and ill-assured as he read the following epistle:—

"Raymond Berenger, the noble Norman Knight, Seneschal of the Garde Doloureuse, to Gwenwyn,

Prince of Powys, (May peace be between them!) sendeth health.

"Your letter, craving the hand of our daughter Eveline Berenger, was safely delivered to us by your servant, Jorworth ap Jevan, and we thank you heartily for the good meaning therein expressed to us and to ours. But, considering within ourselves the difference of blood and lineage, with the impediments and causes of offence which have often arisen in the like cases, we hold it fitter to match our daughter among our own people; and this by no case in disparagement of you, but solely for the weal of you, of ourselves, and of our mutual dependants, who will be the more safe from the risk of quarrel betwixt us, that we essay not to draw the bonds of our intimacy more close than beseemeth. The sheep and the goats feed together in peace on the same pastures, but they mingle not in blood, or race, the one with the other. Moreover, our daughter Eveline hath been sought in marriage by a noble and potent Lord of the Marches, Hugo de Lacy, the Constable of Chester, to which most honourable suit we have returned a favourable answer. It is therefore impossible that we should in this matter grant to you the boon you seek; nevertheless, you shall at all times find us, in other matters, willing to pleasure you; and hereunto we call God, and Our Lady, and Saint Mary Magdalene of Quatford, to witness; to whose keeping we heartily recommend you.

"Written by our command, at our castle of Garde Doloureuse, within the Marches of Wales, by a reverend Priest, Father Aldrovand, a black monk of the house of Wenlock; and to which we have appended our seal, upon the eve of the blessed martyr Saint Alphegius, to whom be honour and glory!"

The voice of Father Einion faltered, and the scroll which he held in his hand trembled in his grasp, as he arrived at the conclusion of this epistle; for well he knew that insults more slight than Gwenwyn would hold the least word it contained, were sure to put every drop of his British blood into the most vehement commotion. Nor did it fail to do so. The Prince had gradually drawn himself up from the posture of repose in which he had prepared to listen to the epistle; and when it concluded, he sprung on his feet like a startled lion, spurning from him as he rose, the foot-bearer, who rolled at some distance on the floor. "Priest," he said, "hast thou read that accursed scroll fairly? for if thou hast added, or diminished one word, or one letter, I will have thine eyes so handled, that thou shalt never read letter more!"

The monk replied, trembling, (for he was well aware that the sacerdotal character was not uniformly respected among the irascible Welshmen,) "By the oath of my order, mighty prince, I have read word for word, and letter for letter."

There was a momentary pause, while the fury of Gwenwyn at this unexpected affront, offered to him in the presence of all his Uckelwyr, (i. e. noble chiefs, literally men of high stature) seemed too big for utterance, when the silence was broken by a few notes from the hitherto mute harp of Cadwallon. The Prince looked round at first with displeasure at the interruption, for he was himself about to speak; but when he beheld the bard bending over his harp with an air of inspiration, and blending together, with unexampled skill, the wildest and most exalted tones of his art, he himself became an auditor instead of a speaker, and Cadwallon, not the Prince seemed to become the central point of the assembly, on whom all eyes were bent, and to whom each ear was turned with breathless eagerness, as if his strains were the responses of an oracle.

"We wed not with the stranger,"—thus burst the song from the lips of the poet. "Vortigern wedded with the stranger; thence came the first wo upon Britain and a sword upon her nobles, and a thunderbolt upon her palace. We wed not with the enslaved Saxon—the free and princely stag seeks not for his *bride the heifer whose neck the yoke hath worn. We wed not with the rapacious* Norman *—the noble hound scorns to seek* a mate from the herd of ravening wolves. When was it heard that the Cymry, the descendants of Brute, the true children of the soil of fair Britain, were plundered, oppressed, bereft of their birthright, and insulted even in their last retreats?—when but since they stretched their hand in friendship to the stranger, and clasped to their bosoms the daughter of the Saxon? Which of the two is feared?—the empty water-course of summer, or the channel of the headlong winter torrent?—A maiden smiles at the summer-shrunk brook while she crosses it, but a barbed horse and his rider will fear to stem the wintry flood. Men of Mathraval and Powys, be the dreaded flood of winter—Gwenwyn son of Cyverliock!—may thy plume be the topmost of its waves!"

All thoughts of peace, thoughts which in themselves were foreign to the hearts of the warlike British, passed before the song of Cadwallon like dust before the whirlwind, and the unanimous shout of the assembly declared for instant war. The Prince himself spoke not, but, looking proudly around him, flung abroad his arm, as one who cheers his followers to the attack.

The priest, had he dared, might have reminded Gwenwyn, that the Cross which he had assumed on his shoulder, had consecrated his arm to the Holy War, and precluded his engaging in any civil strife. But the task was too dangerous for Father Einion's courage, and he shrunk from the hall to the seclusion of his own convent. Caradoc, whose brief hour of popularity was past, also retired, with humbled and dejected looks, and not without a glance of indignation at his triumphant rival, who had so judiciously reserved his display of art for the theme of war, that was ever most popular with the audience.

The chiefs resumed their seats no longer for the purpose of festivity, but to fix, in the hasty manner customary among these prompt warriors, where they were to assemble their forces, which, upon such occasions, comprehended almost all the able-bodied males of the country,—for all, excepting the priests and the bards, were soldiers,—and to settle the order of their descent upon the devoted marches, where they proposed to signalize, by general ravage, their sense of the insult which their Prince had received, by the rejection of his suit.

CHAPTER III.

The sands are number'd, that make up my life,
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.
Henry VI., Act I., Scene IV.

WHEN Raymond Berenger had despatched his mission to the Prince of Powys, he was not unsuspicious, though altogether fearless, of the result. He sent messengers to the several dependants who held their fiefs by the tenure of *cornage*, and warned them to be on the alert, that he might receive instant notice of the approach of the enemy. These vassals, as is well known, occupied the numerous towers, which, like so many falcon-nests, had been built on the points most convenient to defend the frontiers, and were bound to give signal of any incursion of the Welsh, by blowing their horns; which sounds, answered from tower to tower, and from station to station gave the alarm for general defence. But although Raymond considered these precautions as necessary, from the fickle and precarious temper of his neighbours, and for maintaining his own credit as a soldier, he was far from believing the danger to be imminent; for the preparations of the Welsh, though on a much more extensive scale than had lately been usual, were as secret, as their resolution of war had been suddenly adopted.

It was upon the second morning after the memorable festival of Onstoll-Coch, that the tempest broke on the Norman frontier. At first a single, long, and keen bugle-blast, announced the approach of the enemy; presently the signals of alarm were echoed from every castle and tower on the borders of Shropshire, where every place of habitation was then a fortress. Beacons were lighted upon crags and eminences, the bells were rung backward in the churches and towns, while the general and earnest summons to

arms announced an extremity of danger which even the inhabitants of that unsettled country had not hitherto experienced.

Amid this general alarm, Raymond Berenger, having busied himself in arranging his few but gallant followers and adherents, and taken such modes of procuring intelligence of the enemy's strength and motions as were in his power, at length ascended the watch-tower of the castle to observe in person the country around, already obscured in several places by the clouds of smoke, which announced the progress and the ravages of the invaders. He was speedily joined by his favourite squire, to whom the unusual heaviness of his master's looks was cause of much surprise, for till now they had ever been blithest at the hour of battle. The squire held in his hand his master's helmet, for Sir Raymond was all armed, saving the head.

"Dennis Morolt," said the veteran soldier, "are our vassals and liegemen all mustered?"

"All, noble sir, but the Flemings, who are not yet come in."

"The lazy hounds, why tarry they?" said Raymond. "Ill policy it is to plant such sluggish natures in our borders. They are like their own steers, fitter to tug a plough than for aught that requires mettle."

"With your favour," said Dennis, "the knaves can do good service notwithstanding. That Wilkin Flammock of the Green can strike like the hammers of his own fulling-mill."

"He will fight, I believe, when he cannot help it," said Raymond; "but he has no stomach for such exercise, and is as slow and as stubborn as a mule."

"And therefore are his countrymen rightly matched against the Welsh," replied Dennis Morolt, "that their solid and unyielding temper may be a fit foil to the fiery and headlong dispositions of our dangerous neighbours, just as restless waves are best opposed by steadfast rocks.—Hark, sir, I hear Wilkin Flammock's step ascending the turret-stair, as deliberately as ever monk mounted to matins."

Step by step the heavy sound approached, until the form of the huge and substantial Fleming at length issued from the turret-door to the platform where they were conversing. Wilkin Flammock was cased in bright armour, of unusual weight and thickness, and cleaned with exceeding care, which marked the neatness of his nation; but, contrary to the custom of the Normans, entirely plain, and void of carving, gilding, or any sort of ornament. The basenet, or steel-cap, had no visor, and left exposed a broad countenance, with heavy and unpliable features, which announced the character of his temper and understanding. He carried in his hand a heavy mace.

"So, Sir Fleming," said the Castellane, "you are in no hurry, methinks, to repair to the rendezvous."

"So please you," answered the Fleming, "we were compelled to tarry, that we might load our wains with our bales of cloth and other property."

"Ha! wains?—how many wains have you brought with you?"

"Six, noble sir," replied Wilkin.

"And how many men?" demanded Raymond Berenger.

"Twelve, valiant sir," answered Flammock.

"Only two men to each baggage-wain? I wonder you would thus encumber yourself," said Berenger.

"Under your favour, sir, once more," replied Wilkin, "it is only the value which I and my comrades set upon our goods, that inclines us to defend them with our bodies; and, had we been obliged to leave our cloth to the plundering clutches of yonder vagabonds, I should have seen small policy in stopping here to give them the opportunity of adding murder to robbery. Gloucester should have been my first halting-place."

The Norman knight gazed on the Flemish artisan, for such was Wilkin Flammock, with such a mixture of surprise and contempt, as excluded indignation. "I have heard much," he said, "but this is the first time *that I have heard one* with a beard on his lip avouch *himself a coward.*"

"Nor do you hear it now," answered Flammock, *with the utmost composure*—"I am always ready to fight for life and property; and my coming to this country, where they are both in constant danger, shows that I care not much how often I do so. But a sound skin is better than a slashed one, for all that."

"Well," said Raymond Berenger, "fight after thine own fashion, so thou wilt but fight stoutly with that long body of thine. We are like to have need for all that we can do.—Saw you aught of these rascaille Welsh?—have they Gwenwyn's banner amongst them?"

"I saw it with the white dragon displayed," replied Wilkin; "I could not but know it, since it was broidered in my own loom."

Raymond looked so grave upon this intelligence, that Dennis Morolt, unwilling the Fleming should mark it, thought it necessary to withdraw his attention. "I can tell thee," he said to Flammock, "that when the Constable of Chester joins us with his lances, you shall see your handiwork, the dragon, fly faster homeward than ever flew the shuttle which wove it."

"It must fly before the Constable comes up, Dennis Morolt," said Berenger, "else it will fly triumphant over all our bodies."

"In the name of God and the Holy Virgin!" said Dennis, "what may you mean, Sir Knight?—not that we should fight with the Welsh before the Constable joins us?"—He paused, and then, well understanding the firm, yet melancholy glance, with which his master answered the question, he proceeded with yet more vehement earnestness—"You cannot mean it—you cannot intend that we shall quit this castle, which we have so often made good against them, and contend in the field with two hundred men against thousands?—Think better of it my beloved master and let not the rashness of your old age blemish that character for wisdom and warlike skill, which your former life has so nobly won."

"I am not angry with you for blaming my purpose, Dennis," answered the Norman, "for I know you do it in love to me and mine. But, Dennis Morolt, this thing must be—we must fight the Welshmen within these three hours, or the name of Raymond Berenger must be blotted from the genealogy of his house."

"And so we will—we will fight them, my noble master," said the esquire; "fear not cold counsel from Dennis Morolt, where battle is the theme. But we will fight them under the walls of the castle, with honest Wilkin Flammock and his cross-bows on the wall to protect our flanks, and afford us some balance against the numerous odds."

"Not so, Dennis," answered his master—"in the open field we must fight them, or thy master must rank but as a mansworn knight. Know, that when I feasted yonder wily savage in my halls at Christmas, and when the wine was flowing fastest around, Gwenwyn threw out some praises of the fastness and strength of my castle, in a manner which intimated it was these advantages alone that had secured me in former wars from defeat and captivity. I spoke in answer, when I had far better been silent; for what availed my idle boast, but as a fetter to bind me to a deed next to madness? If, I said, a prince of the Cymry shall again come in hostile fashion before the Garde Doloureuse, let him pitch his standard down in yonder plain by the bridge, and, by the word of a good knight, and the faith of a Christian man, Raymond Berenger will meet him as willingly, be he many or be he few, as ever Welshman was met withal.'

Dennis was struck speechless when he heard of a promise so rash, so fatal; but his was not the casuistry which could release his master from the fetters with which his unwary confidence had bound him. It was otherwise with Wilkin Flammock. He stared—he almost laughed, notwithstanding the reverence due to the Castellane, and his own insensibility to risible emotions. "And is this all?" he said. "If your honour had pledged yourself to pay one hundred florins to a Jew or to a Lombard, no doubt you must have kept the day, or forfeited your pledge; but surely one day is as good as another to keep a promise for fighting, and that day is best in which the promiser is strongest. But indeed, after all, what signifies any promise over a wine flagon?"

"It signifies as much as a promise can do that is given elsewhere. The promiser," said Berenger, "escapes not the sin of a word-breaker, because he hath been a drunken braggart."

"For the sin," said Dennis, "sure I am, that rather than you should do such deed of dole, the Abbot of Glastonbury would absolve you for a florin."

"But what shall wipe out the shame?" demanded Berenger—"how shall I dare to show myself again among press of knights, who have broken my word of battle pledged, for fear of a Welshman and his naked savages? No! Dennis Morolt, speak of it no more. Be it for weal or wo, we fight them to-day, and upon yonder fair field."

"It may be," said Flammock, "that Gwenwyn may have forgotten the promise, and so fail to appear to claim it in the appointed space; for, as we heard, your wines of France flooded his Welsh brains deeply."

"He again alluded to it on the morning after it was made," said the Castellane—"trust me, he will not forget what will give him such a chance of removing me from his path for ever."

As he spoke, they observed that large clouds of dust, which had been seen at different points of the landscape, were drawing down towards the opposite side of the river, over which an ancient bridge extended itself to the appointed place of combat. They were at no loss to conjecture the cause. It was evident that Gwenwyn, recalling the parties who had been engaged in partial devastation, was bending with his whole forces towards the bridge and the plain beyond it.

"Let us rush down and secure the pass," said Dennis Morolt; "we may debate with them with some equality by the advantage of defending the bridge. Your word bound you to the plain as to a field of battle, but it did not oblige you to forego such advantages as the passage of the bridge would afford. Our men, our horses, are ready—let our bowmen secure the banks, and my life on the issue."

"When I promised to meet him in yonder field, I meant," replied Raymond Berenger, "to give the Welshman the full advantage of equality of ground. I so meant it—he so understood it; and what avails keeping my word in the letter, if I break it in the sense? We move not till the last Welshman has crossed the bridge; and then"——

"And then," said Dennis, "we move to our death! —May God forgive our sins! But"——

"But what?" said Berenger; "something sticks in thy mind that should have vent."

"My young lady, your daughter the Lady Eveline"——

"I have told her what is to be. She shall remain in the castle, where I will leave a few chosen veterans, with you, Dennis, to command them. In twenty-four hours the siege will be relieved, and we have defended it longer with a slighter garrison. Then to her aunt, the Abbess of the Benedictine sisters—thou, Dennis, wilt see her placed there in honour and safety, and my sister will care for her future provision as her wisdom shall determine."

"*I* leave you at this pinch!" said Dennis Morolt, bursting into tears—"*I* shut myself up within walls, when my master rides to his last of battles!—*I* become esquire to a lady, even though it be to the Lady Eveline, when he lies dead under his shield!—Raymond Berenger, is it for this that I have buckled thy armour so often?"

The tears gushed from the old warrior's eyes as fast as from those of a girl who weeps for her lover; and Raymond, taking him kindly by the hand, said, in a soothing tone, "Do not think, my good old servant, that, were honour to be won, I would drive thee from my side. But this is a wild and an inconsiderate deed, to which my fate or my folly has bound me. I die to save my name from dishonour; but, alas! I must leave on my memory the charge of imprudence."

"Let me share your imprudence, my dearest master," said Dennis Morolt, earnestly;—"the poor esquire has no business to be thought wiser than his master. In many a battle my valour derived some little *fame from partaking in the deeds* which won your renown—deny me not the right to share in that blame which your temerity may incur; let them not say, that so rash was his action, even his old esquire was not permitted to partake in it! I am part of yourself—it is murder to every man whom you take with you, if you leave me behind."

"Dennis," said Berenger, "you make me feel yet more bitterly the folly I have yielded to. I would grant you the boon you ask, sad as it is—But my daughter"——

"Sir Knight," said the Fleming, who had listened to this dialogue with somewhat less than his usual apathy, "it is not my purpose this day to leave this castle: now if you could trust my troth to do what a plain man may for the protection of my Lady Eveline"——

"How, sirrah!" said Raymond; "you do not propose to leave the castle? Who gives you right to propose or dispose in the case, until my pleasure is known?"

"I shall be sorry to have words with you, Sir Castellane," said the imperturbable Fleming;—"but I hold here, in this township, certain mills, tenements, cloth-yards, and so forth, for which I am to pay man-service in defending this Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and in this I am ready. But if you call on me to march from hence, leaving the same castle defenceless, and to offer up my life in a battle which you acknowledge to be desperate, I must needs say my tenure binds me not to obey thee."

"Base mechanic!" said Morolt, laying his hand on his dagger, and menacing the Fleming.

But Raymond Berenger interfered with voice and hand—"Harm him not, Morolt, and blame him not. He hath a sense of duty, though not after our manner; and he and his knaves will fight best behind stone walls. They are taught also, these Flemings, by the practice of their own country, the attack and defence of walled cities and fortresses, and are especially skilful in working of mangonels and military engines. There are several of his countrymen in the castle, besides his own followers. These I propose to leave behind; and I think they will obey him more readily than any but myself—how think'st thou? Thou wouldst not, I know, from a misconstrued point of honour, or a blind love to me, leave this important place, and the safety of Eveline, in doubtful hands?"

"Wilkin Flammock is but a Flemish clown, noble sir," answered Dennis, as much overjoyed as if he had obtained some important advantage; "but I must needs say he is as stout and true as any whom you might trust; and, besides, his own shrewdness will teach him there is more to be gained by defending such a castle as this, than by yielding it to strangers, who may not be likely to keep the terms of surrender, however fairly they may offer them."

"It is fixed then," said Raymond Berenger. "Then, Dennis, thou shalt go with me, and he shall remain behind.—Wilkin Flammock," he said, addressing the Fleming solemnly, "I speak not to thee the language of chivalry, of which thou knowest nothing; but, as thou art an honest man, and a true Christian, I conjure thee to stand to the defence of this castle. Let no promise of the enemy draw thee to any base composition—no threat to any surrender. Relief must speedily arrive; if you fulfil your trust to me and to my daughter, Hugo de Lacy will reward you richly—if you fail, he will punish you severely."

"Sir Knight," said Flammock, "I am pleased you have put your trust so far in a plain handicraftsman. For the Welsh, I am come from a land for which we were compelled—yearly compelled—to struggle with the sea; and they who can deal with the waves in a tempest, need not fear an undisciplined people in their fury. Your daughter shall be as dear to me as mine own; and in that faith you may prick forth—if, indeed, you will not still, like a wiser man, shut gate, down portcullis, up drawbridge, and let your archers and my cross-bows man the wall, and tell the knaves you are not the fool that they take you for."

"Good fellow, that must not be," said the Knight. "I hear my daughter's voice," he added hastily; "I would not again meet her, again to part from her.

To Heaven's keeping I commit thee, honest Fleming. —Follow me, Dennis Morolt."

The old Castellane descended the stair of the southern tower hastily, just as his daughter Eveline ascended that of the eastern turret, to throw herself at his feet once more. She was followed by the Father Aldrovand, chaplain of her father; by an old and almost invalided huntsman, whose more active services in the field and the chase had been for some time chiefly limited to the superintendence of the Knight's kennels, and the charge especially of his more favourite hounds; and by Rose Flammock, the daughter of Wilkin, a blue-eyed Flemish maiden, round, plump, and shy as a partridge, who had been for some time permitted to keep company with the high-born Norman damsel, in a doubtful station, betwixt that of an humble friend and superior domestic.

Eveline rushed upon the battlements, her hair dishevelled, and her eyes drowned in tears, and eagerly demanded of the Fleming where her father was.

Flammock made a clumsy reverence, and attempted some answer; but his voice seemed to fail him. He turned his back upon Eveline without ceremony, and, totally disregarding the anxious inquiries of the huntsman and the chaplain, he said hastily to his daughter, in his own language, "Mad work! mad work! look to the poor maiden, Roschen—*Der alter Herr ist verrucht.*"*

Without farther speech, he descended the stairs, and never paused till he reached the buttery. Here he called like a lion for the controller of these regions, by the various names of Kammerer, Keller-master, and so forth, to which the old Reinold, an ancient Norman esquire, answered not, until the Netherlander fortunately recollected his Anglo-Norman title of butler. This, his regular name of office, was the key to the buttery hatch, and the old man instantly appeared, with his gray cassock and high rolled hose, a ponderous bunch of keys suspended by a silver chain to his broad leathern girdle, which, in consideration of the emergency of the time, he had thought it right to balance on the left side with a huge falchion, which seemed much too weighty for his old arm to wield.

"What is your will," he said, "Master Flammock? or what are your commands, since it is my lord's pleasure that they shall be laws to me for a time?"

"Only a cup of wine, good Meister Kellar-master—butler, I mean."

"I am glad you remember the name of mine office," said Reinold, with some of the petty resentment of a spoiled domestic, who thinks that a stranger has been irregularly put in command over him.

"A flagon of Rhenish, if you love me," answered the Fleming, "for my heart is low and poor within me, and I must needs drink the best."

"And drink you shall," said Reinold, "if drink will give you the courage which perhaps you may want." —He descended to the secret crypts, of which he was the guardian, and returned with a silver flagon, which might contain about a quart.—"Here is such wine," said Reinold, "as thou hast seldom tasted," and was about to pour it into a cup.

"Nay, the flagon—the flagon, friend Reinold; I love a deep and solemn draught when the business is weighty," said Wilkin. He seized on the flagon accordingly, and drinking a preparatory mouthful, paused as if to estimate the strength and flavour of the generous liquor. Apparently he was pleased with both, for he nodded in approbation to the butler; and, raising the flagon to his mouth once more, he slowly and gradually brought the bottom of the vessel parallel with the roof of the apartment, without suffering one drop of the contents to escape him.

"That hath savour, Herr Keller-master," said he, while he was recovering his breath by intervals, after so long a suspense of respiration; "but, may heaven forgive you for thinking it the best I have ever tasted! You little know the cellars of Ghent and of Ypres."

"And I care not for them," said Reinold; "those of gentle Norman blood hold the wines of Gascony and France, generous, light, and cordial, worth all the acid potations of the Rhine and the Neckar."

"All is matter of taste," said the Fleming; "but hark ye—Is there much of this wine in the cellar?"

"Methought but now it pleased not your dainty palate?" said Reinold.

"Nay, nay, my friend," said Wilkin, "I said it had savour—I may have drunk better—but this is right good, where better may not be had.—Again, how much of it hast thou?"

"The whole butt, man," answered the butler; "I have broached a fresh piece for you."

"Good," replied Flammock; "get the quart-pot of Christian measure; heave the cask up into this same buttery, and let each soldier of this castle be served with such a cup as I have here swallowed. I feel it hath done me much good—my heart was sinking when I saw the black smoke arising from mine own fulling-mills yonder. Let each man, I say, have a full quart-pot—men defend not castles on thin liquors."

"I must do as you will, good Wilkin Flammock," said the butler; "but I pray remember all men are not alike. That which will but warm your Flemish hearts, will put wildfire into Norman brains; and what may only encourage your countrymen to man the walls, will make ours fly over the battlements."

"Well, you know the conditions of your own countrymen best; serve out to them what wines and measure you list—only let each Fleming have a solemn quart of Rhenish.—But what will you do for the English churls, of whom there are a right many left with us?"

The old butler paused, and rubbed his brow.—"There will be a strange waste of liquor," he said; "and yet I may not deny that the emergency may defend the expenditure. But for the English, they are, as you wot, a mixed breed, having much of your German sullenness, together with a plentiful touch of the hot blood of yonder Welsh furies. Light wines stir them not; strong heavy draughts would madden them. What think you of ale, an invigorating, strengthening liquor, that warms the heart without inflaming the brain?"

"Ale!" said the Fleming.—"Hum—ha—is your ale mighty, Sir Butler?—is it double ale?"

"Do you doubt my skill?" said the butler.—"March and October have witnessed me ever as they came round, for thirty years, deal with the best barley in Shropshire.—You shall judge."

He filled, from a large hogshead in the corner of the buttery, the flagon which the Fleming had just emptied, and which was no sooner replenished than —Wilkin again drained it to the bottom.

"Good ware," he said, "Master Butler, strong stinging ware. The English churls will fight like devils upon it—let them be furnished with mighty ale along with their beef and brown bread. And now, having given you your charge, Master Reinold, it is time I should look after mine own."

Wilkin Flammock left the buttery, and with a mien and judgment alike undisturbed by the deep potations in which he had so recently indulged, undisturbed also by the various rumours concerning what was passing without doors, he made the round of the castle and its outworks, mustered the little garrison, and assigned to each their posts, reserving to his own countrymen the management of the arblasts, or crossbows, and of the military engines which were contrived by the proud Normans, and were incomprehensible to the ignorant English, or, more properly, Anglo-Saxons, of the period, but which his more adroit countrymen managed with great address. The jealousies entertained by both the Normans and English, at being placed under the temporary command of a Fleming, gradually yielded to the military and mechanical skill which he displayed, as well as to a sense of the emergency, which became greater with every moment.

* *The old lord is frantic.*

CHAPTER IV.

Beside yon brigg out ower yon burn,
Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.
Prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer.

The daughter of Raymond Berenger, with the attendants whom we have mentioned, continued to remain upon the battlements of the Garde Dolourense, in spite of the exhortations of the priest that she would rather await the issue of this terrible interval in the chapel, and amid the rites of religion. He perceived, at length, that she was incapable, from grief and fear, of attending to, or understanding his advice; and, sitting down beside her, while the huntsman and Rose Flammock stood by, endeavoured to suggest such comfort as perhaps he scarcely felt himself.

"This is but a sally of your noble father's," he said; "and though it may seem it is made on great hazard, yet who ever questioned Sir Raymond Berenger's policy of wars?—He is close and secret in his purposes. I guess right well he had not marched out as he proposes, unless he knew that the noble Earl of Arundel, or the mighty Constable of Chester, were close at hand."

"Think you this assuredly, good father?—Go, Raoul—go, my dearest Rose—look to the east—see if you cannot descry banners or cloulds of dust—Listen—listen—hear you no trumpets from that quarter?"

"Alas! my lady," said Raoul, "the thunder of heaven could scarce be heard amid the howling of yonder Welsh wolves." Eveline turned as he spoke, and, looking towards the bridge, she beheld an appalling spectacle.

The river, whose stream washes on three sides the base of the proud eminence on which the castle is situated, curves away from the fortress and its corresponding village on the west, and the hill sinks downward to an extensive plain, so extremely level as to indicate its alluvial origin. Lower down, at the extremity of this plain, where the banks again close in the river, were situated the manufacturing houses of the stout Flemings, which were now burning in a bright flame. The bridge, a high, narrow combination of arches of unequal size, was about half a mile distant from the castle, in the very centre of the plain. The river itself ran in a deep rocky channel, was often unfordable, and at all times difficult of passage, giving considerable advantage to the defenders of the castle, who had spent on other occasions many a dear drop of blood to defend the pass, which Raymond Berenger's fantastic scruples now induced him to abandon. The Welshman, seizing the opportunity with the avidity with which men grasp an unexpected benefit, were fast crowding over the high and steep arches, while their bands, collecting from different points upon the further bank, increased the continued stream of warriors, who, passing leisurely and uninterrupted, formed their line of battle on the plain opposite to the castle.

At first Father Aldrovand viewed their motions without anxiety, nay, with the scornful smile of one who observes an enemy in the act of falling into the snare spread for them by superior skill. Raymond Berenger, with his little body of infantry and cavalry, were drawn up on the easy hill which is betwixt the castle and the plain, ascending from the former towards the fortress; and it seemed clear to the Dominican, who had not entirely forgotten in the cloister his ancient military experience, that it was the Knight's purpose to attack the disordered enemy when a certain number had crossed the river, and the others were partly on the farther side, and partly engaged in the slow and perilous manœuvre of effecting their passage. But when large bodies of the white-mantled Welshmen were permitted without interruption to take such order on the plain as their habits of fighting recommended, the monk's countenance, though he still endeavoured to speak encouragement to the terrified Eveline, assumed a different and an anxious expression; and his acquired habits of resignation contended strenuously with his ancient military ardour. "Be patient," he said, "my daughter, and be of good comfort; *thine eyes shall behold the dismay of yonder barbarous enemy. Let but a minute elapse, and thou shalt see them scattered like dust.—Saint George! they will surely cry thy name now, or never!*"

The monk's beads passed mean while rapidly through his hands, but many an expression of military impatience mingled itself with his orisons. He could not conceive the cause why each successive throng of mountaineers, led under their different banners, and headed by their respective chieftains, was permitted, without interruption, to pass the difficult defile, and extend themselves in battle array on the near side of the bridge, while the English, or rather Anglo-Norman cavalry, remained stationary, without so much as laying their lances in rest. There remained, he thought, but one hope,—one only rational explanation of this unaccountable inactivity—this voluntary surrender of every advantage of ground, when that of numbers was so tremendously on the side of the enemy. Father Aldrovand concluded, that the succours of the Constable of Chester, and other Lord Marchers, must be in the immediate vicinity, and that the Welsh were only permitted to pass the river without opposition, that their retreat might be the more effectually cut off, and their defeat, with a deep river in their rear rendered the more signally calamitous. But even while he clung to this hope, the monk's heart sunk within him, as, looking in every direction from which the expected succours might arrive, he could neither see nor hear the slightest token which announced their approach. In a frame of mind approaching more nearly to despair than to hope, the old man continued alternately to tell his beads, to gaze anxiously around, and to address some words of consolation in broken phrases to the young lady, until the general shout of the Welsh, ringing from the bank of the river to the battlements of the castle, warned him, in a note of exultation, that the very last of the British had defiled through the pass, and that their whole formidable array stood prompt for action upon the hither side of the river.

This thrilling and astounding clamour, to which each Welshman lent his voice with all the energy of defiance, thirst of battle, and hope of conquest, was at length answered by the blast of the Norman trumpets,—the first sign of activity which had been exhibited on the part of Raymond Berenger. But cheerily as they rung, the trumpets, in comparison of the shout which they answered, sounded like the silver whistle of the stout boatswain amid the howling of the tempest.

At the same moment when the trumpets were blown, Berenger gave signal to the archers to discharge their arrows, and the men-at-arms to advance under a hail-storm of shafts, javelins, and stones, shot, darted, and slung by the Welsh against their steel-clad assailants.

The veterans of Raymond, on the other hand, stimulated by many victorious recollections, confident in the talents of their accomplished leader, and undismayed even by the desperation of their circumstances, charged the mass of the Welshmen with their usual determined valour. It was a gallant sight to see this little body of cavalry advance to the onset, their plumes floating above their helmets, their lances in rest, and projecting six feet in length before the breasts of their coursers; their shields hanging from their necks, that their left hands might have freedom to guide their horses; and the whole body rushing on with an equal front, and a momentum of speed which increased with every second. Such an onset might have startled naked men, (for such were the Welsh, in respect of the mail-sheathed Normans,) but it brought no terrors to the ancient British, who had long made it their boast that they exposed their bare bosoms and white tunics to the lances and swords of the men-at-arms, with as much confidence as if they had been born invulnerable. It was not indeed in their power to withstand the weight of the first shock, which, breaking their ranks, densely as they were arranged, carried the barbed horses into the very centre of their host, and well nigh up to the fatal standard, to which Raymond Berenger, bound by his fatal vow, had that day conceded so much vantage-ground. But they yielded like the billows, which give way, indeed, to the gallant ship, but only to assail her sides, and to

unite in her wake. With wild and horrible clamours, they closed their tumultuous ranks around Berenger and his devoted followers, and a deadly scene of strife ensued.

The best warriors of Wales had on this occasion joined the standard of Gwenwyn; the arrows of the men of Gwentland, whose skill in archery almost equalled that of the Normans themselves, rattled on the helmets of the men-at-arms; and the spears of the people of Deheubarth, renowned for the sharpness and temper of their steel heads, were employed against the cuirasses not without fatal effect, notwithstanding the protection which these afforded to the rider.

It was in vain that the archery belonging to Raymond's little band, stout yeomen, who, for the most part, held possessions by military tenure, exhausted their quivers on the broad mark afforded them by the Welsh army. It is probable, that every shaft carried a Welshman's life on its point; yet, to have afforded important relief to the cavalry, now closely and inextricably engaged, the slaughter ought to have been twenty-fold at least. Mean time, the Welsh, galled by this incessant discharge, answered it by volleys from their own archers, whose numbers made some amends for their inferiority, and who were supported by numerous bodies of darters and slingers. So that the Norman archers, who had more than once attempted to descend from their position to operate a diversion in favour of Raymond and his devoted band, were now so closely engaged in front, as obliged them to abandon all thoughts of such a movement.

Mean while, that chivalrous leader, who from the first had hoped for no more than an honourable death, laboured with all his power to render his fate signal, by involving in it that of the Welsh Prince, the author of the war. He cautiously avoided the expenditure of his strength by hewing among the British; but, with the shock of his managed horse, repelled the numbers who pressed on him, and leaving the plebeians to the swords of his companions, shouted his war-cry, and made his way towards the fatal standard of Gwenwyn, beside which, discharging at once the duties of a skilful leader and a brave soldier, the Prince had stationed himself. Raymond's experience of the Welsh disposition, subject equally to the highest flood, and most sudden ebb of passion, gave him some hope that a successful attack upon this point, followed by the death or capture of the Prince, and the downfall of his standard, might even yet strike such a panic, as should change the fortunes of the day, otherwise so nearly desperate. The veteran, therefore, animated his comrades to the charge by voice and example; and, in spite of all opposition, forced his way gradually onward. But Gwenwyn in person, surrounded by his best and noblest champions, offered a defence as obstinate as the assault was intrepid. In vain they were borne to the earth by the barbed horses, or hewed down by the invulnerable riders. Wounded and overthrown, the Britons continued their resistance, clung round the legs of the Norman steeds, and cumbered their advance; while their brethren, thrusting with pikes, proved every joint and crevice of the plate and mail, or, grappling with the men-at-arms, strove to pull them from their horses by main force, or beat them down with their bills and Welsh hooks And wo betide those who were by these various means dismounted, for the long sharp knives worn by the Welsh soon pierced them with a hundred wounds, and were then only merciful when the first inflicted was deadly.

The combat was at this point, and had raged for more than half an hour, when Berenger, having forced his horse within two spears' length of the British standard, he and Gwenwyn were so near to each other as to exchange tokens of mutual defiance.

"Turn thee, Wolf of Wales," said Berenger, "and abide, if thou darest, one blow of a good knight's sword! Raymond Berenger spits at thee and thy banner."

"False Norman churl!" said Gwenwyn, swinging around his head a mace of prodigious weight, and already clotted with blood, "thy iron head-piece shall ill protect thy lying tongue, with which I will this day feed the ravens!"

Raymond made no farther answer, but pushed his horse towards the Prince, who advanced to meet him with equal readiness. But ere they came within reach of each other's weapons, a Welsh champion, devoted like the Romans who opposed the elephants of Pyrrhus, finding that the armour of Raymond's horse resisted the repeated thrusts of his spear, threw himself under the animal, and stabbed him in the belly with his long knife. The noble horse reared and fell, crushing with his weight the Briton who had wounded him; the helmet of the rider burst its clasps in the fall, and rolled away from his head, giving to view his noble features and gray hairs. He made more than one effort to extricate himself from the fallen horse, but ere he could succeed, received his death's-wound from the hand of Gwenwyn, who hesitated not to strike him down with his mace while in the act of attempting to rise.

During the whole of this bloody day, Dennis Morolt's horse had kept pace for pace, and his arm blow for blow, with his master's. It seemed as if two different bodies had been moving under one act of volition. He husbanded his strength, or put it forth, exactly as he observed his knight did, and was close by his side, when he made the last deadly effort. At that fatal moment, when Raymond Berenger rushed on the chief, the brave squire forced his way up to the standard, and, grasping it firmly, struggled for possession of it with a gigantic Briton, to whose care it had been confided, and who now exerted his utmost strength to defend it. But even while engaged in this mortal struggle, the eye of Morolt scarcely left his master; and when he saw him fall, his own force seemed by sympathy to abandon him, and the British champion had no longer any trouble in laying him prostrate among the slain.

The victory of the British was now complete.—Upon the fall of their leader, the followers of Raymond Berenger would willingly have fled or surrendered. But the first was impossible, so closely had they been enveloped; and in the cruel wars maintained by the Welsh upon their frontiers, quarter to the vanquished was out of question. A few of the men-at-arms were lucky enough to disentangle themselves from the tumult, and, not even attempting to enter the castle, fled in various directions, to carry their own fears among the inhabitants of the marches, by announcing the loss of the battle, and the fate of the far-renowned Raymond Berenger.

The archers of the fallen leader, as they had never been so deeply involved in the combat, which had been chiefly maintained by the cavalry, became now, in their turn, the sole object of the enemy's attack. But when they saw the multitude come roaring towards them like a sea, with all its waves, they abandoned the bank which they had hitherto bravely defended, and began a regular retreat to the castle in the best order which they could, as the only remaining means of securing their lives. A few of their light-footed enemies attempted to intercept them, during the execution of this prudent manœuvre, by outstripping them in their march, and throwing themselves into the hollow way which led to the castle, to oppose their retreat. But the coolness of the English archers, accustomed to extremities of every kind, supported them on the present occasion. While a part of them, armed with glaives and bills, dislodged the Welsh from the hollow way, the others facing in the opposite direction, and parted into divisions, which alternately halted and retreated, maintained such a countenance as to check pursuit, and exchange a severe discharge of missiles with the Welsh, by which both parties were considerable sufferers.

At length, having left more than two-thirds of their brave companions behind, the yeomanry attained the point, which, being commanded by arrows and engines from the battlements, might be considered as that of comparative safety. A volley of large stones, and square-headed bolts of great size and thickness, effectually stopped the farther progress of the pursuit, and those who had led it drew back, their tumultuary forces to the plain, where, with shouts of joyless and

ation, their countrymen were employed in secur-
ie plunder of the field; while some, impelled by
d and revenge, mangled and mutilated the limbs
dead Normans, in a manner unworthy of their
nal cause and their own courage. The fearful
with which this dreadful work was consum-
d, while it struck horror into the minds of the
er garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, inspired
at the same time with the resolution rather to
d the fortress to the last extremity, than to sub-
the mercy of so vengeful an enemy.*

CHAPTER V.

That Baron he to his castle fled,
To Barnard Castle then fled he
The uttermost walls were eathe to win,
The Earls have won them speedilie;—
The uttermost walls were stone and brick;
But though they won them soon anon,
Long ere they won the inmost walls,
For they were hewn in rock of stone.
PERCY'S *Relics of Ancient Poetry.*

s unhappy fate of the battle was soon evident
anxious spectators upon the watch-towers of
arde Doloureuse, which name the castle that
o well deserved. With difficulty the confessor
red his own emotions to control those of the
es on whom he attended, and who were now
in their lamentation by many others—women,
en, and infirm old men, the relatives of those
they saw engaged in this unavailing contest.
helpless beings had been admitted to the castle
urity's sake, and they had now thronged to the
ments, from which Father Aldrovand found
lty in making them descend, aware that the
of them on the towers, that should have ap-
lined with armed men, would be an additional
agement to the exertions of the assailants. He
the Lady Eveline to set an example to this
of helpless, yet untractable mourners.
erving, at least endeavouring to preserve, even
extremity of grief, that composure which the
ers of the times enjoined—for chivalry had its
m as well as philosophy—Eveline replied with
e which she would fain have rendered firm,
which was tremulous in her despite—"Yes,
you say well—here is no longer aught left for
us to look upon. Warlike meed and honoured
unk when yonder white plume touched the
ground,—Come, maidens, there is no longer
left us to see—to mass, to mass—the tourney
!"
re was wildness in her tone, and when she
vith the air of one who would lead out a pro-
n, she staggered, and would have fallen, but
support of the confessor. Hastily wrapping
ad in her mantle, as if ashamed of the agony
f which she could not restrain, and of which
s and the low moaning sounds that issued from
the folds enveloping her face, declared the ex-
she suffered Father Aldrovand to conduct her
er he would.
r gold," he said, "has changed to brass, our
to dross, our wisdom to folly—it is His will,
confounds the councils of the wise, and shortens
m of the mighty. To the chapel—to the chapel,
Eveline; and instead of vain repining, let us
o God and the saints to turn away their dis-
re, and to save the feeble remnant from the
f the devouring wolf."
s speaking, he half led, half supported Eveline,
ras at the moment almost incapable of thought
tion, to the castle-chapel, where, sinking before
ar, she assumed the attitude at least of devotion,
n her thoughts, despite the pious words which

her tongue faltered out mechanically, were upon the field of battle, beside the body of her slaughtered parent. The rest of the mourners imitated their young lady in her devotional posture, and in the absence of her thoughts. The consciousness that so many of the garrison had been cut off in Raymond's incautious sally, added to their sorrows the sense of personal insecurity, which was exaggerated by the cruelties which were too often exercised by the enemy, who, in the heat of victory, were accustomed to spare neither sex nor age.

The monk, however, assumed among them the tone of authority which his character warranted, rebuked their wailing and ineffectual complaints, and having, as he thought, brought them to such a state of mind as better became their condition, he left them to their private devotions, to indulge his own anxious curiosity by inquiring into the defences of the castle. Upon the outward walls he found Wilkin Flammock, who, having done the office of a good and skilful captain in the mode of managing his artillery, and beating back, as we have already seen, the advanced guard of the enemy, was now with his own hand measuring out to his little garrison no stinted allowance of wine.

"Have a care, good Wilkin," said the father, "that thou dost not exceed in this matter. Wine is, thou knowest, like fire and water, an excellent servant, but a very bad master."

"It will be long ere it overflow the deep and solid skulls of my countrymen," said Wilkin Flammock. "Our Flemish courage is like our Flanders horses—the one needs the spur, and the other must have a taste of the wine-pot; but, credit me, father, they are of an enduring generation, and will not shrink in the washing.—But indeed, if I were to give the knaves a cup more than enough, it were not altogether amiss since they are like to have a platter the less."

"How do you mean?" cried the monk, starting; "I trust in the saints the provisions have been cared for?"

"Not so well as in your convent, good father," replied Wilkin, with the same immoveable stolidity of countenance. "We had kept, as you know, too jolly a Christmas to have a very fat Easter. Yon Welsh hounds, who helped to eat up our victuals, are now like to get into our hold for the lack of them."

"Thou talkest mere folly," answered the monk; "orders were last evening given by our lord (whose soul God assoilzie!) to fetch in the necessary supplies from the country around."

"Ay, but the Welsh were too sharp set to permit us to do that at our ease this morning, which should have been done weeks and months since. Our lord deceased, if deceased he be, was one of those who trusted to the edge of the sword, and even so hath come of it. Commend me to a cross-bow and a well-victualled castle, if I must needs fight at all—You look pale, my good father, a cup of wine will revive you."

The monk motioned away from him the untasted cup, which Wilkin pressed him to with clownish civility. "We have now, indeed," he said, "no refuge, save in prayer!"

"Most true, good father;" again replied the impassible Fleming; "pray therefore as much as you will. I will content myself with fasting, which will come whether I will or no."—At this moment a horn was heard before the gate.—"Look to the portcullis and the gate, ye knaves!—What news, Neil Hansen?"

"A messenger from the Welsh tarries at the Mill-hill, just within shot of the cross-bows; he has a white flag, and demands admittance."

"Admit him not upon thy life, till we be prepared for him," said Wilkin. "Bend the bonny mangonel upon the place, and shoot him if he dare to stir from the spot where he stands till we get all prepared to receive him," said Flammock, in his native language. "And, Neil, thou houndsfoot, bestir thyself—let every pike, lance, and bole in the castle be ranged along the battlements, and pointed through the shot-holes—cut up some tapestry into the shape of banners, and show them from the highest towers—

* IMAGE OF THE WELSH.—This is by no means exaggerated. The chapter we have just closed A very honourable testimony was given to their valour by King Henry II., in a letter to the Greek Emperor, Emanuel Comnenus. This prince having desired that an accurate account should be sent him of all that was remarkable in the island of Great Britain, Henry, in answer to his request, was pleased to take notice among other particulars of the extraordinary courage and fierceness of the Welsh, "who are not afraid to fight unarmed with enemies armed at all points, valiantly shedding their blood in the cause of their country, and purchasing glory at the expense of their lives."

Be ready, when I give a signal, to strike *naker*,* and blow trumpets, if we have any; if not, some cow-horns—any thing for a noise. And hark ye, Neil Hansen, do you, and four or five of your fellows, go to the armory and slip on coats-of-mail; our Netherlandish corslets do not appal them so much. Then let the Welsh thief be blindfolded and brought in amongst us—Do you hold up your heads and keep silence—leave me to deal with him—only have a care there be no English among us."

The monk, who in his travels had acquired some slight knowledge of the Flemish language, had well nigh started when he heard the last article in Wilkin's instructions to his countryman, but commanded himself, although a little surprised, both at this suspicious circumstance, and at the readiness and dexterity with which the rough-hewn Fleming seemed to adapt his preparations to the rules of war and of sound policy.

Wilkin, on his part, was not very certain whether the monk had not heard and understood more of what he said to his countryman, than what he had intended. As if to lull asleep any suspicion which Father Aldrovand might entertain, he repeated to him in English most of the directions which he had given, adding, "Well, good father, what think you of it?"

"Excellent well," answered the father, "and done as you had practised war from the cradle, instead of weaving broad-cloth."

"Nay, spare not your gibes, father," answered Wilkin.—"I know full well that you English think that Flemings have naught in their brainpan but sodden beef and cabbage; yet you see there goes wisdom to weaving of webs."

"Right, Master Wilkin Flammock," answered the father; "but, good Fleming, wilt thou tell me what answer thou wilt make to the Welsh Prince's summons?"

"Reverend father, first tell me what the summons will be," replied the Fleming.

"To surrender this castle upon the instant," answered the monk. "What will be your reply?"

"My answer will be—Nay, unless upon good composition."

"How, Sir Fleming! dare you mention composition and the Castle of the Garde Doloureuse in one sentence?" exclaimed the monk.

Not if I may do better," answered the Fleming. "But would your reverence have me dally until the question amongst the garrison be, whether a plump priest or a fat Fleming will be the better flesh to furnish their shambles?"

"Pshaw!" replied Father Aldrovand, "thou canst not mean such folly. Relief must arrive within twenty-four hours at farthest. Raymond Berenger expected it for certain within such a space."

"Raymond Berenger hath been deceived this morning in more matters than one," answered the Fleming.

"Hark thee, Flanderkin," answered the monk, whose retreat from the world had not altogether quenched his military habits and propensities, "I counsel thee to deal uprightly in this matter, as thou dost regard thine own life; for here are as many English left alive, notwithstanding the slaughter of the day, as may well suffice to fling the Flemish bull-frogs into the castle-ditch, should they have cause to think thou meanest falsely, in the keeping of this castle, and the defence of the Lady Eveline!"

"Let not your reverence be moved with unnecessary and idle fears," replied Wilkin Flammock—"I am castellane in this house, by command of its lord, and what I hold for the advantage of mine service, that will I do."

"But I," said the angry monk, "I am the servant of the Pope—the chaplain of this castle, with power to bind and to unloose. I fear me thou art no true Christian, Wilkin Flammock, but dost lean to the heresy of the mountaineers. Thou hast refused to *take the blessed cross*—thou hast breakfasted, and *drunk both ale and wine*, ere thou hast heard mass. *Thou art not to be trusted, man*, and I will not trust thee—I demand to be present at the conference betwixt thee and the Welshman."

"It may not be, good father," said Wilkin, with the same smiling, heavy countenance, which he maintained on all occasions of life, however urgent. "It is true, as thou sayest, good father, that I have mine own reasons for not marching quite so far as the gates of Jericho at present; and lucky I have such reasons, since I had not else been here to defend the gate of the Garde Doloureuse. It is also true that I may have been sometimes obliged to visit my mills earlier than the chaplain was called by his zeal to the altar, and that my stomach brooks not working ere I break my fast. But for this, father, I have paid a mulct even to your worshipful reverence, and methinks since you are pleased to remember the confession so exactly, you should not forget the penance and the absolution."

The monk, in alluding to the secrets of the confessional, had gone a step beyond what the rules of his order and of the church permitted. He was baffled by the Fleming's reply, and finding him unmoved by the charge of heresy, he could only answer in some confusion, "You refuse, then, to admit me to your conference with the Welshman?"

"Reverend father," said Wilkin, "it altogether respecteth secular matters. If aught of religious tenor should intervene, you shall be summoned without delay."

"I will be there in spite of thee, thou Flemish ox," muttered the monk to himself, but in a tone not to be heard by the bystanders; and so speaking, he left the battlements.

Wilkin Flammock, a few minutes afterwards, having first seen that all was arranged on the battlements, so as to give an imposing idea of a strength which did not exist, descended to a small guard-room, betwixt the outer and inner gate, where he was attended by half-a-dozen of his own people, disguised in the Norman armour which they had found in the armory of the castle,—their strong, tall, and bulky forms, and motionless postures, causing them to look rather like trophies of some past age, than living and existing soldiers. Surrounded by these huge and inanimate figures, in a little vaulted room which almost excluded daylight, Flammock received the Welsh envoy, who was led in blindfolded betwixt two Flemings, yet not so carefully watched but that they permitted him to have a glimpse of the preparations on the battlements, which had, in fact, been made chiefly for the purpose of imposing on him. For the same purpose an occasional clatter of arms was made without; voices were heard, as if officers were going their rounds; and other sounds of active preparation seemed to announce that a numerous and regular garrison was preparing to receive an attack.

When the bandage was removed from Jorworth's eyes—for the same individual who had formerly brought Gwenwyn's offer of alliance, now bare his summons of surrender—he looked haughtily around him, and demanded to whom he was to deliver the commands of his master, the Gwenwyn, son of Cyvelioc, Prince of Powys.

"His highness," answered Fleming, with his usual smiling indifference of manner, "must be contented to treat with Wilkin Flammock of the Fulling-mills, deputed governor of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Thou deputed governor!" exclaimed Jorworth; "thou!—a low country-weaver!—it is impossible.—Low as they are, the English Crogan* cannot have sunk to a point so low, as to be commanded by *thee!* These men seem English, to them I will deliver my message."

"You may if you will," replied Wilkin, "but if they return you any answer save by signs, you shall call me *schelm*."

"Is this true?" said the Welsh envoy, looking towards the men-at-arms, as they seemed, by whom Flammock was attended; "are you really come to this pass? I thought that the mere having been born on British earth, though the children of spoilers and invaders, had inspired you with too much pride to brook the yoke of a base mechanic. Or, if you are

* Naker—drum

* This is a somewhat contumelious epithet, applied by the Welsh to the English.

rageous, should you not be cautious?—Well
he proverb, Wo to him that will trust a stran-
till mute—still silent?—answer me by word
—Do you really call and acknowledge him as
der?"

nen in armour with one accord nodded their
in reply to Jorworth's question, and then re-
motionless as before.

Welshman, with the acute genius of his coun-
pected there was something in this which he
t entirely comprehend, but, preparing himself
on his guard, he proceeded as follows: "Be
nay, I care not who hears the message of my
n, since it brings pardon and mercy to the
nts of this Castell an Carrig,* which you have
e Garde Doloureuse, to cover the usurpation
rritory by the change of the name. Upon sur-
f the same to the Prince of Powys, with its
ncies, and with the arms which it contains,
h the maiden Eveline Berenger, all within the
all depart unmolested, and have safe-conduct
ever they will, to go beyond the marches of
ry."

how, if we obey not this summons?" said the
rbable Wilkin Flammock.

n shall your portion be with Raymond Beren-
r late leader," replied Jorworth, his eyes, while
speaking, glancing with the vindictive ferocity
ictated his answer. "So many strangers as
amongst ye, so many bodies to the ravens, so
eads to the gibbet!—It is long since the kites
d such a banquet of lurdane Flemings and
xons."

nd Jorworth," said Wilkin, "if such be thy
ssage, bear mine answer back to thy master,
ise men trust not to the words of others that
which they can secure by their own deeds.
e walls high and strong enough, deep moats,
nty of munition, both long-bow and arblast.
keep the castle, trusting the castle will keep
od shall send us succour."

not peril your lives on such an issue," said
lsh emissary, changing his language to the
, which, from occasional communication
se of that nation in Pembrokeshire, he spoke
and which he now adopted, as if to conceal
ort of his discourse from the supposed Eng-
the apartment. "Hark thee hither," he pro-
"good Fleming. Knowest thou not that he
n is your trust, the Constable De Lacy, hath
imself by his vow to engage in no quarrel till
es the sea, and cannot come to your aid with-
ry? He and the other Lords Marchers have
heir forces far northward to join the host of
rs. What will it avail you to put us to the
trouble of a long siege, when you can hope
e?"

what will it avail me more," said Wilkin, an-
in his native language, and looking at the
an fixedly, yet with a countenance from
ll expression seemed studiously banished, and
xhibited, upon features otherwise tolerable, a
ible compound of dullness and simplicity,
will it avail me whether your trouble be great
l?"

ne, friend Flammock," said the Welshman,
not thyself more unapprehensive than nature
med thee. The glen is dark, but a sunbeam
it the side of it. Thy utmost efforts cannot
the fall of this castle; but thou mayst hasten
the doing so shall avail thee much." Thus
g, he drew close up to Wilkin, and sunk his
an insinuating whisper, as he said, "Never
withdrawing of a bar, or the raising of a port-
ring such vantage to Fleming as they may
if thou wilt."

ly know," said Wilkin, "that the drawing the
d the dropping the other, have cost me my
worldly substance."

ming, it shall be compensated to thee with an
ving measure. The liberality of Gwenwyn
s summer *rain*."

"My whole mills and buildings have been this morning burnt to the earth"——

"Thou shalt have a thousand marks of silver, man, in the place of thy goods," said the Welshman; but the Fleming continued, without seeming to hear him, to number up his losses.

"My lands are forayed, twenty kine driven off, and"——

"Threescore shall replace them," interrupted Jorworth, "chosen from the most bright-skinned of the spoil."

"But my daughter—but the Lady Eveline"—said the Fleming, with some slight change in his monotonous voice, which seemed to express doubt and perplexity—"You are cruel conquerors, and"——

"To those who resist us we are fearful," said Jorworth, "but not to such as shall deserve clemency by surrender. Gwenwyn will forget the contumelies of Raymond, and raise his daughter to high honour among the daughters of the Cymry. For thine own child, form but a wish for her advantage, and it shall be fulfilled to the uttermost. Now, Fleming, we understand each other."

"I understand thee, at least," said Flammock.

"And I thee. I trust?" said Jorworth, bending his keen, wild blue eye on the stolid and unexpressive face of the Netherlander, like an eager student who seeks to discover some hidden and mysterious meaning in a passage of a classic author, the direct import of which seems trite and trivial.

"You believe that you understand me," said Wilkin; "but here lies the difficulty,—which of us shall trust the other?"

"Darest thou ask?" answered Jorworth. "Is it for thee, or such as thee, to express doubt of the purposes of the Prince of Powys?"

"I know them not, good Jorworth, but through thee; and well I wot thou art not one who will let thy traffic miscarry for want of aid from the breath of thy mouth."

"As I am a Christian man," said Jorworth, hurrying asseveration on asseveration—"by the soul of my father—by the faith of my mother—by the black rood of"——

"Stop, good Jorworth—thou heapest thine oaths too thickly on each other, for me to value them to the right estimate," said Flammock; "that which is so lightly pledged, is sometimes not thought worth redeeming. Some part of the promised guerdon in hand the whilst, were worth a hundred oaths."

"Thou suspicious churl, darest thou doubt my word?"

"No—by no means," answered Wilkin;—"ne'ertheless, I will believe thy deed more readily."

"To the point, Fleming," said Jorworth—"What wouldst thou have of me?"

"Let me have some present sight of the money thou didst promise, and I will think of the rest of thy proposal."

"Base silver-broker!" answered Jorworth, "thinkest thou the Prince of Powys has as many money-bags, as the merchants of thy land of sale and barter? He gathers treasures by his conquests, as the waterspout sucks up water by its strength; but it is to disperse them among his followers, as the cloudy column restores its contents to earth and ocean. The silver that I promised thee has yet to be gathered out of the Saxon chests—nay, the casket of Berenger himself must be ransacked to make up the tale."

"Methinks I could do that myself, (having full power in the castle,) and so save you a labour," said the Fleming.

"True," answered Jorworth, "but it would be at the expense of a cord and a noose, whether the Welsh took the place or the Normans relieved it—the one would expect their booty entire—the other their countryman's treasures to be delivered undiminished."

"I may not gainsay that," said the Fleming. "Well, say I were content to trust you thus far, why not return my cattle, which are in your own hands and at your disposal? If you do not pleasure me in

* *Castle of the Craig.*

something beforehand, what can I expect of you afterwards?"

"I would pleasure you in a greater matter," answered the equally suspicious Welshman. "But what would it avail thee to have thy cattle within the fortress? They can be better cared for on the plain beneath."

"In faith," replied the Fleming, "thou sayst truth—they will be but a trouble to us here, where we have so many already provided for the use of the garrison.—And yet, when I consider it more closely, we have enough of forage to maintain all we have, and more. Now, my cattle are of a peculiar stock, brought from the rich pastures of Flanders, and I desire to have them restored ere your axes and Welsh hooks be busy with their hides."

"You shall have them this night, hide and horn," said Jorworth; "it is but a small earnest of a great boon."

"Thanks to your munificence," said the Fleming; "I am a simple-minded man, and bound my wishes to the recovery of my own property."

"Thou wilt be ready, then, to deliver the castle?" said Jorworth.

"Of that we will talk farther to-morrow," said Wilkin Flammock; "if these English and Normans should suspect such a purpose, we should have wild work—they must be fully dispersed ere I can hold farther communication on the subject. Mean while, I pray thee, depart suddenly, and as if offended with the tenor of our discourse."

"Yet would I fain know something more fixed and absolute," said Jorworth.

"Impossible—impossible," said the Fleming; "see you not yonder tall fellow begins already to handle his dagger—Go hence in haste, and angrily—and forget not the cattle."

"I will not forget them," said Jorworth; "but if thou keep not faith with us"——

So speaking, he left the apartment with a gesture of menace, partly really directed to Wilkin himself, partly assumed in consequence of his advice. Flammock replied in English, as if that all around might understand what he said,

"Do thy worst, Sir Welshman! I am a true man; I defy the proposals of rendition, and will hold out this castle to thy shame and thy master's!—Here—let him be blindfolded once more, and returned in safety to his attendants without; the next Welshman who appears before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse, shall be more sharply received."

The Welshman was blindfolded and withdrawn when, as Wilkin Flammock himself left the guard-room, one of the seeming men-at-arms who had been present at this interview, said in his ear, in English, "Thou art a false traitor, Flammock, and shalt die a traitor's death!"

Startled at this, the Fleming would have questioned the man farther, but he had disappeared so soon as the words were uttered. Flammock was disconcerted by this circumstance, which showed him that his interview with Jorworth hath been observed, and its purpose known or conjectured, by some one who was a stranger to his confidence, and might thwart his intentions; and he quickly after learned that this was the case.

CHAPTER VI.

Blessed Mary, mother dear,
To a maiden bend thine ear;
Virgin, undefiled, to thee
A wretched virgin bends the knee.
Hymn to the Virgin.

THE daughter of the slaughtered Raymond had descended from the elevated station whence she had beheld the field of battle, in the agony of grief natural to a child whose eyes have beheld the death of an honoured and beloved father. But her station, and the principles of chivalry in which she had been trained up, did not permit any prolonged or needless indulgence of inactive sorrow. In raising the young *and beautiful of the female sex to the rank of princesses, or rather goddesses, the spirit of that singular* —— *was exacted from them, in requital, a tone of character, and a line of conduct, superior and something contradictory to that of natural or merely human feeling. Its heroines frequently resembled portraits shown by an artificial light—strong and luminous, and which placed in high relief the objects on which it was turned; but having still something of adventitious splendour, which, compared with that of the natural day, seemed glaring and exaggerated.

It was not permitted to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, the daughter of a line of heroes, whose stem was to be found in the race of Thor, Balder, Odin, and other deified warriors of the North, whose beauty was the theme of a hundred minstrels, and her eyes the leading star of half the chivalry of the warlike marches of Wales, to mourn her sire with the ineffectual tears of a village maiden. Young as she was, and horrible as was the incident which she had but that instant witnessed, it was not altogether so appalling to her as to a maiden whose eye had not been accustomed to the rough, and often fatal sports of chivalry, and whose residence had not been among scenes and men where war and death had been the unceasing theme of every tongue, whose imagination had not been familiarized with wild and bloody events, or, finally, who had not been trained up to consider an honourable "death under shield," as that of a field of battle was termed, as a more desirable termination to the life of a warrior, than that lingering and unhonoured fate which comes slowly on, to conclude the listless and helpless inactivity of prolonged old age. Eveline, while she wept for her father, felt her bosom glow when she recollected that he died in the blaze of his fame, and amidst heaps of his slaughtered enemies; and when she thought of the exigencies of her own situation, it was with the determination to defend her own liberty, and to avenge her father's death, by every means which Heaven had left within her power.

The aids of religion were not forgotten; and according to the custom of the times, and the doctrines of the Roman church, she endeavoured to propitiate the favour of Heaven by vows as well as prayers. In a small crypt, or oratory, adjoining to the chapel, was hung over an altar-piece, on which a lamp constantly burned, a small picture of the Virgin Mary, revered as a household and peculiar deity by the family of Berenger, one of whose ancestors had brought it from the Holy Land, whither he had gone upon pilgrimage. It was of the period of the Lower Empire, a Grecian painting, not unlike those which in Catholic countries are often imputed to the Evangelist Luke. The crypt in which it was placed was accounted a shrine of uncommon sanctity—nay, supposed to have displayed miraculous powers; and Eveline, by the daily garland of flowers which she offered before the painting, and by the constant prayers with which they were accompanied, had constituted herself the peculiar votaress of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, for so the picture was named.

Now, apart from others, alone, and in secrecy, sinking in the extremity of her sorrow before the shrine of her patroness, she besought the protection of kindred purity for the defence of her freedom and honour, and invoked vengeance on the wild and treacherous chieftain who had slain her father, and was now beleaguering her place of strength. Not only did she vow a large donative in lands to the shrine of the protectress whose aid she implored; but the oath passed her lips, (even though they faltered, and though something within her remonstrated against the vow,) that whatsoever favoured knight Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse might employ for her rescue, should obtain from her in guerdon whatever boon she might honourably grant, were it that of her virgin hand at the holy altar. Taught as she was to believe, by the assurances of many a knight, that such a surrender was the highest boon which heaven could bestow, she felt as discharging a debt of gratitude when she placed herself entirely at the disposal of the pure and blessed patroness in whose aid she confided. Perhaps there lurked in this devotion some earthly hope of which she was herself scarce conscious, and which reconciled her to the indefinite sacrifice thus freely offered. The Virgin,

(this flattering hope might insinuate,) kindest and most benevolent of patronesses, will use compassionately the power resigned to her, and *he* will be the favoured champion of Maria, upon whom her votaress would most willingly confer favour.

But if there was such a hope, as something selfish will often mingle with our noblest and purest emotions, it arose unconscious of Eveline herself, who, in the full assurance of implicit faith, and fixing on the representative of her adoration, eyes in which the most earnest supplication, the most humble confidence struggled with unbidden tears, was perhaps more beautiful than when, young as she was, she was selected to bestow the prize of chivalry in the lists of Chester. It was no wonder that, in such a moment of high excitation, when prostrated in devotion before a being of whose power to protect her, and to make her protection assured by a visible sign, she doubted nothing, the Lady Eveline conceived she saw with her own eyes the acceptance of her vow. As she gazed on the picture with an overstrained eye, and an imagination heated with enthusiasm, the expression seemed to alter from the hard outline, fashioned by the Greek painter; the eyes appeared to become animated, and to return with looks of compassion the suppliant entreaties of the votaress, and the mouth visibly arranged itself into a smile of inexpressible sweetness. It even seemed to her that the head made a gentle inclination.

Overpowered by supernatural awe at appearances of which her faith permitted her not to question the reality, the Lady Eveline folded her arms on her bosom, and prostrated her forehead on the pavement, asthe posture most fitting to listen to divine communication.

But her vision went not so far; there was neither sound nor voice, and when, after stealing her eyes all around the crypt in which she knelt, she again raised them to the figure of Our Lady, the features seemed to be in the form in which the limner had sketched them, saving that, to Eveline's imagination, they still retained an august and yet gracious expression, which she had not before remarked upon the countenance. With awful reverence, almost amounting to fear, yet comforted, and even elated with the visitation she had witnessed, the maiden repeated again and again the orisons which she thought most grateful to the ear of her benefactress; and, rising at length, retired backwards, as from the presence of a sovereign, until she attained the outer chapel.

Here one or two females still knelt before the saints which the walls and niches presented for adoration; but the rest of the terrified suppliants, too anxious to prolong their devotions, had dispersed through the castle to learn tidings of their friends, and to obtain some refreshment, or at least some place of repose for themselves and their families.

Bowing her head, and muttering an ave to each saint as she passed his image, (for impending danger makes men observant of the rites of devotion,) the Lady Eveline had almost reached the door of the chapel, when a man-at-arms, as he seemed, entered hastily; and with a louder voice than suited the holy place, unless when need was most urgent, demanded the Lady Eveline. Impressed with the feelings of veneration which the late scene had produced, she was about to rebuke his military rudeness, when he spoke again, and in anxious haste, "Daughter, we are betrayed!" and though the form, and the coat-of-mail which covered it, were those of a soldier, the voice was that of Father Aldrovand, who eager and anxious at the same time, disengaged himself from the mail hood, and showed his countenance.

"Father," she said, "what means this? Have you forgotten the confidence in Heaven which you are wont to recommend, that you bear other arms than your order assigns to you?"

"It may come to that ere long," said Father Aldrovand; "for I was a soldier ere I was a monk. But now I have donn'd this harness to discover treachery, not to resist force. Ah! my beloved daughter—we are dreadfully beset—foemen without—traitors within! The false *Fleming, Wilkin Flammock*, is treating *for the surrender of the castle!*"

"Who dares say so?" said a veiled female, who has been kneeling unnoticed in a sequestered corner of the chapel, but who now started up and came boldly betwixt Lady Eveline and the monk.

"Go hence, thou saucy minion," said the monk, surprised at this bold interruption; "this concerns not thee."

"But it *doth* concern me," said the damsel, throwing back her veil, and discovering the juvenile countenance of Rose, the daughter of Wilkin Flammock, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks blushing with anger, the vehemence of which made a singular contrast with the very fair complexion, and almost infantine features of the speaker, whose whole form and figure was that of a girl who has scarce emerged from childhood, and indeed whose general manners were as gentle and bashful as they now seemed bold, impassioned, and undaunted.—"Doth it not concern me," she said, "that my father's honest name should be tainted with treason? Doth it not concern the stream when the fountain is troubled? It *doth* concern me, and I will know the author of the calumny."

"Damsel," said Eveline, "restrain thy useless passion; the good father, though he cannot intentionally calumniate thy father, speaks, it may be, from false report."

"As I am an unworthy priest," said the father, "I speak from the report of my own ears. Upon the oath of my order, myself heard this Wilkin Flammock chaffering with the Welshman for the surrender of the Garde Doloureuse. By help of this hauberk and mail hood, I gained admittance to a conference where he thought there were no English ears. They spoke Flemish too, but I knew the jargon of old."

"The Flemish," said the angry maiden, whose headstrong passion led her to speak first in answer to the last insult offered, "is no jargon like your piebald English, half Norman, half Saxon, but a noble Gothic tongue, spoken by the brave warriors who fought against the Roman Kaisars, when Britain bent the neck to them—and as for this he has said of Wilkin Flammock," she continued, collecting her ideas into more order as she went on, "believe it not, my dearest lady; but, as you value the honour of your own noble father, confide, as in the Evangelists, in the honesty of mine!" This she spoke with an imploring tone of voice, mingled with sobs, as if her heart had been breaking.

Eveline endeavoured to soothe her attendant. "Rose," she said, "In this evil time suspicions will light on the best men, and misunderstandings will arise among the best friends. Let us hear the good father state what he hath to charge upon your parent. Fear not but that Wilkin shall be heard in his defence. Thou wert wont to be quiet and reasonable."

"I am neither quiet nor reasonable on this matter," said Rose, with redoubled indignation; "and it is ill of you, lady, to listen to the falsehoods of that reverend mummer, who is neither true priest nor true soldier. But I will fetch one who shall confront him either in casque or cowl."

So saying, she went hastily out of the chapel, while the monk, after some pedantic circumlocution, acquainted the Lady Eveline with what he had overheard betwixt Jorworth and Wilkin; and proposed to her to draw together the few English who were in the castle, and take possession of the innermost square tower; a keep which, as usual in Gothic fortresses of the Norman period, was situated so as to make considerable defence, even after the exterior works of the castle, which it commanded, were in the hand of the enemy.

"Father," said Eveline, still confident in the vision she had lately witnessed, "this were good counsel in extremity; but otherwise, it were to create the very evil we fear, by setting our garrison at odds amongst themselves. I have a strong, and not unwarranted confidence, good father, in our blessed Lady of this Garde Doloureuse, that we shall attain at once vengeance on our barbarous enemies, and escape from our present jeopardy; and I call you to witness the vow I have made, that to him whom Our Lady should employ to work us succour, I will refuse nothing, were it my father's inheritance, or the hand of his daughter."

"*Ave Maria! Ave Regina Cœli!*" said the priest; "on a rock more sure you could not have founded your trust.—But, daughter," he continued, after the proper ejaculation had been made, "have you never heard, even by a hint, that there was a treaty for your hand betwixt our much-honoured lord, of whom we are cruelly bereft, (may God assoilzie his soul!) and the great house of Lacy?"

"Something I may have heard," said Eveline, dropping her eyes, while a slight tinge suffused her cheek; "but I refer me to the disposal of Our Lady of Succour and Consolation."

As she spoke, Rose entered the chapel with the same vivacity she had shown in leaving it, leading by the hand her father, whose sluggish though firm step, vacant countenance, and heavy demeanour, formed the strongest contrast to the rapidity of her motions, and the anxious animation of her address. Her task of dragging him forward might have reminded the spectator of some of those ancient monuments, on which a small cherub, singularly inadequate to the task, is often represented as hoisting upwards towards the empyrean the fleshly bulk of some ponderous tenant of the tomb, whose disproportioned weight bids fair to render ineffectual the benevolent and spirited exertions of its fluttering guide and assistant.

"Roschen—my child—what grieves thee?" said the Netherlander, as he yielded to his daughter's violence with a smile, which, being on the countenance of a father, had more of expression and feeling than those which seemed to have made their constant dwelling upon his lips.

"Here stands my father," said the impatient maiden; "impeach him with treason, who can or dare! There stands Wilkin Flammock, son of Dieterick, the Cramer of Antwerp,—let those accuse him to his face who slandered him behind his back!"

"Speak, Father Aldrovand," said the Lady Eveline; "we are young in our lordship, and, alas! the duty hath descended upon us in an evil hour; yet we will, so may God and Our Lady help us, hear and judge of your accusation to the utmost of our power."

"This Wilkin Flammock," said the monk, "however bold he hath made himself in villany, dares not deny that I heard him with my own ears treat for the surrender of the castle."

"Strike him, father!" said the indignant Rose,—"strike the disguised mummer! The steel hauberk may be struck, though not the monk's frock—strike him, or tell him that he lies foully!"

"Peace, Roschen, thou art mad," said her father, angrily; "the monk hath more truth than sense about him, and I would his ears had been farther off when he thrust them into what concerned him not."

Rose's countenance fell when she heard her father bluntly avow the treasonable communication of which she had thought him incapable—she dropt the hand by which she had dragged him into the chapel, and stared on the Lady Eveline, with eyes which seemed starting from their sockets, and a countenance from which the blood, with which it was so lately so highly coloured, had retreated to garrison the heart.

Eveline looked upon the culprit with a countenance in which sweetness and dignity were mingled with sorrow. "Wilkin," she said, "I could not have believed this. What! on the very day of thy confiding benefactor's death, canst thou have been tampering with his murderers, to deliver up the castle, and betray thy trust!—But I will not upbraid thee—I deprive thee of the trust reposed in so unworthy a person, and appoint thee to be kept in ward in the western tower, till God send us relief, when, it may be, thy daughter's merits shall atone for thy offences, and save farther punishment.—See that our commands be presently obeyed."

"Yes—yes—yes!" exclaimed Rose, hurrying one word on the other as fast and vehemently as she could articulate—"Let us go—let us go to the darkest dungeon—darkness befits us better than light."

The monk, on the other hand, perceiving that the *Fleming made no motion to obey* the mandate of *arrest, came forward, in a manner* more suiting his ancient profession, and present disguise, than his spiritual character; and with the words, "I attach thee, Wilkin Flammock, of acknowledged treason to your liege lady," would have laid hand upon him, had not the Fleming stepped back and warned him off with a menacing and determined gesture, while he said,—"Ye are mad!—all of you English are mad when the moon is full, and my silly girl hath caught the malady.—Lady, your honoured father gave me a charge, which I purpose to execute to the best for all parties, and you cannot, being a minor, deprive me of it at your idle pleasure.—Father Aldrovand, a monk makes no lawful arrests.—Daughter Roschen, hold your peace and dry your eyes—you are a fool."

"I am, I am," said Rose, drying her eyes, and regaining her elasticity of manner—"I am indeed a fool, and worse than a fool, for a moment to doubt my father's probity.—Confide in him, dearest lady; he is wise though he is grave, and kind though he is plain and homely in his speech. Should he prove false he will fare the worse! for I will plunge myself from the pinnacle of the Warder's Tower to the bottom of the moat, and he shall lose his own daughter for betraying his master's."

"This is all frenzy," said the monk—"Who trusts avowed traitors?—Here, Normans, English, to the rescue of your liege lady—Bows and bills—bows and bills!"

"You may spare your throat for your next homily, good father," said the Netherlander, "or call in good Flemish, since you understand it, for to no other language will those within hearing reply."

He then approached the Lady Eveline with a real or affected air of clumsy kindness, and something as nearly approaching to courtesy as his manners and features could assume. He bade her good night, and, assuring her that he would act for the best, left the chapel. The monk was about to break forth into revilings, but Eveline, with more prudence, checked his zeal.

"I cannot," she said, "but hope that this man's intentions are honest"——

"Now, God's blessings on you, lady, for that very word!" said Rose, eagerly interrupting her, and kissing her hand.

"But if unhappily they are doubtful," continued Eveline, "it is not by reproach that we can bring him to a better purpose. Good father, give an eye to the preparations for resistance, and see naught omitted that our means furnish for the defence of the castle."

"Fear nothing, my dearest daughter," said Aldrovand; "there are still some English hearts amongst us, and we will rather kill and eat the Flemings themselves than surrender the castle.

"That were food as dangerous to come by as bear's venison, father," answered Rose, bitterly, still on fire with the idea that the monk treated her nation with suspicion and contumely.

On these terms they separated;—the women to indulge their fears and sorrows in private grief, or alleviate them by private devotion; the monk to try to discover what were the real purposes of Wilkin Flammock, and to counteract them if possible, should they seem to indicate treachery. His eye, however, though sharpened by strong suspicion, saw nothing to strengthen his fears, excepting that the Fleming had, with considerable military skill, placed the principal posts of the castle in the charge of his own countrymen, which must make any attempt to dispossess him of his present authority both difficult and dangerous. The monk at length retired, summoned by the duties of the evening service, and with the determination to be stirring with the light next morning.

CHAPTER VII.

O, sadly shines the morning sun
On leaguer'd castle hall,
When bastion, tower, and battlement,
Seem nodding to their fall.—*Old Ballad.*

TRUE to his resolution, and telling his beads as he went, that he might lose no time, Father Aldrovand

began his rounds in the castle so soon as daylight had touched the top of the eastern horizon. A natural instinct led him first to those stalls which, had the fortress been properly victualled for a siege, ought to have been tenanted by cattle; and great was his delight to see more than a score of fat kine and bullocks in the place which had last night been empty! One of them had already been carried to the shambles, and a Fleming or two, who played butchers on the occasion, were dividing the carcass for the cook's use. The good father had well nigh cried out, a miracle; but, not to be too precipitate, he limited his transport to a private exclamation in honour of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse.

"Who talks of lack of provender?—who speaks of surrender now?" he said. "Here is enough to maintain us till Hugo de Lacy arrives, were he to sail back from Cyprus to our relief. I did purpose to have fasted this morning, as well to save victuals as on a religious score: but the blessing of the saints must not be slighted.—Sir Cook, let me have half a yard or so of broiled beef presently; bid the pantler send me a manchet, and the butler a cup of wine. I will take a running breakfast on the western battlements."*

At this place, which was rather the weakest point of the Garde Doloureuse, the good father found Wilkin Flammock anxiously superintending the necessary measures of defence. He greeted him courteously, congratulated him on the stock of provisions with which the castle had been supplied during the night, and was inquiring how they had been so happily introduced through the Welsh besiegers, when Wilkin took the first occasion to interrupt him.

"Of all this another time, good father; but I wish at present, and before other discourse, to consult thee on a matter which presses my conscience, and moreover deeply concerns my worldly estate."

"Speak on, my excellent son," said the father, conceiving that he should thus gain the key to Wilkin's real intentions. "O, a tender conscience is a jewel! and he that will not listen when it saith, 'pour out thy doubts into the ear of the priest,' shall one day have his own dolorous outcries choked with fire and brimstone. Thou wert ever of a tender conscience, son Wilkin, though thou hast but a rough and borrel bearing."

"Well, then," said Wilkin, "you are to know, good father, that I have had some dealings with my neighbour, Jan Vanwelt, concerning my daughter Rose, and that he has paid me certain gilders on condition I will match her to him."

"Pshaw, pshaw! my good son," said the disappointed confessor, "this gear can lie over—this is no time for marrying or giving in marriage, when we are all like to be murdered."

"Nay, but hear me, good father," said the Fleming, "for this point of conscience concerns the present case more nearly than you wot of.—You must know I have no will to bestow Rose on this same Jan Vanwelt, who is old, and of ill conditions; and I would know of you whether I may, in conscience, refuse him my consent?"

"Truly," said Father Aldrovand, "Rose is a pretty lass, though somewhat hasty; and I think you may honestly withdraw your consent, always on paying back the gilders you have received."

"But there lies the pinch, good father," said the Fleming—"the refunding this money will reduce me to utter poverty. The Welsh have destroyed my substance; and this handful of money is all, God help me! on which I must begin the world again."

"Nevertheless, son Wilkin," said Aldrovand, "thou must keep thy word, or pay the forfeit; for what saith the text? *Quis habitabit in tabernaculo, quis requiescet in monte sancto?*—Who shall ascend to the tabernacle, and dwell in the holy mountain? Is it not answered again, *qui jurat proximo, et non decipit?*—Go to, my son—break not thy plighted word for a little filthy lucre—better is an empty stomach and a hungry heart with a clear conscience, than a fatted ox with iniquity and word-breaking.—Sawest thou not our late noble lord, who (may his soul be happy!) chose rather to die in unequal battle, like a true knight, than live a perjured man, though he had but spoken a rash word to a Welshman over a wine flask?"

"Alas! then," said the Fleming, "this is even what I feared! We must e'en render up the castle, or restore to the Welshman, Jorworth, the cattle, by means of which I had schemed to victual and defend it."

"How—wherefore—what dost thou mean?" said the monk in astonishment. "I speak to thee of Rose Flammock, and Jan Van-devil, or whatever you call him, and you reply with talk about cattle and castles, and I wot not what!"

"So please you, holy father, I did but speak in parables. This castle was the daughter I had promised to deliver over—the Welshman is Jan Vanwelt, and the gilders were the cattle he has sent in, as a part-payment beforehand of my guerdon."

"Parables!" said the monk, colouring with anger at the trick put on him; "what has a boor like thee to do with parables?—But I forgive thee—I forgive thee."

"I am therefore to yield the castle to the Welshman, or restore him his cattle?" said the impenetrable Dutchman.

"Sooner yield thy soul to Satan!" replied the monk.

"I fear me it must be the alternative," said the Fleming; "for the example of thy honourable lord"——

"The example of an honourable fool"—answered the monk; then presently subjoined, "Our Lady be with her servant!—This Belgic-brained boor makes me forget what I would say."

"Nay, but the holy text which your reverence cited to me even now," continued the Fleming.

"Go to," said the monk; "what hast thou to do to presume to think of texts?—knowest thou not that the letter of the Scripture slayeth, and that it is the exposition which maketh to live?—Art thou not like one who, coming to a physician, conceals from him half the symptoms of the disease?—I tell thee, thou foolish Fleming, the text speaketh but of promises made unto Christians, and there is in the Rubric a special exception of such as are made to Welshmen." At this commentary the Fleming grinned so broadly as to show his whole case of broad strong white teeth. Father Aldrovand himself grinned in sympathy, and then proceeded to say,—"Come, come, I see how it is. Thou hast studied some small revenge on me for doubting of thy truth; and, in verity, I think thou hast taken it wittily enough. But wherefore didst thou not let me into the secret from the beginning? I promise thee I had foul suspicions of thee."

"What!" said the Fleming, "is it possible I could ever think of involving your reverence in a little matter of deceit? Surely heaven hath sent me more grace and manners.—Hark, I hear Jorworth's horn at the gate."

"He blows like a town swineherd," said Aldrovand, in disdain.

"It is not your reverence's pleasure that I should restore the castle unto him, then?" said Flammock.

"Yea, thus far. Prithee deliver him straightway over the walls such a tub of boiling water as shall scald the hair from his goat-skin cloak. And, hark thee, do thou in the first place try the temperature of the kettle with thy forefinger, and that shall be thy penance for the trick thou hast played me."

The Fleming answered this with another broad grin of intelligence, and they proceeded to the outer gate, to which Jorworth had come alone. Placing himself at the wicket, which, however, he kept carefully barred, and speaking through a small opening contrived for such purpose, Wilkin Flammock demanded of the Welshman his business.

"To receive rendition of the castle, agreeable to promise," said Jorworth.

* Old Henry Jenkins, in his Recollections of the Abbacies before their dissolution, has preserved the fact, that roast beef was delivered *out to the guests, not by weight, but by measure.*

"Ay? and art thou come on such an errand alone?" said Wilkin.

"No, truly," answered Jorworth; "I have some two score of men concealed among yonder bushes."

"Then thou hadst best lead them away quickly," answered Wilkin, "before our archers let fly a sheaf of arrows among them."

"How, villain! Dost thou not mean to keep thy promise?" said the Welshman.

"I gave thee none," said the Fleming; "I promised but to think on what thou didst say. I have done so, and have communicated with my ghostly father, who will in no respect hear of my listening to thy proposal."

"And wilt thou," said Jorworth, "keep the cattle which I simply sent into the castle on the faith of our agreement?"

"I will excommunicate and deliver him over to Satan," said the monk, unable to wait the phlegmatic and lingering answer of the Fleming, "if he give horn, hoof, or hair of them, to such an uncircumcised Philistine as thou or thy master."

"It is well, shorn priest," answered Jorworth, in great anger. "But mark me—reckon not on your frock for ransom. When Gwenwyn hath taken this castle, as it shall not longer shelter such a pair of faithless traitors, I will have you sewed up each into the carcass of one of these kine, for which your penitent has forsworn himself, and lay you where wolf and eagle shall be your only companions."

"Thou wilt work thy will when it is matched with thy power," said the sedate Netherlander.

"False Welshman, we defy thee to thy teeth!" answered, in the same breath, the more irascible monk. "I trust to see the hounds gnaw thy joints ere that day come that ye talk of so proudly."

By way of answer to both, Jorworth drew back his arm with his levelled javelin, and shaking the shaft till it acquired a vibratory motion, he hurled it with equal strength and dexterity right against the aperture in the wicket. It whizzed through the opening at which it was aimed, and flew (harmlessly, however,) between the heads of the monk and the Fleming; the former of whom started back, while the latter only said, as he looked at the javelin, which stood quivering in the door of the guard-room, "That was well aimed, and happily balked."

Jorworth, the instant he had flung his dart, hastened to the ambush which he had prepared, and gave them at once the signal and the example of a rapid retreat down the hill. Father Aldrovand would willingly have followed them with a volley of arrows, but the Fleming observed that ammunition was too precious with them to be wasted on a few runaways. Perhaps the honest man remembered that they had come within the danger of such a salutation, in some measure, on his own assurance.

When the noise of the hasty retreat of Jorworth and his followers had died away, there ensued a dead silence, well corresponding with the coolness and calmness of that early hour in the morning.

"This will not last long," said Wilkin to the monk, in a tone of foreboding seriousness, which found an echo in the good father's bosom.

"It will not, and it cannot," answered Aldrovand; "and we must expect a shrewd attack, which I should mind little, but that their numbers are great, ours few; the extent of the walls considerable, and the obstinacy of these Welsh fiends almost equal to their fury. But we will do the best. I will to the Lady Eveline—She must show herself upon the battlements—She is fairer in feature than becometh a man of my order to speak of; and she has withal a breathing of her father's lofty spirit. The look and the word of such a lady will give a man double strength in the hour of need."

"It may be," said the Fleming; "and I will go see that the good breakfast which I have appointed be presently served forth; it will give my Flemings more strength than the sight of the ten thousand virgins—may their help be with us!—were they all *arranged on a fair field.*"

CHAPTER VIII

'Twas when ye raised, 'mid sap and siege,
The banner of your rightful liege
At your she captain's call,
Who, miracle of womankind,
Lent mettle to the meanest hind
That mann'd her castle wall.
WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

THE morning light was scarce fully spread abroad, when Eveline Berenger, in compliance with her confessor's advice, commenced her progress around the walls and battlements of the beleaguered castle, to confirm by her personal entreaties the minds of the valiant, and to rouse the more timid to hope and to exertion. She wore a rich collar and bracelets, as ornaments which indicated her rank and high descent; and her under tunic, in the manner of the times, was gathered around her slender waist by a girdle, embroidered with precious stones, and secured by a large buckle of gold. From one side of the girdle was suspended a pouch or purse, splendidly adorned with needle-work, and on the left side it sustained a small dagger of exquisite workmanship. A dark-coloured mantle, chosen as emblematic of her clouded fortunes, was flung loosely around her; and its hood was brought forward, so as to shadow but not hide, her beautiful countenance. Her looks had lost the high and ecstatic expression which had been inspired by supposed revelation, but they retained a sorrowful and mild, yet determined character—and, in addressing the soldiers, she used a mixture of entreaty and command—now throwing herself upon their protection—now demanding in her aid the just tribute of their allegiance.

The garrison was divided, as military skill dictated, in groups, on the points most liable to attack, or from which an assailing enemy might be best annoyed; and it was this unavoidable separation of their force into small detachments, which showed to disadvantage the extent of walls, compared with the number of the defenders; and though Wilkin Flammock had contrived several means of concealing this deficiency of force from the enemy, he could not disguise it from the defenders of the castle, who cast mournful glances on the length of battlements which were unoccupied save by sentinels, and then looked out to the fatal field of battle, loaded with the bodies of those who ought to have been their comrades in this hour of peril.

The presence of Eveline did much to rouse the garrison from this state of discouragement. She glided from post to post, from tower to tower of the old gray fortress, as a gleam of light passes over a clouded landscape, and, touching its various points in succession, calls them out to beauty and effect. Sorrow and fear sometimes make sufferers eloquent. She addressed the various nations who composed her little garrison, each in appropriate language. To the English, she spoke as children of the soil—to the Flemings, as men who had become denizens by the right of hospitality—to the Normans as descendants of that victorious race, whose sword had made them the nobles and sovereigns of every land where its edge had been tried. To them she used the language of chivalry, by whose rules the meanest of that nation regulated, or affected to regulate, his actions. The English she reminded of their good faith and honesty of heart; and to the Flemings she spoke of the destruction of their property, the fruits of their honest industry. To all she proposed vengeance for the death of their leader and his followers—to all she recommended confidence in God and Our Lady of the Garde Dolourcuse; and she ventured to assure all, of the strong and victorious bands that were already in march to their relief.

"Will the gallant champions of the cross," she said, "think of leaving their native land, while the wail of women and of orphans is in their ears?—it were to convert their pious purpose into mortal sin, and to derogate from the high fame they have so well won. Yes—fight but valiantly, and perhaps, before the very sun that is now slowly rising shall sink in the sea, you will see it shining on the ranks of Shrewsbury and Chester. When did the Welsh-

man wait to hear the clangour of their trumpets, or the rustling of their silken banners? Fight bravely—fight freely but a while!—our castle is strong—our munition ample—your hearts are good—your arms are powerful—God is nigh to us, and our friends are not far distant. Fight, then, in the name of all that is good and holy—fight for yourselves, for your wives, for your children, and for your property—and oh! fight for an orphan maiden, who hath no other defenders but what a sense of her sorrows, and the remembrance of her father, may raise up among you!"

Such speeches as these made a powerful impression on the men to whom they were addressed, already hardened, by habits and sentiments, against a sense of danger. The chivalrous Normans swore, on the cross of their swords, they would die to a man ere they would surrender their posts—the blunter Anglo-Saxons cried, "Shame on him who would render up such a lamb as Eveline to a Welsh wolf, while he could make her a bulwark with his body!" —Even the cold Flemings caught a spark of the enthusiasm with which the others were animated, and muttered to each other praises of the young lady's beauty, and short but honest resolves to do the best they might in her defence.

Rose Flammock, who accompanied her lady with one or two attendants upon her circuit around the castle, seemed to have relapsed into her natural character of a shy and timid girl, out of the excited state into which she had been brought by the suspicions which in the evening before had attached to her father's character. She tripped closely but respectfully after Eveline, and listened to what she said from time to time, with the awe and admiration of a child listening to its tutor, while only her moistened eye expressed how far she felt or comprehended the extent of the danger, or the force of the exhortations. There was, however, a moment when the youthful maiden's eye became more bright, her step more confident, her looks more elevated. This was when they approached the spot where her father, having discharged the duties of commander of the garrison, was now exercising those of engineer, and displaying great skill, as well as wonderful personal strength, in directing and assisting the establishment of a large mangonel, (a military engine used for casting stones,) upon a station commanding an exposed postern-gate, which led from the western side of the castle down to the plain; and where a severe assault was naturally to be expected. The greater part of his armour lay beside him, but covered with his cassock to screen it from the morning dew; while in his leathern doublet, with arms bare to the shoulder, and a huge sledge-hammer in his hand, he set an example to the mechanics who worked under his direction.

In slow and solid natures there is usually a touch of shamefacedness, and a sensitiveness to the breach of petty observances. Wilkin Flammock had been unmoved even to insensibility at the imputation of treason so lately cast upon him; but he coloured high, and was confused, while hastily throwing on his cassock, he endeavoured to conceal the dishabille in which he had been surprised by the Lady Eveline. Not so his daughter. Proud of her father's zeal, her eye gleamed from him to her mistress with a look of triumph, which seemed to say, "And this faithful follower, is he who was suspected of treachery!"

Eveline's own bosom made her the same reproach; and, anxious to atone for her momentary doubt of his fidelity, she offered for his acceptance a ring of value, "in small amends," she said, "of a momentary misconstruction."

"It needs not, lady," said Flammock, with his usual bluntness, "unless I have the freedom to bestow the gaud on Rose; for I think she was grieved enough at that which moved me little,—as why should it?"

"Dispose of it as thou wilt," said Eveline; "the stone it bears is as true as thine own faith."

Here Eveline paused, and looking on the broad expanded plain which extended between the site of the castle and the river, observed how silent and still the morning was rising over what had so lately been a scene of such extensive slaughter.

"It will not be so long," answered Flammock "we shall have noise enough, and that nearer to our ears than yesterday."

"Which way lie the enemy?" said Eveline; "methinks I can spy neither tents nor pavilions."

"They use none, lady," answered Wilkin Flammock. "Heaven has denied them the grace and knowledge to weave linen enough for such a purpose —Yonder they lie on both sides of the river, covered with naught but their white mantles. Would one think that a host of thieves and cut-throats could look so like the finest object in nature—a well-spread bleaching-field?—Hark—hark!—the wasps are beginning to buzz; they will soon be plying their stings."

In fact, there was heard among the Welsh army a low and indistinct murmur, like that of

"Bees alarm'd, and mustering in their hives."

Terrified at the hollow menacing sound, which grew louder every moment, Rose, who had all the irritability of a sensitive temperament, clung to her father's arm, saying, in a terrified whisper, "It is like the sound of the sea the night before the great inundation."

"And it betokens too rough weather for women to be abroad in," said Flammock. "Go to your chamber, Lady Eveline, if it be your will—and go you too, Roschen—God bless you both—ye do but keep us idle here."

And, indeed, conscious that she had done all that was incumbent upon her, and fearful lest the chill which she felt creeping over her own heart should infect others, Eveline took her vassal's advice, and withdrew slowly to her own apartment, often casting back her eye to the place where the Welsh, now drawn out and under arms, were advancing their ridgy battalions, like the waves of an approaching tide.

The Prince of Powys had, with considerable military skill, adopted a plan of attack suitable to the fiery genius of his followers, and calculated to alarm on every point the feeble garrison.

The three sides of the castle which were defended by the river, were watched each by a numerous body of the British, with instructions to confine themselves to the discharge of arrows, unless they should observe that some favourable opportunity of close attack should occur. But far the greater part of Gwenwyn's forces, consisting of three columns of great strength, advanced along the plain on the western side of the castle, and menaced, with a desperate assault, the walls, which, in that direction, were deprived of the defence of the river. The first of these formidable bodies consisted entirely of archers, who dispersed themselves in front of the beleaguered place and took advantage of every bush and rising ground which could afford them shelter; and then began to bend their bows and shower their arrows on the battlements and loopholes, suffering, however, a great deal more damage than they were able to inflict, as the garrison returned their shot in comparative safety, and with more secure and deliberate aim.* Under cover, however, of their discharge of arrows, two very strong bodies of Welsh attempted to carry the outer defences of the castle by storm. They had axes to destroy the palisades, then called barriers; fagots to fill up the external ditches; torches to set fire to aught combustible which they might find; and, above all, ladders to scale the walls.

* ARCHERS OF WALES.—The Welsh were excellent bowmen: but, under favour of Lord Lyttleton, they probably did not use the long-bow, the formidable weapon of the Normans, and afterwards of the English yeomen. That of the Welsh most likely rather resembled the bow of the cognate Celtic tribes of Ireland, and of the Highlands of Scotland. It was shorter than the Norman long-bow, as being drawn to the breast, not to the ear, more loosely strung, and the arrow having a heavy iron head: altogether, in short, a less effective weapon. It appears from the following anecdote, that there was a difference between the Welsh arrows and those of the English.

In 1122, Henry the II., marching into Powys-Land to chastise Meredyth ap Blethyn and certain rebels, in passing a defile was struck by an arrow on the breast. Repelled by the excellence of his breastplate, the shaft fell to the ground. When the King felt the blow and saw the shaft he swore his usual oath, by the death of our Lord, that the arrow came not from a Welsh but an English bow; and, influenced by this belief, hastily put an end to the war.

These detachments rushed with incredible fury towards the point of attack, despite a most obstinate defence, and the great loss which they sustained by missiles of every kind, and continued the assault for nearly an hour, supplied by reinforcements which more than recruited their diminished numbers. When they were at last compelled to retreat, they seemed to adopt a new and yet more harassing species of attack. A large body assaulted one exposed point of the fortress with such fury as to draw thither as many of the besieged as could possibly be spared from other defended posts, and when there appeared a point less strongly manned than was adequate to defence, that, in its turn, was furiously assailed by a separate body of the enemy.

Thus the defenders of the Garde Doloureuse resembled the embarrassed traveller, engaged in repelling a swarm of hornets, which, while he brushes them from one part, fix in swarms upon another, and drive him to despair by their numbers, and the boldness and multiplicity of their attacks. The postern being of course a principal point of attack, Father Aldrovand, whose anxiety would not permit him to be absent from the walls, and who, indeed, where decency would permit, took an occasional share in the active defence of the place, hasted thither, as the point chiefly in danger.

Here he found the Fleming, like a second Ajax, grim with dust and blood, working with his own hands the great engine which he had lately helped to erect, and at the same time giving heedful eye to all the exigencies around.

"How thinkest thou of this day's work?" said the monk in a whisper.

"What skills it talking of it, father?" replied Flammock; "thou art no soldier, and I have no time for words."

"Nay, take thy breath," said the monk, tucking up the sleeves of his frock; "I will try to help thee the while:—although, Our Lady pity me, I know nothing of these strange devices—not even the names. But our rule commands us to labour; there can be no harm, therefore, in turning this winch—or in placing this steel-headed piece of wood opposite to the cord," (suiting his action to his words,) "nor see I aught uncanonical in adjusting the lever thus, or in touching the spring."

The large bolt whizzed through the air as he spoke, and was so successfully aimed, that it struck down a Welsh chief of eminence, to whom Gwenwyn himself was in the act of giving some important charge.

"Well driven, *trebuchet*—well flown, *quarrel!*" cried the monk, unable to contain his delight, and giving, in his triumph, the true technical names to the engine, and the javelin which it discharged.

"And well aimed, monk," added Wilkin Flammock; "I think thou knowest more than is in thy breviary."

"Care not thou for that," said the father; "and now that thou seest I can work an engine, and that the Welsh knaves seem something low in stomach, what think'st thou of our estate?"

"Well enough—for a bad one—if we may hope for speedy succour; but men's bodies are of flesh, not of iron, and we may be at last wearied out by numbers. Only one soldier to four yards of wall, is a fearful odds; and the villains are aware of it, and keep us to sharp work."

The renewal of the assault here broke off their conversation, nor did the active enemy permit them to enjoy much repose until sunset; for, alarming them with repeated menaces of attack upon different points, besides making two or three formidable and furious assaults, they left them scarce time to breathe, or to take a moment's refreshment. Yet the Welsh paid a severe price for their temerity; for while nothing could exceed the bravery with which their men repeatedly advanced to the attack, those which were made latest in the day had less of animated desperation than their first onset; and it is probable, that the sense of having sustained great loss, and apprehension of its effects on the spirits of his people, made Gwenwyn sensible that the fortune of the day was unfavourable to his cause, and that it was time to withdraw his followers from the fruitless contest, as acceptable to Gwenwyn as to the exhausted garrison of the Garde Doloureuse.

But in the camp or leaguer of the Welsh there was glee and triumph, for the loss of the past day was forgotten in recollections of the signal victory which had preceded this siege; and the dispirited garrison could hear from their walls the laugh and the song, the sound of harping and gayety, which triumphed by anticipation over their surrender.

The sun was for some time sunk, the twilight deepened, and night closed with a blue and cloudless sky, in which the thousand spangles that deck the firmament received double brilliancy from some slight touch of frost, although the paler planet, their mistress, was but in her first quarter. The necessities of the garrison were considerably aggravated by that of keeping a very strong and watchful guard, ill according with the weakness of their numbers, at a time which appeared favourable to any sudden nocturnal alarm; and, so urgent was this duty, that those who had been more slightly wounded on the preceding day, were obliged to take their share in it, notwithstanding their hurts. The monk and Fleming, who now perfectly understood each other, went in company around the walls at midnight, exhorting the warders to be watchful, and examining with their own eyes the state of the fortress. It was in the course of these rounds, and as they were ascending an elevated platform by a range of narrow and uneven steps, something galling to the monk's tread, that they perceived on the summit to which they were ascending, instead of the black corslet of the Flemish sentinel who had been placed there, two white forms, the appearance of which struck Wilkin Flammock with more dismay than he had shown during any of the doubtful events of the preceding day's fight.

"Father," he said, "betake yourself to your tools—*es spuckt*—there are hobgoblins here!"

The good father had not learned, as a priest, to defy the spiritual host, whom, as a soldier, he had dreaded more than any mortal enemy; but he began to recite, with chattering teeth, the exorcism of the church, "*Conjuro vos omnes, spiritus maligni, magni, atque parvi,*"—when he was interrupted by the voice of Eveline, who called out, "Is it you, Father Aldrovand?"

Much lightened at heart by finding they had no ghost to deal with, Wilkin Flammock and the priest advanced hastily to the platform, where they found the lady with her faithful Rose, the former with a half-pike in her hand, like a sentinel on duty.

"How is this, daughter?" said the monk; "how came you here, and thus armed? and where is the sentinel,—the lazy Flemish hound, that should have kept the post?"

"May he not be a lazy hound, yet not a Flemish one, father?" said Rose, who was ever awakened by any thing which seemed a reflection upon her country; "methinks I have heard of such curs of English breed."

"Go to, Rose, you are too malapert for a young maiden," said her father. "Once more, where is Peterkin Vorst, who should have kept this post?"

"Let him not be blamed for my fault," said Eveline, pointing to a place where the Flemish sentinel lay in the shade of the battlement fast asleep—"He was overcome with toil—had fought hard through the day, and when I saw him asleep as I came hither, like a wandering spirit that cannot take slumber or repose, I would not disturb the rest which I envied. As he had fought for me, I might, I thought, watch an hour for him; so I took his weapon with the purpose of remaining here till some one should come to relieve him."

"I will relieve the schelm, with a vengeance!" said Wilkin Flammock, and saluted the slumbering and prostrate warder with two kicks, which made his corslet clatter. The man started to his feet in no small alarm, which he would have communicated to the next sentinels and to the whole garrison, by crying out that the Welsh were upon the walls, had not the monk covered his broad mouth with his hand just as the roar was issuing forth.—"Peace, and get thee down to the under bawley," said he;—"thou deservest

death, oy all the policies of war—but, look ye, variet, and see who has saved your worthless neck, by watching while you were dreaming of swine's flesh and beer-pots."

The Fleming, although as yet but half awake, was sufficiently conscious of his situation, to sneak off without reply, after two or three awkward congees, as well to Eveline as to those by whom his repose had been so unceremoniously interrupted.

"He deserves to be tied neck and heel, the hounds-foot," said Wilkin. "But what would you have, lady? My countrymen cannot live without rest or sleep." So saying, he gave a yawn so wide, as if he had proposed to swallow one of the turrets at an angle of the platform on which he stood, as if it had only garnished a Christmas pasty.

"True, good Wilkin," said Eveline; "and do you therefore, take some rest, and trust to my watchfulness, at least till the guards are relieved. I cannot sleep if I would, and I would not if I could."

"Thanks, lady," said Flammock; "and in truth, as this is a cantrical place, and the rounds must pass in an hour at farthest, I will e'en close my eyes for such a space, for the lids feel as heavy as floodgates."

"O, father, father!" exclaimed Rose, alive to her sire's unceremonious neglect of decorum—"think where you are, and in whose presence!"

"Ay, ay, good Flammock," said the monk, "remember the presence of a noble Norman maiden is no place for folding of cloaks and donning of night-caps."

"Let him alone, father," said Eveline, who in another moment might have smiled at the readiness with which Wilkin Flammock folded himself in his huge cloak, extended his substantial form on the stone bench, and gave the most decided tokens of profound repose, long ere the monk had done speaking.—"Forms and fashions of respect," she continued, "are for times of ease and nicety;—when in danger, the soldier's bedchamber is wherever he can find leisure for an hour's sleep—his eating-hall, wherever he can obtain food. Sit thou down by Rose and me, good father, and tell us of some holy lesson which may pass away these hours of weariness and calamity."

The father obeyed; but however willing to afford consolation, his ingenuity and theological skill suggested nothing better than a recitation of the penitentiary psalms, in which task he continued until fatigue became too powerful for him also, when he committed the same breach of decorum for which he had upbraided Wilkin Flammock, and fell fast asleep in the midst of his devotions.

CHAPTER IX.

"O night of wo," she said and wept,
"O night foreboding sorrow!
O night of wo," she said and wept,
"But more I dread the morrow!"

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT.

THE fatigue which had exhausted Flammock and the monk, was unfelt by the two anxious maidens, who remained with their eyes bent, now upon the dim landscape, now on the stars by which it was lighted, as if they could have read there the events which the morrow was to bring forth. It was a placid and melancholy scene. Tree and field, and hill and plain, lay before them in doubtful light, while, at greater distance, their eye could with difficulty trace one or two places where the river, hidden in general by banks and trees, spread its more expanded bosom to the stars, and the pale crescent. All was still, excepting the solemn rush of the waters, and now and then the shrill tinkle of a harp, which, heard from more than a mile's distance through the midnight silence, announced that some of the Welshmen still protracted their most beloved amusement. The wild notes, partially heard, seemed like the voice of some passing spirit; and, connected as they were with ideas of fierce and unrelenting hostility, thrilled on Eveline's ear, as if prophetic of war and wo, captivity and death. The only other sounds which disturbed the extreme stillness of the night, were the occasional step of a sentinel upon his post, or the hooting of the owls, which seemed to wail the approaching downfall of the moonlight turrets, in which they had established their ancient habitations.

The calmness of all around seemed to press like a weight on the bosom of the unhappy Eveline, and brought to her mind a deeper sense of present grief, and keener apprehension of future horrors, than had reigned there during the bustle, blood, and confusion of the preceding day. She rose up—she sat down—she moved to and fro on the platform—she remained fixed like a statue to a single spot, as if she were trying by variety of posture to divert her internal sense of fear and sorrow.

At length, looking at the monk and the Fleming as they slept soundly under the shade of the battlement, she could no longer forbear breaking silence. "Men are happy," she said, "my beloved Rose; their anxious thoughts are either diverted by toilsome exertion, or drowned in the insensibility which follows it. They may encounter wounds and death, but it is we who feel in the spirit a more keen anguish than the body knows, and in the gnawing sense of present ill and fear of future misery, suffer a living death, more cruel than that which ends our woes at once."

"Do not be thus downcast, my noble lady," said Rose; "be rather what you were yesterday, caring for the wounded, for the aged, for every one but yourself—exposing even your dear life among the showers of the Welsh arrows, when doing so could give courage to others; while I—shame on me—could but tremble, sob, and weep, and needed all the little wit I have to prevent my shouting with the wild cries of the Welsh, or screaming and groaning with those of our friends who fell around me."

"Alas! Rose," answered her mistress, "you may at pleasure indulge your fears to the verge of distraction itself—you have a father to fight and watch for you. Mine—my kind, noble, and honoured parent, lies dead on yonder field, and all which remains for me is to act as may best become his memory. But, this moment is at least mine, to think upon and to mourn for him."

So saying, and overpowered by the long-repressed burst of filial sorrow, she sunk down on the banquette which ran along the inside of the embattled parapet of the platform, and murmuring to herself, "He is gone for ever!" abandoned herself to the extremity of grief. One hand grasped unconsciously the weapon which she held, and served, at the same time, to prop her forehead, while the tears, by which she was now for the first time relieved, flowed in torrents from her eyes, and her sobs seemed so convulsive, that Rose almost feared her heart was bursting. Her affection and sympathy dictated at once the kindest course which Eveline's condition permitted. Without attempting to control the torrent of grief in its full current, she gently sat her down beside the mourner, and possessing herself of the hand which had sunk motionless by her side, she alternately pressed it to her lips, her bosom, and her brow—now covered it with kisses, now bedewed it with tears, and amid these tokens of the most devoted and humble sympathy, waited a more composed moment to offer her little stock of consolation in such deep silence and stillness, that, as the pale light fell upon the two beautiful young women, it seemed rather to show a group of statuary, the work of some eminent sculptor, than beings whose eyes still wept, and whose hearts still throbbed. At a little distance, the gleaming corslet of the Fleming, and the dark garments of Father Aldrovand, as they lay prostrate on the stone steps, might represent the bodies of those for whom the principal figures were mourning.

After a deep agony of many minutes, it seemed that the sorrows of Eveline were assuming a more composed character; her convulsive sobs were changed for long, low, profound sighs, and the course of her tears, though they still flowed, was milder and less violent. Her kind attendant, availing herself of these gentler symptoms, tried softly to win the spear from her lady's grasp. "Let me be sentinel for a while," she said, "my sweet lady—I will at least scream louder than you if any danger should approach."

ventured to kiss her cheek, and throw her arms around Eveline's neck while she spoke; but a mute caress, which expressed her sense of the faithful girl's kind intentions to minister if possible to her repose, was the only answer returned. They remained for many minutes silent and in the same posture,—Eveline, like an upright and slender poplar,—Rose, who encircled her lady in her arms, like the woodbine which twines around it.

At length Rose suddenly felt her young mistress shiver in her embrace, and that Eveline's hand grasped her arm rigidly as she whispered, "Do you hear nothing?"

"No—nothing but the hooting of the owl," answered Rose, timorously.

"I heard a distant sound," said Eveline,—"I thought I heard it—hark, it comes again!—Look from the battlements, Rose, while I awaken the priest and thy father."

"Dearest lady," said Rose, "I dare not—What can this sound be that is heard by one only?—You are deceived by the rush of the river."

"I would not alarm the castle unnecessarily," said Eveline, pausing, "or even break your father's needful slumbers, by a fancy of mine—But hark—hark!—I hear it again—distinct amidst the intermitting sound of the rushing water—a low tremulous sound, mingled with a tinkling like smiths or armourers at work upon their anvils."

Rose had by this time sprung up on the banquette, and flinging back her rich tresses of fair hair, had applied her hand behind her ear to collect the distant sound. "I hear it," she cried, "and it increases—Awake them, for Heaven's sake, and without a moment's delay!"

Eveline accordingly stirred the sleepers with the reversed end of the lance, and as they started to their feet in haste, she whispered, in a hasty but cautious voice, "To arms—the Welsh are upon us!"

"What—where?" said Wilkin Flammock, "where be they?"

"Listen, and you will hear them arming," she replied.

"The noise is but in thine own fancy, lady," said the Fleming, whose organs were of the same heavy character with his form and his disposition. "I would I had not gone to sleep at all, since I was to be awakened so soon."

"Nay, but listen, good Flammock—the sound of armour comes from the north-east."

"The Welsh lie not in that quarter, lady," said Wilkin, "and, besides, they wear no armour."

"I hear it—I hear it!" said Father Aldrovand, who had been listening for some time. "All praise to St. Benedict!—Our Lady of the Garde Dolourcuse has been gracious to her servants as ever!—It is the tramp of horse—it is the clash of armour—the chivalry of the Marches are coming to our relief—Kyrie Eleison!"

"I hear something too," said Flammock,—"something like the hollow sound of the great sea, when it burst into my neighbour Klinkerman's warehouse, and rolled his pots and pans against each other. But it were an evil mistake, father, to take foes for friends—we were best rouse the people."

"Tush!" said the priest, "talk to me of pots and kettles?—Was I squire of the body to Count Stephen Mauleverer for twenty years, and do I not know the tramp of a war-horse, or the clash of a mail-coat?—But call the men to the walls at any rate, and have me the best drawn up in the basecourt—we may help them by a sally."

"That will not be rashly undertaken with my consent," murmured the Fleming; "but to the wall if you will, and in good time. But keep your Normans and English silent, Sir Priest, else their unruly and noisy joy will awaken the Welsh camp, and prepare them for their unwelcome visiters."

The monk laid his finger on his lip in sign of intelligence, and they parted in opposite directions, each to rouse the defenders of the castle, who were soon heard drawing from all quarters to their posts upon the walls, with hearts in a very different mood from that in which they had descended from them. The utmost caution being used to prevent noise, the manning of the walls was accomplished in silence, and the garrison awaited in breathless expectation the success of the forces who were rapidly advancing to their relief.

The character of the sounds, which now loudly awakened the silence of this eventful night, could no longer be mistaken. They were distinguishable from the rushing of a mighty river, or from the muttering sound of distant thunder, by the sharp and angry notes which the clashing of the riders' arms mingled with the deep bass of the horses' rapid tread. From the long continuance of the sounds, their loudness, and the extent of horizon from which they seemed to come, all in the castle were satisfied that the approaching relief consisted of several very strong bodies of horse.* At once this mighty sound ceased, as if the earth on which they trode had either devoured the armed squadrons, or had become incapable of resounding to their tramp. The defenders of the Garde Dolourcuse concluded that their friends had made a sudden halt to give their horses breath, examine the leaguer of the enemy, and settle the order of the attack upon them. The pause, however was but momentary.

The British, so alert at surprising their enemies, were themselves, on many occasions, liable to surprise. Their men were undisciplined, and sometimes negligent of the patient duties of the sentinel; and, besides, their foragers and flying parties, who scoured the country during the preceding day, had brought back tidings which had lulled them into fatal security. Their camp had been therefore carelessly guarded, and, confident in the smallness of the garrison, they had altogether neglected the important military duty of establishing patrols and outposts at a proper distance from their main body. Thus the cavalry of the Lords Marchers, notwithstanding the noise which accompanied their advance, had approached very near the British camp, without exciting the least alarm. But while they were arranging their forces into separate columns, in order to commence the assault, a loud and increasing clamour among the Welsh announced that they were at length aware of their danger. The shrill and discordant cries by which they endeavoured to assemble their men, each under the banner of his chief, resounded from their leaguer. But these rallying shouts were soon converted into screams, and clamours of horror and dismay, when the thundering charge of the barbed horses and heavily-armed cavalry of the Anglo-Normans surprised their undefended camp.

Yet not even under circumstances so adverse did the descendants of the ancient Britons renounce their defence, or forfeit their old hereditary privilege, to be called the bravest of mankind. Their cries of defiance and resistance were heard resounding above the groans of the wounded, the shouts of the triumphant assailants, and the universal tumult of the night-battle. It was not until the morning light began to peep forth, that the slaughter or dispersion of Gwenwyn's forces was complete, and that the "earthquake voice of victory" arose in uncontrolled and unmingled energy of exultation.

Then the beseiged, if they could be still so termed, looking from their towers over the expanded country beneath witnessed nothing but one wide-spread scene of desultory flight and unrelaxed pursuit. That the Welsh had been permitted to encamp in fancied security upon the hither side of the river, now rendered their discomfiture more dreadfully fatal. The single pass by which they could cross to the other side was soon completely choked by fugitives, on whose rear raged the swords of the victorious Normans. Many threw themselves into the river, upon the precarious chance of gaining the farther side, and, except a few who were uncommonly strong, skilful, and active, perished among the rocks and in the currents; others, more fortunate, escaped by fords, with which they had accidentally been made acquainted; many dispersed, or, in small bands, fled in reckless despair to-

* Even the sharp and angry clang made by the iron scabbards of modern cavalry ringing against the steel-tipp'd saddles and stirrup, betrays their approach from a distance. The clash of the armour of knights, armed cap-a-pie, must have been much more easily discernible.

e castle, as if the fortress which had been their
victorious, could be a place of refuge to them
present forlorn condition; while others
wildly over the plain, seeking only escape
mediate and instant danger, without knowing
they ran.
ormans, mean while, divided into small par-
owed and slaughtered them at pleasure;
a rallying point for the victors, the banner
de Lacy streamed from a small mount, on
lwenwyn had lately pitched his own, and
ed by a competent force, both of infantry and
, which the experienced Baron permitted on
nt to wander far from it.
st, as we have already said, followed the
th shouts of exultation and of vengeance,
round the battlements, which resounded with
"Ha, Saint Edward!—Ha, Saint Dennis!
—slay—no quarter to the Welsh wolves—
Raymond Berenger!"
ldiers on the walls joined in these vengeful
orious clamours, and discharged several
of arrows upon such fugitives, as, in their
approached too near the castle. They
n have sallied to give more active assistance
rk of destruction; but the communication
v open with the Constable of Chester's forces,
lammock considered himself and the garri-
under the orders of that renowned chief, and
listen to the eager admonitions of Father
d, who would, notwithstanding his sacer-
racter, have willingly himself taken charge
ly which he proposed.
rth, the scene of slaughter seemed at an
e retreat was blown on many a bugle, and
alted on the plain to collect their personal
muster them under their proper pennon,
march them slowly back to the great stand-
ir leader, around which the main body were
e assembled, like the clouds which gather
ne evening sun—a fanciful simile, which
t be drawn farther, in respect of the level
rong lurid light which shot from those dark
, as the beams were flung back from their
rmour.
un was in this manner soon cleared of the
, and remained occupied only by the dead
the slaughtered Welshmen. The bands
followed the pursuit to a greater distance
now seen returning, driving before them, or
after them, dejected and unhappy captives,
they had given quarter when their thirst of
satiated.
then that, desirous to attract the attention
rators, Wilkin Flammock commanded all
ers of the castle to be displayed, under a
hout of acclamation from those who had
der them. It was answered by a universal
from De Lacy's army, which rung so wide,
even yet have startled such of the Welsh
as, far distant from this disastrous field
night have ventured to halt for a moment's

ly after this greeting had been exchanged,
ider advanced from the Constable's army
the castle, showing, even at a distance, an
lexterity of horsemanship and grace of
it. He arrived at the drawbridge, which
ntly lowered to admit him, whilst Flam-
the monk (for the latter, as far as he could,
himself with the former in all acts of au-
stened to receive the envoy of their liberator.
d him just alighted from the raven-coloured
ich was slightly flecked with blood as well
nd still panted with the exertions of the
though, answering to the caressing hand
thful rider, he arched his neck, shook his
rison, and snorted, to announce his una-
ttle and unwearied love of combat. The
an's eagle look bore the same token of
vigour, mingled with the signs of recent
His hemlet hanging at his saddle-bow,
gallant countenance, coloured highly, but
ed, which looked out from a rich profusion
of short chestnut curls; and although his armour was of a massive and simple form, he moved under it with such elasticity and ease, that it seemed a graceful attire, not a burden or encumbrance. A furred mantle had not sat on him with more easy grace than the heavy hauberk, which complied with every gesture of his noble form. Yet his countenance was so juvenile, that only the down on the upper lip announced decisively the approach to manhood. The females, who thronged into the court to see the first envoy of their deliverers, could not forbear mixing praises of his beauty with blessings on his valour; and one comely middle-aged dame, in particular, distinguished by the tightness with which her scarlet hose sat on a well-shaped leg and ankle, and by the cleanness of her coif, pressed close up to the young squire, and, more forward than the rest, doubled the crimson hue of his cheek, by crying aloud, that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse had sent them news of their redemption by an angel from the sanctuary;—a speech which, although Father Aldrovand shook his head, was received by her companions with such general acclamation, as greatly embarrassed the young man's modesty.

"Peace, all of ye!" said Wilkin Flammock—"Know you no respects, you women, or have you never seen a young gentlemen before, that you hang on him like flies on a honeycomb? Stand back, I say, and let us hear in peace what are the commands of the noble Lord of Lacy."

"These," said the young man, "I can only deliver in the presence of the right noble demoiselle, Eveline Berenger, if I may be thought worthy of such honour."

"That thou art, noble sir," said the same forward dame, who had before expressed her admiration so energetically; "I will uphold thee worthy of her presence, and whatever other grace a lady can do thee."

"Now hold thy tongue, with a wanion!" said the monk; while in the same breath the Fleming exclaimed, "Beware the cucking-stool, Dame Scant-o'-Grace!" while he conducted the noble youth across the court.

"Let my good horse be cared for," said the cavalier, as he put the bridle into the hand of a menial; and in doing so got rid of some part of his female retinue, who began to pat and praise the steed as much as they had done the rider; and some, in the enthusiasm of their joy, hardly abstained from kissing the stirrups and horse furniture.

But Dame Gillian was not so easily diverted from her own point as were some of her companions. She continued to repeat the word *cucking-stool*, till the Fleming was out of hearing, and then became more specific in her objurgation.—"And why cucking-stool, I pray, Sir Wilkin Butterfitkin? You are the man would stop an English mouth with a Flemish damask napkin, I trow! Marry quep, my cousin the weaver! And why the cucking-stool, I pray?—because my young lady is comely, and the young squire is a man of mettle, reverence to his beard that is to come yet! Have we not eyes to see, and have we not a mouth and a tongue?"

"In troth, Dame Gillian, they do you wrong who doubt it," said Eveline's nurse, who stood by; "but I prithee, keep it shut now, were it but for womanhood."

"How now, mannerly Mrs. Margery?" replied the incorrigible Gillian; "is your heart so high, because you dandled our young lady on your knee fifteen years since?—Let me tell you, the cat will find its way to the cream, though it was brought up on an abbess's lap."

"Home, housewife—home!" exclaimed her husband, the old huntsman, who was weary of this public exhibition of his domestic termagant—"home, or I will give you a taste of my dog-leash—Here are both the confessor and Wilkin Flammock wondering at your impudence."

"Indeed!" replied Gillian; "and are not two fools enough for wonderment, that you must come with your grave pate to make up the number three?"

There was a general laugh at the huntsman's ex-

pense, under cover of which he prudently withdrew his spouse, without attempting to continue the war of tongues, in which she had shown such a decided superiority.

This controversy, so light is the change in human spirits, especially among the lower class, awakened bursts of idle mirth among beings, who had so lately been in the jaws of danger, if not of absolute despair.

CHAPTER X.

They bore him barefaced on his bier,
Six proper youths and tall,
And many a tear bedew'd his grave
Within yon kirkyard wall.
The Friar of Orders Gray.

WHILE these matters took place in the castle-yard, the young squire, Damian Lacy, obtained the audience which he had requested of Eveline Berenger, who received him in the great hall of the castle, seated beneath the dais, or canopy, and waited upon by Rose, and other female attendants; of whom the first alone was permitted to use a tabouret or small stool, in her presence, so strict were the Norman maidens of quality in maintaining their claims to high rank and observance.

The youth was introduced by the confessor and Flammock, as the spiritual character of the one, and the trust reposed by her late father in the other, authorized them to be present upon the occasion. Eveline naturally blushed, as she advanced two steps to receive the handsome youthful envoy; and her bashfulness seemed infectious, for it was with some confusion that Damian went through the ceremony of saluting the hand which she extended towards him in token of welcome. Eveline was under the necessity of speaking first.

"We advance as far as our limits will permit us," she said, "to greet with our thanks the messenger who brings us tidings of safety. We speak—unless we err—to the noble Damian of Lacy?"

"To the humblest of your servants," answered Damian, falling with some difficulty into the tone of courtesy which his errand and character required, "who approaches you on behalf of his noble uncle, Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester."

"Will not our noble deliverer in person honour with his presence the poor dwelling which he has saved?"

"My noble kinsman," answered Damian, "is now God's soldier, and bound by a vow not to come beneath a roof until he embark for the Holy Land. But by my voice he congratulates you on the defeat of your savage enemies, and sends you these tokens that the comrade and friend of your noble father hath not left his lamentable death many hours unavenged." So saying, he drew forth and laid before Eveline the gold bracelets, the coronet, and the eudorchawg, or chain of linked gold, which had distinguished the rank of the Welsh Prince.*

"Gwenwyn hath then fallen?" said Eveline, a natural shudder combating with the feelings of gratified vengeance, as she beheld that the trophies were specked with blood,—"The slayer of my father is no more!"

"My kinsman's lance transfixed the Briton as he endeavoured to rally his flying people—he died grimly on the weapon which had passed more than a fathom through his body, and exerted his last strength in a furious but ineffectual blow with his mace."

"Heaven is just," said Eveline; "may his sins be forgiven to the man of blood, since he hath fallen by a death so bloody!—One question I would ask you, noble sir. My father's remains"—— She paused, unable to proceed.

"An hour will place them at your disposal, most honoured lady," replied the squire, in the tone of sympathy which the sorrows of so young and so fair an orphan called irresistibly forth. "Such preparations as time admitted were making even when I left the host, to transport what was mortal of the noble Berenger from the field on which we found him, amid a monument of slain which his own sword had raised. My kinsman's vow will not allow him to pass your portcullis; but, with your permission, I will represent him, if such be your pleasure, at these honoured obsequies, having charge to that effect."

"My brave and noble father," said Eveline, making an effort to restrain her tears, "will be best mourned by the noble and the brave." She would have continued, but her voice failed her, and she was obliged to withdraw abruptly, in order to give vent to her sorrow, and prepare for the funeral rites with such ceremony as circumstances should permit. Damian bowed to the departing mourner as reverently as he would have done to a divinity, and taking his horse, returned to his uncle's host, which had encamped hastily on the recent field of battle.

The sun was now high, and the whole plain presented the appearance of a bustle, equally different from the solitude of the early morning, and from the roar and fury of the subsequent engagement. The news of Hugo de Lacy's victory every where spread abroad, with all the alacrity of triumph, and had induced many of the inhabitants of the country, who had fled before the fury of the Wolf of Plinlimmon, to return to their desolate habitations. Numbers also of the loose and profligate characters which abound in a country subject to the frequent changes of war, had flocked thither in quest of spoil, or to gratify a spirit of restless curiosity. The Jew and the Lombard, despising danger where there was a chance of gain, might be already seen bartering liquors and wares with the victorious men-at-arms, for the blood-stained ornaments of gold lately worn by the defeated British. Others acted as brokers betwixt the Welsh captives and their captors; and where they could trust the means and good faith of the former, sometimes became bound for, or even advanced in ready money, the sums necessary for their ransom; whilst a more numerous class became themselves the purchasers of those prisoners who had no immediate means of settling with their conquerors.

That the spoil thus acquired might not long encumber the soldier, or blunt his ardour for farther enterprise, the usual means of dissipating military spoils were already at hand. Courtezans, mimes, jugglers, minstrels, and tale-tellers of every description, had accompanied the night-march; and, secure in the military reputation of the celebrated De Lacy, had rested fearlessly at some little distance until the battle was fought and won. These now approached, in many a joyous group, to congratulate the victors. Close to the parties which they formed for the dance, the song, or the tale, upon the yet bloody field, the countrymen summoned in for the purpose, were opening large trenches for depositing the dead—leeches were seen tending the wounded—priests and monks confessing those in extremity—soldiers transporting from the field the bodies of the more honoured among the slain—peasants mourning over their trampled crops and plundered habitations—and widows and orphans searching for the bodies of husbands and parents, amid the promiscuous carnage of two combats. Thus wo mingled her wildest notes with those of jubilee and bacchanal triumph, and the plain of the Garde Doloureuse formed a singular parallel to the varied maze of human life, where joy and grief are so strangely mixed, and where the confines of mirth and pleasure often border on those of sorrow and of death.

About noon those various noises were at once silenced, and the attention alike of those who rejoiced or who grieved was arrested by the loud and mournful sound of six trumpets, which, uplifting and uniting their thrilling tones in a wild and melancholy death-

* EUDORCHAWG, OR GOLD CHAINS OF THE WELSH.—These were the distinguished marks of rank and valour among the numerous tribes of Celtic extraction. Manlius, the Roman Champion, gained the name of Torquatus, or he of the chain, on account of an ornament of this kind, won, in single combat, from a gigantic Gaul. Aneurin, the Welsh bard, mentions, in his poem on the battle of Catterath, that no less than three hundred of the British, who fell there, had their necks wreathed with the Eudorchawg. This seems to infer that the chain was a badge of distinction, and valour perhaps, but not of royalty; otherwise there would scarce have been so many kings present in one battle. This chain has been found accordingly in Ireland and Wales, and sometimes, though more rarely, in Scotland. Doubtless it was of too precious materials not to be usually converted into money by the enemy into whose hands it fell.

note, apprized all, that the obsequies of the valiant Raymond Berenger were about to commence. From a tent, which had been hastily pitched for the immediate reception of the body, twelve black monks, the inhabitants of a neighbouring convent, began to file out in pairs, headed by their abbot, who bore a large cross, and thundered forth the sublime notes of the Catholic *Miserere me, Domine.* Then came a chosen body of men-at-arms, trailing their lances, with their points reversed and pointed to the earth; and after them the body of the valiant Berenger, wrapped in his own knightly banner, which, regained from the hands of the Welsh, now served its noble owner instead of a funeral pall. The most gallant knights of the Constable's household (for, like other great nobles of that period, he had formed it upon a scale which approached to that of royalty) walked as mourners and supporters of the corpse, which was borne upon lances; and the Constable of Chester himself, alone and fully armed, excepting the head, followed as chief mourner. A chosen body of squires, men-at-arms, and pages of noble descent, brought up the rear of the procession; while their nakers and trumpets echoed back, from time to time, the melancholy song of the monks, by replying in a note as lugubrious as their own.

The course of pleasure was arrested, and even that of sorrow was for a moment turned from her own griefs, to witness the last honours bestowed on him, who had been in life the father and guardian of his people.

The mournful procession traversed slowly the plain which had been within a few hours the scene of such varied events; and, pausing before the outer gate of the barricades of the castle, invited by a prolonged and solemn flourish, the fortress to receive the remains of its late gallant defender. The melancholy summons was answered by the warder's horn—the drawbridge sunk—the portcullis rose—and Father Aldrovand appeared in the middle of the gateway, arrayed in his sacerdotal habit, whilst a little space behind him stood the orphaned damsel, in such weeds of mourning as time admitted, supported by her attendant Rose, and followed by the females of the household.

The Constable of Chester paused upon the threshold of the outer gate, and, pointing to the cross signed in white cloth upon his left shoulder, with a lowly reverence resigned to his nephew, Damian, the task of attending the remains of Raymond Berenger to the chapel within the castle. The soldiers of Hugo de Lacy, most of whom were bound by the same vow with himself, also halted without the castle gate, and remained under arms, while the death-peal of the chapel bell announced from within, the progress of the procession.

It winded on through those narrow entrances, which were skilfully contrived to interrupt the progress of an enemy, even should he succeed in forcing the outer gate, and arrived at length in the great court-yard, where most of the inhabitants of the fortress, and those who, under recent circumstances, had taken refuge there, were drawn up, in order to look, for the last time, on their departed lord. Among these were mingled a few of the motley crowd from without, whom curiosity, or the expectation of a dole, had brought to the castle gate, and who, by one argument or another, had obtained from the warders permission to enter the interior.

The body was here set down before the door of the chapel, the ancient Gothic front of which formed one side of the court-yard, until certain prayers were recited by the priests, in which the crowd around were supposed to join with becoming reverence.

It was during this interval, that a man, whose peaked beard, embroidered girdle, and high-crowned hat of gray felt, gave him the air of a Lombard merchant, addressed Margery, the nurse of Eveline, in a whispering tone, and with a foreign accent.—"I am a travelling merchant, good sister, and am come hither in quest of gain—can you tell me whether I can have any custom in this castle?"

"You are come at an evil time, Sir Stranger—you may yourself *see that this is a place for mourning, and not for merchandise.*"

"Yet mourning times have their own commerce," said the stranger, approaching still closer to the side of Margery, and lowering his voice to a tone yet more confidential. "I have sable scarfs of Persian silk—black bugles, in which a princess might mourn for a deceased monarch—cyprus, such as the East hath seldom sent forth—black cloth for mourning hangings—all that may express sorrow and reverence in fashion and attire; and I know how to be grateful to those who help me to custom. Come, bethink you, good dame—such things must be had—I will sell as good ware and as cheap as another; and a kirtle to yourself, or, at your pleasure, a purse with five florins, shall be the meed of your kindness."

"I prithee peace, friend," said Margery, "and choose a better time for vaunting your wares—you neglect both place and season; and if you be farther importunate, I must speak to those who will show you the outward side of the castle gate. I marvel the warders would admit pedlars upon a day such as this—they would drive a gainful bargain by the bedside of their mother, were she dying, I trow." So saying, she turned scornfully from him.

While thus angrily rejected on the one side, the merchant felt his cloak receive an intelligent twitch upon the other, and, looking round upon the signal, he saw a dame, whose black kerchief was affectedly disposed, so as to give an appearance of solemnity to a set of light laughing features, which must have been captivating when young, since they retained so many good points when at least forty years had passed over them. She winked to the merchant, touching at the same time her under lip with her forefinger, to announce the propriety of silence and secrecy; then gliding from the crowd, retreated to a small recess formed by a projecting buttress of the chapel, as if to avoid the pressure likely to take place at the moment when the bier should be lifted. The merchant failed not to follow her example, and was soon by her side, when she did not give him the trouble of opening his affairs, but commenced the conversation herself,

"I have heard what you said to our dame Margery—Mannerly Margery, as I call her—heard as much, at least, as led me to guess the rest, for I have got an eye in my head, I promise you."

"A pair of them, my pretty dame, and as bright as drops of dew in a May morning."

"Oh, you say so, because I have been weeping," said the scarlet-hosed Gillian, for it was even herself who spoke; "and to be sure, I have good cause, for our lord was always my very good lord, and would sometimes chuck me under the chin, and call me buxom Gillian of Croydon—not that the good gentleman was ever uncivil, for he would thrust a silver twopennies into my hand at the same time.—Oh! the friend that I have lost!—And I have had anger on his account too—I have seen old Raoul as sour as vinegar, and fit for no place but the kennel for a whole day about it; but as I said to him, it was not for the like of me to be affronting our master, and a great baron, about a chuck under the chin, or a kiss, or such like."

"No wonder you are so sorry for so kind a master, dame," said the merchant.

"No wonder indeed," replied the dame, with a sigh; "and then what is to become of us?- It is like my young mistress will go to her aunt—or she will marry one of these Lacys that they talk so much of—or, at any rate she will leave the castle; and it's like old Raoul and I will be turned to grass with the lord's old chargers. The lord knows, they may as well hang him up with the old hounds, for he is both footless and fangless, and fit for nothing on earth that I know of."

"Your young mistress is that lady in the mourning mantle," said the merchant, "who so nearly sunk down upon the body just now?"

"In good troth is she, sir—and much cause she has to sink down. I am sure she will be to seek for such another father."

"I see you are a most discerning woman, gossip Gillian," answered the merchant; "and yonder youth that supported her is her bridegroom?"

"Much need she has for some one to support her!

said Gillian; "and so have I for that matter, for what can poor old rusty Raoul do?"

"But as to your young lady's marriage?" said the merchant.

"No one knows more, than that such a thing was in treaty between our late lord and the great Constable of Chester, that came to-day but just in time to prevent the Welsh from cutting all our throats, and doing the Lord knoweth what mischief beside. But there is a marriage talked of, that is certain—and most folk think it must be for this smooth-cheeked boy, Damian, as they call him; for though the Constable has gotten a beard, which his nephew hath not, it is something too grizzled for a bride-groom's chin—Besides, he goes to the Holy Wars—fittest place for all elderly warriors—I wish he would take Raoul with him.—But what is all this to what you were saying about your mourning wares even now?—It is a sad truth, that my poor Lord is gone—But what then?—Well-a-day, you know the good old saw,—

'Cloth must we wear,
Eat beef and drink beer,
Though the dead go to bier,'

And for your merchandising, I am as like to help you with my good word as Mannerly Margery, provided you bid fair for it; since, if the lady loves me not so much, I can turn the steward round my finger."

"Take this in part of our bargain, pretty Mrs. Gillian," said the merchant; "and when my wains come up, I will consider you amply, if I get good sale by your favourable report.—But how shall I get into the castle again? for I would wish to consult you, being a sensible woman, before I come in with my luggage."

"Why," answered the complaisant dame, "if our English be on guard, you have only to ask for Gillian, and they will open the wicket to any single man at once; for we English stick all together, were it but to spite the Normans;—but if a Norman be on duty, you must ask for old Raoul, and say you come to speak of dogs and hawks for sale, and I warrant you come to speech of me that way. If the sentinel be a Fleming, you have but to say you are a merchant, and he will let you in for the love of trade."

The merchant repeated his thankful acknowledgment, glided from her side, and mixed among the spectators, leaving her to congratulate herself on having gained a brace of florins by the indulgence of her natural talkative humour; for which, on other occasions, she had sometimes dearly paid.

The ceasing of the heavy toll of the castle bell now gave intimation that the noble Raymond Berenger had been laid in the vault with his fathers. That part of the funeral attendants who had come from the host of De Lacy, now proceeded to the castle hall, where they partook, but with temperance, of some refreshments, which were offered as a death-meal; and presently after left the castle, headed by young Damian, in the same slow and melancholy form in which they had entered. The monks remained within the castle to sing repeated services for the soul of the deceased, and for those of his faithful men-at-arms who had fallen around him, and who had been so much mangled during, and after, the contest with the Welsh, that it was scarce possible to know one individual from another; otherwise the body of Dennis Morolt would have obtained, as his faith well deserved, the honours of a separate funeral.*

CHAPTER XI.

——The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.—*Hamlet.*

THE religious rites which followed the funeral of Raymond Berenger, endured without interruption for the period of six days; during which, alms were distributed to the poor, and relief administered, at the expense of the Lady Eveline, to all those *who had suffered* by the late inroad. Death-meals, *as they were termed, were also* spread in honour of the deceased; but the lady herself, and most of his attendants, observed a stern course of vigil, discipline, and fasts, which appeared to the Normans a more decorous manner of testifying their respect for the dead, than the Saxon and Flemish custom of banqueting and drinking inordinately upon such occasions.

Mean while, the Constable De Lacy retained a large body of his men encamped under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse, for protection against some new irruption of the Welsh, while with the rest he took advantage of his victory, and struck terror into the British by many well-conducted forays, marked with ravages scarcely less hurtful than their own. Among the enemy, the evils of discord were added to those of defeat and invasion; for two distant relations of Gwenwyn contended for the throne he had lately occupied, and on this, as on many other occasions, the Britons suffered as much from internal dissension as from the sword of the Normans. A worse politician, and a less celebrated soldier, than the sagacious and successful De Lacy, could not have failed, under such circumstances, to negotiate as he did an advantageous peace, which, while it deprived Powys of a part of its frontier, and the command of some important passes, in which it was the Constable's purpose to build castles, rendered the Garde Doloureuse more secure than formerly, from any sudden attack on the part of their fiery and restless neighbours. De Lacy's care also went to re-establishing those settlers who had fled from their possessions, and putting the whole lordship, which now descended upon an unprotected female, into a state of defence as perfect as its situation on a hostile frontier could possibly permit.

Whilst thus anxiously prov'dent in the affairs of the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, De Lacy, during the space we have mentioned, sought not to disturb her filial grief by any personal intercourse. His nephew, indeed, was despatched by times every morning to lay before her his uncle's *devoirs*, in the high-flown language of the day, and acquaint her with the steps which he had taken in her affairs. As a maid due to his relative's high services, Damian was always admitted to see Eveline on such occasions, and returned charged with her grateful thanks, and her implicit acquiescence in whatever the Constable proposed for her consideration.

But when the days of rigid mourning were elapsed, the young De Lacy stated, on the part of his kinsman, that his treaty with the Welsh being concluded, and all things in this district arranged as well as circumstances would permit, the Constable of Chester now proposed to return into his own territory, in order to resume his instant preparations for the Holy Land, which the duty of chastising her enemies had for some days interrupted.

"And will not the noble Constable, before he departs from this place," said Eveline, with a burst of gratitude which the occasion well merited, "receive the personal thanks of her that was ready to perish, when he so valiantly came to her aid?"

"It was even on that point that I was commissioned to speak," replied Damian; "but my noble kinsman feels diffident to propose to you that which he most earnestly desires—the privilege of speaking to your own ear certain matters of high import, and with which he judges it fit to intrust no third party."

"Surely," said the maiden, blushing, "there can be naught beyond the bounds of maidenhood, in my seeing the noble Constable whenever such is his pleasure."

"But his vow," replied Damian, "binds my kinsman not to come beneath a roof until he sets sail for

The Welsh, a fierce and barbarous people, were often accused of mangling the bodies of their slain antagonists. Every one must remember Shakspeare's account, how

——"the noble Mortimer,
Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
Against the irregular and wild Glendower—
Was, by the rude hands of that Welshman, taken,
And a thousand of his people butcher'd:
Upon whose dead corpse there was much misuse,
Such beastly shameless transformation,
By those Welshwomen done, as may not be,
Without much shame, retold or spoken of."

Palestine; and in order to meet him, you must grace him so far as to visit his pavilion;—a condescension which, as a knight and Norman noble, he can scarcely ask of a damsel of high degree."

"And is that all?" said Eveline, who, educated in a remote situation, was a stranger to some of the nice points of etiquette which the damsels of the time observed in keeping their state towards the other sex. "Shall I not," she said, "go to render my thanks to my deliverer, since he cannot come hither to receive them? Tell the noble Hugo de Lacy, that, next to my gratitude to Heaven, it is due to him, and to his brave companions in arms. I will come to his tent as to a holy shrine; and, could such homage please him, I would come barefooted, were the road strewed with flints and with thorns."

"My uncle will be equally honoured and delighted with your resolve," said Damian; "but it will be his study to save you all unnecessary trouble, and with that view a pavilion shall be instantly planted before your castle gate, which, if it please you to grace it with your presence, may be the place for the desired interview."

Eveline readily acquiesced in what was proposed, as the expedient agreeable to the Constable, and recommended by Damian; but, in the simplicity of her heart, she saw no good reason why, under the guardianship of the latter, she should not instantly, and without farther form, have traversed the little familiar plain on which, when a child, she used to chase butterflies and gather king's-cups, and where of later years she was wont to exercise her palfrey on this well-known plain, being the only space, and that of small extent, which separated her from the camp of the Constable.

The youthful emissary, with whose presence she had now become familiar, retired to acquaint his kinsman and lord with the success of his commission; and Eveline experienced the first sensation of anxiety upon her own account which had agitated her bosom, since the defeat and death of Gwenwyn gave her permission to dedicate her thoughts exclusively to grief, for the loss which she had sustained in the person of her noble father. But now, when that grief, though not satiated, was blunted by solitary indulgence—now that she was to appear before the person of whose fame she had heard so much, of whose powerful protection she had received such recent proofs, her mind insensibly turned upon the nature and consequences of that important interview. She had seen Hugo de Lacy, indeed, at the great tournament at Chester, where his valour and skill were the theme of every tongue, and she had received the homage which he rendered her beauty when he assigned to her the prize, with all the gay flutterings of youthful vanity; but of his person and figure she had no distinct idea, excepting that he was a middle-sized man, dressed in peculiarly rich armour, and that the countenance, which looked out from under the shade of his raised visor, seemed to her juvenile estimate very nearly as old as that of her father. This person, of whom she had such slight recollection, had been the chosen instrument employed by her tutelar protectress in rescuing her from captivity, and in avenging the loss of a father, and she was bound by her vow to consider him as the arbiter of her fate, if indeed he should deem it worth his while to become so. She wearied her memory with vain efforts to recollect so much of his features as might give her some means of guessing at his disposition, and her judgment toiled in conjecturing what line of conduct he was likely to pursue towards her.

The great Baron himself seemed to attach to their meeting a degree of consequence, which was intimated by the formal preparations which he made for it. Eveline had imagined that he might have ridden to the gate of the castle in five minutes, and that, if a pavilion were actually necessary to the decorum of their interview, a tent could have been transferred from his leaguer to the castle gate, and pitched there in ten minutes more. But it was plain that the Constable considered much more form and ceremony as essential to their meeting; for in about half an hour *after Damian de Lacy had left* the castle, not fewer than twenty soldiers and artificers, under the direction of a pursuivant, whose tabard was decorated with the armorial bearings of the house of Lacy, were employed in erecting before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse one of those splendid pavilions, which were employed at tournaments and other occasions of public state. It was of purple silk, valanced with gold embroidery, having the cords of the same rich materials. The door-way was formed by six lances, the staves of which were plated with silver, and the blades composed of the same precious metal. These were pitched into the ground by couples, and crossed at the top, so as to form a sort of succession of arches, which were covered by drapery of sea-green silk, forming a pleasing contrast with the purple and gold.

The interior of the tent was declared by Dame Gillian and others, whose curiosity induced them to visit it, to be of a splendour agreeing with the outside. There were Oriental carpets, and there were tapestries of Ghent and Bruges mingled in gay profusion, while the top of the pavilion, covered with sky-blue silk, was arranged so as to resemble the firmament, and richly studded with a sun, moon, and stars, composed of solid silver. This gorgeous pavilion had been made for the use of the celebrated William of Ypres, who acquired such great wealth as general of the mercenaries of King Stephen, and was by him created Earl of Albemarle; but the chance of war had assigned it to De Lacy, after one of the dreadful engagements, so many of which occurred during the civil wars, betwixt Stephen and the Empress Maude, or Matilda. The Constable had never before been known to use it; for although wealthy and powerful, Hugo de Lacy was, on most occasions, plain and unostentatious; which, to those who knew him, made his present conduct seem the more remarkable. At the hour of noon he arrived, nobly mounted, at the gate of the castle, and drawing up a small body of servants, pages, and equerries, who attended him in their richest liveries, placed himself at their head, and directed his nephew to intimate to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, that the humblest of her servants awaited the honour of her presence at the castle gate.

Among the spectators who witnessed his arrival, there were many who thought that some part of the state and splendour attached to his pavilion and his retinue, had been better applied to set forth the person of the Constable himself, as his attire was simple even to meanness, and his person by no means of such distinguished bearing as might altogether dispense with the advantages of dress and ornament. The opinion became yet more prevalent, when he descended from horseback, until which time his masterly management of the noble animal he bestrode, gave a dignity to his person and figure, which he lost upon dismounting from his steel saddle. In height, the celebrated Constable scarce attained the middle size, and his limbs, though strongly built and well knit, were deficient in grace and ease of movement. His legs were slightly curved outwards, which gave him advantage as a horseman, but showed unfavourably when he was upon foot. He halted, though very slightly, in consequence of one of his legs having been broken by the fall of a charger, and inartificially set by an inexperienced surgeon. This, also, was a blemish in his deportment; and though his broad shoulders, sinewy arms, and expanded chest, betokened the strength which he often displayed, it was strength of a clumsy and ungraceful character. His language and gestures were those of one seldom used to converse with equals, more seldom still with superiors; short, abrupt, and decisive, almost to the verge of sternness. In the judgment of those who were habitually acquainted with the Constable, there was both dignity and kindness in his keen eye and expanded brow; but such as saw him for the first time judged less favourably, and pretended to discover a harsh and passionate expression, although they allowed his countenance to have, on the whole, a bold and martial character. His age was in reality not more than five-and-forty, but the fatigues of war and of climate had added in appearance ten years to that

period of time. By far the plainest dressed man of his train, he wore only a short Norman mantle, over the close dress of shamoy-leather, which, almost always covered by his armour, was in some places slightly soiled by its pressure. A brown hat, in which he wore a sprig of rosemary in memory of his vow, served for his head-gear—his good sword and dagger hung at a belt made of seal-skin.

Thus accoutred, and at the head of a glittering and gilded band of retainers, who watched his slightest glance, the Constable of Chester awaited the arrival of the Lady Eveline Berenger, at the gate of her castle of Doloureuse.

The trumpets from within announced her presence—the bridge fell, and, led by Damian de Lacy in his gayest habit, and followed by her train of females, and menial or vassal attendants, she came forth in her loveliness from under the massive and antique portal of her paternal fortress. She was dressed without ornaments of any kind, and in deep mourning weeds, as best befitted her recent loss; forming, in this respect, a strong contrast with the rich attire of her conductor, whose costly dress gleamed with jewels and embroidery, while their age and personal beauty made them in every other respect the fair counterpart of each other; a circumstance which probably gave rise to the delighted murmur and buzz which passed through the bystanders on their appearance, and which only respect for the deep mourning of Eveline prevented from breaking out into shouts of applause.

The instant that the fair foot of Eveline had made a step beyond the palisades which formed the outward barrier of the castle, the Constable de Lacy came forward to meet her, and, bending his right knee to the earth, craved pardon for the discourtesy which his vow had imposed on him, while he expressed his sense of the honour with which she now graced him, as one for which his life, devoted to her service, would be an inadequate acknowledgment.

The action and speech, though both in consistence with the romantic gallantry of the times, embarrassed Eveline; and the rather that this homage was so publicly rendered. She entreated the Constable to stand up, and not to add to the confusion of one who was already sufficiently at a loss how to acquit herself of the heavy debt of gratitude which she owed him. The constable arose accordingly, after saluting her hand, which she extended to him, and prayed her, since she was so far condescending, to deign to enter the poor hut he had prepared for her shelter, and to grant him the honour of the audience he had solicited. Eveline, without further answer than a bow, yielded him her hand, and, desiring the rest of her train to remain where they were, commanded the attendance of Rose Flammock.

"Lady," said the Constable, "the matters of which I am compelled thus hastily to speak, are of a nature the most private."

"This maiden," replied Eveline, "is my bower-woman, and acquainted with my most inward thoughts; I beseech you to permit her presence at our conference."

"It were better otherwise," said Hugo de Lacy, with some embarrassment; "but your pleasure shall be obeyed."

He led the Lady Eveline into the tent, and entreated her to be seated on a large pile of cushions, covered with rich Venetian silk. Rose placed herself behind her mistress, half kneeling upon the same cushions, and watched the motions of the all-accomplished soldier and statesman, whom the voice of fame lauded so loudly; enjoying his embarrassment as a triumph of her sex, and scarcely of opinion that his shamoy doublet and square form accorded with the splendour of the scene, or the almost angelic beauty of Eveline, the other actor therein.

"Lady," said the Constable, after some hesitation, "I would willingly say what it is my lot to tell you, in such terms as ladies love to listen to, and which surely your excellent beauty more especially deserves; *but I have been* too long trained in camps and councils *to express my meaning* otherwise than simply *and plainly.*"

"I shall the more easily understand you, my l said Eveline, trembling, though she scarce why.

"My story, then, must be a blunt one. Some there passed between your honourable fathe myself, touching a union of our houses."—He pa as if he wished or expected Eveline to say somet but, as she was silent, he proceeded. "I wo God, that as he was at the beginning of this t it had pleased Heaven he should have conducte concluded it with his usual wisdom; but remedy?—he has gone the path which we mu trend."

"Your lordship," said Eveline, "has nobly av the death of your noble friend."

"I have but done my devoir, lady, as a good k in defence of an endangered maiden—a Lord Ma in protection of the frontier—and a friend in ave his friend. But to the point.—Our long and line draws near to a close. Of my remote kins Randal Lacy, I will not speak; for in him nothing that is good or hopeful, nor have we b one for many years. My nephew, Damian, hopeful promise to be a worthy branch of our an tree—but he is scarce twenty years old, and h long career of adventure and peril to encounte he can honourably propose to himself the duti domestic privacy or matrimonial engagements. mother also is English, some abatement perha the escutcheon of his arms; yet, had ten years passed over him with the honours of chival should have proposed Damian de Lacy for the h ness to which I at present aspire."

"You—you, my lord!—it is impossible!" said line, endeavouring at the same time to suppre that could be offensive in the surprise which she not help exhibiting.

"I do not wonder," replied the Constable, calm for, the ice now being broken, he resumed the na steadiness of his manner and character,—"tha express surprise at this daring proposal, I have perhaps the form that pleases a lady's eye, and I forgotten,—that is, if ever I knew them,—the t and phrases which pleases a lady's ear; but, Eveline, the Lady of Hugh de Lacy will be one o foremost among the matronage of England."

"It will the better become the individual to w so high a dignity is offered," said Eveline, "to sider how far she is capable of discharging its dut

"Of that I fear nothing," said De Lacy. "She hath been so excellent a daughter, cannot be estimable in every other relation in life."

"I do not find that confidence in myself, my l replied the embarrassed maiden, "with which are so willing to load me—And I—forgive me—I crave time for other inquiries as well as those w respect myself."

"Your father, noble lady, had this union wa at heart. This scroll, signed with his own hand, show it." He bent his knee as he gave the p "The wife of De Lacy will have, as the daughte Raymond Berenger merits, the rank of a princ his widow, the dowery of a queen."

"Mock me not with your knee, my lord, while plead to me the paternal commands, which, joine other circumstances"——— She paused, and sig deeply—"leave me, perhaps, but little room for will!"

Emboldened by this answer, De Lacy, who hitherto remained on his knee, rose gently, and suming a seat beside the Lady Eveline, continue press his suit—not, indeed, in the language of pass but of a plain-spoken man, eagerly urging a prop on which his happiness depended. The vision of miraculous image was, it may be supposed, uppern in the mind of Eveline, who, tied down by solemn vow she had made on that occasion, felt self constrained to return evasive answers, wi she might perhaps have given a direct negative, her own wishes alone been to decide her reply.

"You cannot," she said, "expect from me, my l in this my so recent orphan state, that I should ex to a speedy determination upon an affair of such d importance. Give me leisure of your nobleness

consideration with myself—for consultation with my friends."

"Alas! fair Eveline," said the Baron, "do not be offended at my urgency. I cannot long delay setting forward on a distant and perilous expedition; and the short time left me for soliciting your favour, must be an apology for my importunity."

"And is it in these circumstances, noble De Lacy, that you would encumber yourself with family ties?" asked the maiden, timidly.

"I am God's soldier," said the Constable, "and He, in whose cause I fight in Palestine, will defend my wife in England."

"Hear then my present answer, my lord," said Eveline Berenger, rising from her seat. "To-morrow I proceed to the Benedictine nunnery at Gloucester, where resides my honoured father's sister, who is Abbess of that reverend house. To her guidance I will commit myself in this matter."

"A fair and maidenly resolution," answered De Lacy, who seemed, on his part, rather glad that the conference was abridged, "and, as I trust, not altogether unfavourable to the suit of your humble suppliant, since the good Lady Abbess hath been long my honoured friend." He then turned to Rose, who was about to attend her lady:—"Pretty maiden," he said, offering a chain of gold, "let this carcanet encircle thy neck, and buy thy good-will."

"My good-will cannot be purchased, my lord," said Rose, putting back the gift which he proffered.

"Your fair word, then," said the Constable, again pressing it upon her.

"Fair words are easily bought," said Rose, still rejecting the chain, "but they are seldom worth the purchase-money."

"Do you scorn my proffer, damsel?" said De Lacy; "it has graced the neck of a Norman count?"

"Give it to a Norman countess, then, my lord," said the damsel; "I am plain Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter. I keep my good word to go with my good-will, and a latten chain will become me as well as beaten gold."

"Peace, Rose," said her lady; "you are over malapert to talk thus to the Lord Constable.—And you, my lord," she continued, "permit me now to depart, since you are possessed of my answer to your present proposal. I regret it had not been of some less delicate nature, that by granting it at once, and without delay, I might have shown my sense of your services."

The lady was handed forth by the Constable of Chester, with the same ceremony which had been observed at their entrance, and she returned to her own castle, sad and anxious in mind for the event of this important conference. She gathered closely around her the great mourning veil, that the alteration of her countenance might not be observed; and, without pausing to speak even to Father Aldrovand, she instantly withdrew to the privacy of her own bower.

CHAPTER XII.

Now all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
And ladies of England that happy would prove,
Marry never for houses, nor marry for land,
Nor marry for nothing but only love.
Family Quarrels

WHEN the Lady Eveline had retired into her own private chamber, Rose Flammock followed her unbidden, and proffered her assistance in removing the large veil which she had worn while she was abroad; but the lady refused her permission, saying, "You are forward with service, maiden, when it is not required of you."

"You are displeased with me, lady!" said Rose.

"And if I am, I have cause," replied Eveline. "You know my difficulties—you know what my duty demands; yet, instead of aiding me to make the sacrifice, you render it more difficult."

"Would I had influence to guide your path!" said Rose; "you should find it a smooth one—ay, an honest and straight *one, to boot!*"

"*How mean you, maiden?*" said Eveline.

"I would have you," answered Rose, "recall the encouragement—the consent, I may almost call it, you have yielded to this proud baron. He is too great to be loved himself—too haughty to love you as you deserve. If you wed him, you wed gilded misery, and, it may be, dishonour as well as discontent."

"Remember, damsel," answered Eveline Berenger, "his services towards us."

"His services?" answered Rose. "He ventured his life for us, indeed, but so did every soldier in his host. And am I bound to wed any ruffling blade among them, because he fought when the trumpet sounded? I wonder what is the meaning of their *devoir*, as they call it, when it shames them not to claim the highest reward woman can bestow, merely for discharging the duty of a gentleman by a distressed creature. A gentleman, said I?—The coarsest boor in Flanders would hardly expect thanks for doing the duty of a man by women in such a case."

"But my father's wishes?" said the young lady.

"They had reference, without doubt, to the inclination of your father's daughter," answered the attendant. "I will not do my late noble lord—(may God assoilzie him!)—the injustice to suppose he would have urged aught in this matter which squared not with your free choice."

"Then my vow—my fatal vow—as I had well nigh called it," said Eveline. "May Heaven forgive me my ingratitude to my patroness!"

"Even this shakes me not," said Rose; "I will never believe our Lady of Mercy would exact such a penalty for her protection, as to desire me to wed the man I could not love. She smiled, you say, upon your prayer. Go—lay at her feet those difficulties which oppress you, and see if she will not smile again. Or seek a dispensation from your vow—seek it at the expense of the half of your estate—seek it at the expense of your whole property. Go a pilgrimage barefooted to Rome—do any thing but give your hand where you cannot give your heart."

"You speak warmly, Rose," said Eveline, still sighing as she spoke.

"Alas! my sweet lady, I have cause. Have I not seen a household where love was not—where, although there was worth and good-will, and enough of the means of life, all was imbittered by regrets, which were not only vain, but criminal?"

"Yet, methinks, Rose, a sense of what is due to ourselves and to others, may, if listened to, guide and comfort us under such feelings even as thou hast described."

"It will save us from sin, lady, but not from sorrow," answered Rose; "and wherefore should we, with our eyes open, rush into circumstances where duty must war with inclination? Why row against wind and tide, when you may as easily take advantage of the breeze?"

"Because the voyage of my life lies where winds and currents oppose me," answered Eveline. "It is my fate, Rose."

"Not unless you make it such by choice," answered Rose. "O, could you but have seen the pale cheek, sunken eye, and dejected bearing of my poor mother!—I have said too much."

"It was then your mother," said her young lady, "of whose unhappy wedlock you have spoken?"

"It was—it was," said Rose, bursting into tears. "I have exposed my own shame to save you from sorrow. Unhappy she was, though most guiltless—so unhappy, that the breach of the dyke, and the inundation in which she perished, were, but for my sake, to her welcome as night to the weary labourer. She had a heart like yours, formed to love and be loved; and it would be doing honour to yonder proud Baron, to say he had such worth as my father's.—Yet was she most unhappy. O! my sweet lady, be warned, and break off this ill-omened match!"

Eveline returned the pressure with which the affectionate girl, as she clung to her hand, enforced her well-meant advice, and then muttered, with a profound sigh,—"Rose, it is too late."

"Never—never," said Rose, looking eagerly around the room. "Where are those writing materials?—Let me bring Father Aldrovand, and instruct him of

your pleasure—or, stay, the good father hath himself an eye on the splendours of the world which he thinks he has abandoned—he will be no safe secretary.—I will go myself to the Lord Constable—*me* his rank cannot dazzle, or his wealth bribe, or his power overawe. I will tell him he doth no knightly part towards you, to press his contract with your father in such an hour of helpless sorrow—no pious part, in delaying the execution of his vows for the purpose of marrying or giving in marriage—no honest part, to press himself on a maiden whose heart has not decided in his favour—no wise part, to marry one whom he must presently abandon, either to solitude, or to the dangers of a profligate court."

"You have not courage for such an embassy, Rose," said her mistress, sadly smiling through her tears at her youthful attendant's zeal.

"Not courage for it!—and wherefore not?—Try me," answered the Flemish maiden, in return. "I am neither Saracen nor Welshman—his lance and sword scare me not. I follow not his banner—his voice of command concerns me not. I could with your leave, boldly tell him he is a selfish man, veiling with fair and honourable pretext his pursuit of objects which concern his own pride and gratification, and founding high claims on having rendered the services which common humanity demanded. And all for what?—Forsooth, the great De Lacy must have an heir to his noble house, and his fair nephew is not good enough to be his representative, because his mother was of Anglo-Saxon strain, and the real heir must be pure unmixed Norman; and for this Lady Eveline Berenger, in the first bloom of youth, must be wedded to a man who might be her father, and who, after leaving her unprotected for years, will return in such guise as might beseem her grandfather!"

"Since he is thus scrupulous concerning purity of lineage," said Eveline, "perhaps he may call to mind—what so good a herald as he is cannot fail to know—that I am of Saxon strain by my father's mother."

"Oh," replied Rose, "he will forgive that blot in the heiress of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Fie, Rose," answered her mistress, "thou dost him wrong in taxing him with avarice."

"Perhaps so," answered Rose; "but he is undeniably ambitious; and Avarice, I have heard, is Ambition's bastard brother, though Ambition be sometimes ashamed of the relationship."

"You speak too boldly, damsel," said Eveline; "and, while I acknowledge your affection, it becomes me to check your mode of expression."

"Nay, take that tone, and I have done," said Rose. "To Eveline, whom I love, and who loves me, I can speak freely—but to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, the proud Norman damsel, (which when you choose to be you can be,) I can curtsey as low as my station demands, and speak as little truth as she cares to hear."

"Thou art a wild but a kind girl," said Eveline: "no one who did not know thee would think that soft and childish exterior covered such a soul of fire. Thy mother must indeed have been the being of feeling and passion you paint her; for thy father—nay, nay, never arm in his defence until he be attacked—I only meant to say, that his solid sense and sound judgment are his most distinguished qualities."

"And I would you would avail yourself of them, lady," said Rose.

"In fitting things I will; but he were rather an unmeet counsellor in that which we now treat of," said Eveline.

"You mistake him," answered Rose Flammock, "and underrate his value. Sound judgment is like to the graduated measuring-wand, which, though usually applied only to coarser cloths, will give with equal truth the dimensions of Indian silk, or of cloth of gold."

"Well—well—this affair presses not instantly at least," said the young lady. "Leave me now, Rose, *and send Gillian the tirewoman hither*—I have directions to give about the packing and removal of my wardrobe."

"That Gillian the tirewoman hath been a mighty favourite of late," said Rose; "time was when it was otherwise."

"I like her manners as little as thou dost," said Eveline; "but she is old Raoul's wife—she was a sort of half-favourite with my dear father—who, like other men, was perhaps taken by that very freedom which we think unseemly in persons of our sex; and then, there is no other woman in the Castle that hath such skill in empacketing clothes without the risk of their being injured."

"That last reason alone," said Rose, smiling, "is, admit, an irresistible pretension to favour, and Dame Gillian shall presently attend you.—But take my advice, lady—keep her to her bales and her mails, and let her not prate to you on what concerns her not."

So saying, Rose left the apartment, and her young lady looked after her in silence—then murmured to herself—"Rose loves me truly; but she would willingly be more of the mistress than the maiden; and then she is somewhat jealous of every other person that approaches me.—It is strange, that I have not seen Damian de Lacy since my interview with the Constable. He anticipates, I suppose, the chance of his finding in me a severe aunt!"

But the domestics, who crowed for orders with reference to her removal early on the morrow, began now to divert the current of their lady's thoughts from the consideration of her own particular situation, which, as the prospect presented nothing pleasant, with the elastic spirit of youth, she willingly postponed till further leisure.

CHAPTER XIII.

Too much rest is rust,
There's ever cheer in changing;
We tyne by too much trust,
So we'll be up and ranging.—*Old Song.*

EARLY on the subsequent morning, a gallant company, saddened indeed by the deep mourning which their principals wore, left the well-defended Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, which had been so lately the scene of such remarkable events.

The sun was just beginning to exhale the heavy dews which had fallen during the night, and to disperse the thin gray mist which eddied around towers and battlements, when Wilkin Flammock, with six crossbowmen on horseback, and as many spearmen on foot, sallied forth from under the Gothic gateway, and crossed the sounding drawbridge. After this advanced guard, came four household servants well mounted, and after them, as many inferior female attendants, all in mourning. Then rode forth the young Lady Eveline herself, occupying the centre of the little procession, and her long black robes formed a striking contrast to the colour of her milk-white palfrey. Beside her, on a Spanish jennet, the gift of her affectionate father,—who had procured it at a high rate, and who would have given half his substance to gratify his daughter,—sat the girlish form of Rose Flammock, who had so much of juvenile shyness in her manner, so much of feeling and of judgment in her thoughts and actions. Dame Margery followed, mixed in the party escorted by Father Aldrovand, whose company she chiefly frequented; for Margery affected a little the character of the devotee, and her influence in the family, as having been Eveline's nurse, was so great as to render her no improper companion for the chaplain, when her lady did not require her attendance on her own person. Then came old Raoul the huntsman, his wife, and two or three other officers of Raymond Berenger's household; the steward with his golden chain, velvet cassock, and white wand, bringing up the rear, which was closed by a small band of archers, and four men-at-arms. The guards, and indeed the greater part of the attendants, were only designed to give the necessary degree of honour to the young lady's movements, by accompanying her a short space from the castle, where they were met by the Constable of Chester, who, with a retinue of thirty lances, proposed himself to escort Eveline as far as Gloucester, the place of her destination. Under this protection no danger was to

be apprehended, even if the severe defeat so lately sustained by the Welsh had not of itself been likely to prevent any attempt, on the part of those hostile mountaineers, to disturb the safety of the marches for some time to come.

In pursuance of this arrangement, which permitted the armed part of Eveline's retinue to return for the protection of the castle, and the restoration of order in the district around, the Constable awaited her at the fatal bridge, at the head of the gallant band of selected horsemen whom he had ordered to attend upon him. The parties halted, as if to salute each other; but the Constable, observing that Eveline drew her veil more closely around her, and recollecting the loss she had so lately sustained on that luckless spot, had the judgment to confine his greeting to a mute reverence, so low that the lofty plume which he wore, (for he was now in complete armour,) mingled with the flowing mane of his gallant horse. Wilkin Flammock next halted, to ask the lady if she had any farther commands.

"None, good Wilkin," said Eveline; "but to be, as ever, true and watchful."

"The properties of a good mastiff," said Flammock. "Some rude sagacity, and a stout hand instead of a sharp case of teeth, are all that I can claim to be added to them—I will do my best.—Fare thee well, Roschen! Thou art going among strangers—forget not the qualities which made thee loved at home. The saints bless thee—farewell!"

The steward next approached to take his leave, but in doing so, had nearly met with a fatal accident. It had been the pleasure of Raoul, who was in his own disposition crossgrained, and in person rheumatic, to accommodate himself with an old Arab horse, which had been kept, for the sake of the breed, as lean, and almost as lame as himself, and with a temper as vicious as that of a fiend. Betwixt the rider and the horse was a constant misunderstanding, testified on Raoul's part by oaths, rough checks with the curb, and severe digging with the spurs, which Mahound (so paganishly was the horse named) answered by plunging, bounding, and endeavouring by all expedients to unseat his rider, as well as striking and lashing out furiously at whatever else approached him. It was thought by many of the household, that Raoul preferred this vicious cross-tempered animal upon all occasions when he travelled in company with his wife, in order to take advantage by the chance, that amongst the various kicks, plunges, gambades, lashings out, and other eccentricities of Mahound, his heels might come in contact with Dame Gillian's ribs. And now, when as the important steward spurred up his palfrey to kiss his young lady's hand, and to take his leave, it seemed to the bystanders as if Raoul so managed his bridle and spur, that Mahound yerked out his hoofs at the same moment, one of which coming in contact with the steward's thigh, would have splintered it like a rotten reed, had the parties been a couple of inches nearer to each other. As it was, the steward sustained considerable damage; and they that observed the grin upon Raoul's vinegar countenance entertained little doubt, that Mahound's heels then and there avenged certain nods, winks, and wreathed smiles, which had passed betwixt the gold-chained functionary and the coquettish tirewoman since the party left the castle.

This incident abridged the painful solemnity of parting betwixt the Lady Eveline and her dependants, and lessened at the same time the formality of her meeting with the Constable, and, as it were, resigning herself to his protection.

Hugo de Lacy, having commanded six of his men-at-arms to proceed as an advanced-guard, remained himself to see the steward properly deposited on a litter, and then, with the rest of his followers, marched in military fashion about one hundred yards in the rear of Lady Eveline and her retinue, judiciously forbearing to present himself to her society while she was engaged in the orisons which the place where they met naturally suggested, and waiting patiently until the elasticity of youthful temper should require some diversion of the gloomy thoughts which the scene inspired.

Guided by this policy, the Constable did not approach the ladies until the advance of the morning rendered it politeness to remind them, that a pleasant spot for breaking their fast occurred in the neighbourhood, where he had ventured to make some preparations for rest and refreshment. Immediately after the Lady Eveline had intimated her acceptance of this courtesy, they came in sight of the spot he alluded to, marked by an ancient oak, which, spreading its broad branches far and wide, reminded the traveller of that of Mamre, under which celestial beings accepted the hospitality of the patriarch. Across two of these huge projecting arms was flung a piece of rose-coloured sarsenet, as a canopy to keep off the morning beams, which were already rising high. Cushions of silk, interchanged with others covered with the furs of animals of the chase, were arranged round a repast, which a Norman cook had done his utmost to distinguish, by the superior delicacy of his art, from the gross meals of the Saxons, and the penurious simplicity of the Welsh tables. A fountain, which bubbled from under a large mossy stone at some distance, refreshed the air with its sound, and the taste with its liquid crystal; while, at the same time, it formed a cistern for cooling two or three flasks of Gascon wine and hippocras, which were at that time the necessary accompaniments of the morning meal.

When Eveline, with Rose, the Confessor, and at some farther distance her faithful nurse, was seated at this silvan banquet, the leaves rustling to a gentle breeze, the water bubbling in the background, the birds twittering around, while the half-heard sounds of conversation and laughter at a distance announced that their guard was in the vicinity, she could not avoid making the Constable some natural compliment on his happy selection of a place of repose.

"You do me more than justice," replied the Baron; "the spot was selected by my nephew, who hath a fancy like a minstrel. Myself am but slow in imagining such devices."

Rose looked full at her mistress, as if she endeavoured to look into her very inmost soul; but Eveline answered with the utmost simplicity,—"And wherefore hath not the noble Damian waited to join us at the entertainment which he hath directed?"

"He prefers riding onward," said the Baron, "with some light-horsemen; for, notwithstanding there are now no Welsh knaves stirring, yet the marches are never free from robbers and outlaws; and though there is nothing to fear for a band like ours, yet you should not be alarmed even by the approach of danger."

"I have indeed seen but too much of it lately," said Eveline; and relapsed into the melancholy mood from which the novelty of the scene had for a moment awakened her.

Mean while, the Constable, removing, with the assistance of his squire, his mailed hood and its steel crest, as well as his gauntlets, remained in his flexible coat-of-mail, composed entirely of rings of steel curiously interwoven, his hands bare, and his brows covered with a velvet bonnet of a peculiar fashion, appropriated to the use of knights, and called a *mortier*, which permitted him both to converse and to eat more easily than when he wore the full defensive armour. His discourse was plain, sensible, and manly; and, turning upon the state of the country, and the precautions to be observed for governing and defending so disorderly a frontier, it became gradually interesting to Eveline, one of whose warmest wishes was to be the protectress of her father's vassals. De Lacy, on his part, seemed much pleased; for, young as Eveline was, her questions showed intelligence, and her mode of answering, both apprehension and docility. In short, familiarity was so far established betwixt them, that, in the next stage of their journey, the Constable seemed to think his appropriate place was at the Lady Eveline's bridle-rein; and although she certainly did not countenance his attendance, yet neither did she seem willing to discourage it.—Himself no ardent lover, although captivated both with the beauty and the amiable qualities of the fair orphan, De Lacy was satisfied with being endured as a companion, and made no efforts to improve his

opportunity which this familiarity afforded him, by recurring to any of the topics of the preceding day.

A halt was made at noon in a small village, where the same purveyor had made preparations for their accommodation, and particularly for that of the Lady Eveline; but, something to her surprise, he himself remained invisible. The conversation of the Constable of Chester was, doubtless, in the highest degree instructive; but at Eveline's years, a maiden might be excused for wishing some addition to the society in the person of a younger and less serious attendant; and when she recollected the regularity with which Damian Lacy had hitherto made his respects to her, she rather wondered at his continued absence. But her reflection went no deeper than the passing thought of one who was not quite so much delighted with her present company as not to believe it capable of an agreeable addition. She was lending a patient ear to the account which the Constable gave her of the descent and pedigree of a gallant knight of the distinguished family of Herbert; at whose castle he purposed to repose during the night, when one of the retinue announced a messenger from the Lady of Baldringham.

"My honoured father's aunt," said Eveline, arising to testify that respect for age and relationship which the manners of the time required.

"I knew not," said the Constable, "that my gallant friend had such a relative."

"She was my grandmother's sister," answered Eveline, "a noble Saxon lady; but she disliked the match formed with a Norman house, and never saw her sister after the period of her marriage."

She broke off, as the messenger, who had the appearance of the steward of a person of consequence, entered their presence, and, bending his knee reverently, delivered a letter, which, being examined by Father Aldrovand, was found to contain the following invitation, expressed, not in French, then the general language of communication amongst the gentry, but in the old Saxon language, modified as it now was by some intermixture of French.

"If the grand-daughter of Aelfreid of Baldringham hath so much of the old Saxon strain as to desire to see an ancient relation, who still dwells in the house of her forefathers, and lives after their manner, she is thus invited to repose for the night in the dwelling of Ermengarde of Baldringham."

"Your pleasure will be, doubtless, to decline the present hospitality?" said the Constable de Lacy; "the noble Herbert expects us, and has made great preparation."

"Your presence, my lord," said Eveline, "will more than console him for my absence. It is fitting and proper that I should meet my aunt's advances to reconciliation, since she has condescended to make them."

De Lacy's brow was slightly clouded, for seldom had he met with any thing approaching to contradiction of his pleasure. "I pray you to reflect, Lady Eveline," he said, "that your aunt's house is probably defenceless, or at least very imperfectly guarded.—Would it not be your pleasure that I should continue my dutiful attendance?"

"Of that, my lord, mine aunt can, in her own house, be the sole judge; and methinks, as she has not deemed it necessary to request the honour of your lordship's company, it were unbecoming in me to permit you to take the trouble of attendance:—you have already had but too much on my account."

"But for the sake of your own safety, madam," said De Lacy, unwilling to leave his charge.

"My safety, my lord, cannot be endangered in the house of so near a relative; whatever precautions she may take on her own behalf, will doubtless be amply sufficient for mine."

"I hope it will be found so," said De Lacy; "and I will at least add to them the security of a patrol around the castle during your abode in it." He stopped, and then proceeded with some hesitation to express his *hope, that Eveline, now* about to visit a kinswoman *whose prejudices against the* Norman race were *generally known, would be on her guard* against what *she might hear upon that subject.*

Eveline answered with dignity, that the daughter of Raymond Berenger was unlikely to listen to any opinions which would affect the dignity of that good knight's nation and descent; and with this assurance, the Constable finding it impossible to obtain any which had more special reference to himself and his suit, was compelled to remain satisfied. He recollected also that the castle of Herbert was within two miles of the habitation of the Lady of Baldringham, and that his separation from Eveline was but for one night; yet a sense of the difference betwixt their years, and perhaps of his own deficiency in those lighter qualifications by which the female heart is supposed to be most frequently won, rendered even this temporary absence matter of anxious thought and apprehension; so that, during their afternoon journey, he rode in silence by Eveline's side, rather meditating what might chance to-morrow, than endeavouring to avail himself of present opportunity. In this unsocial manner they travelled on until the point was reached where they were to separate for the evening.

This was an elevated spot, from which they could see, on the right hand, the castle of Amelot Herbert, rising high upon an eminence, with all its Gothic pinnacles and turrets; and on the left, low-embowered amongst oaken woods, the rude and lonely dwelling in which the Lady of Baldringham still maintained the customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and looked with contempt and hatred on all innovations that had been introduced since the battle of Hastings.

Here the Constable De Lacy, having charged a part of his men to attend the Lady Eveline to the house of her relation, and to keep watch around it with the utmost vigilance, but at such a distance as might not give offence or inconvenience to the family, kissed her hand, and took a reluctant leave. Eveline proceeded onwards by a path so little trodden, as to show the solitary condition of the mansion to which it led. Large kine, of an uncommon and valuable breed, were feeding in the rich pastures around; and now and then fallow deer, which appeared to have lost the shyness of their nature, tripped across the glades of the woodland, or stood and lay in small groups under some great oak. The transient pleasure which such a scene of rural quiet was calculated to afford, changed to more serious feelings, when a sudden turn brought her at once in front of the mansion-house, of which she had seen nothing since she first beheld it from the point where she parted with the Constable, and which she had more than one reason for regarding with some apprehension.

The house, for it could not be termed a castle, was only two stories high, low and massively built, with doors and windows forming the heavy round arch which is usually called Saxon;—the walls were mantled with various creeping plants, which had crept along them undisturbed—grass grew up to the very threshold, at which hung a buffalo's horn, suspended by a brass chain. A massive door of black oak closed a gate, which much resembled the ancient entrance of a ruined sepulchre, and not a soul appeared to acknowledge or greet their arrival.

"Were I you, my Lady Eveline," said the officious dame Gillian, "I would turn bridle yet; for this old dungeon seems little likely to afford food or shelter to Christian folks."

Eveline imposed silence on her indiscreet attendant, though herself exchanging a look with Rose which confessed something like timidity, as she commanded Raoul to blow the horn at the gate. "I have heard," she said, "that my aunt loves the ancient customs so well, that she is loath to admit into her halls any thing younger than the time of Edward the Confessor."

Raoul, in the mean time, cursing the rude instrument which baffled his skill in sounding a regular call, and gave voice only to a tremendous and discordant roar, which seemed to shake the old walls, thick as they were, repeated his summons three times before they obtained admittance. On the third sounding, the gate opened, and a numerous retinue of servants of both sexes appeared in the dark and narrow hall, at the upper end of which a great fire of wood was sending its furnace-blast up an antique chimney, whose

front, as extensive as that of a modern kitchen, was carved over with ornaments of massive stone, and garnished on the top with a long range of niches, from each of which frowned the image of some Saxon saint, whose barbarous name was scarce to be found in the Romish calendar.

The same officer who had brought the invitation from his lady to Eveline, now stepped forward, as she supposed, to assist her from her palfrey; but it was in reality to lead it by the bridle-rein into the paved hall itself, and up to a raised platform, or dais, at the upper end of which she was at length permitted to dismount. Two matrons of advanced years, and four young women of gentle birth, educated by the bounty of Ermengarde, attended with reverence the arrival of her kinswoman. Eveline would have inquired of them for her grand-aunt, but the matrons with much respect laid their fingers on their mouths, as if to enjoin her silence; a gesture which, united to the singularity of her reception in other respects, still further excited her curiosity to see her venerable relative.

It was soon gratified; for, through a pair of folding-doors, which opened not far from the platform on which she stood, she was ushered into a large low apartment hung with arras; at the upper end of which, under a species of canopy, was seated the ancient Lady of Baldringham. Fourscore years had not quenched the brightness of her eyes, or bent an inch of her stately height; her gray hair was still so profuse as to form a tier, combined as it was with a chaplet of ivy leaves; her long dark-coloured gown fell in ample folds, and the broidered girdle, which gathered it around her, was fastened by a buckle of gold, studded with precious stones, which were worth an Earl's ransom; her features, which had once been beautiful, or rather majestic, bore still, though faded and wrinkled, an air of melancholy and stern grandeur, that assorted well with her garb and deportment. She had a staff of ebony in her hand; at her feet rested a large aged wolf-dog, who pricked his ears and bristled up his neck, as the step of a stranger, a sound so seldom heard in those halls, approached the chair in which his aged mistress sat motionless.

"Peace, Thryme," said the venerable dame; "and thou, daughter of the house of Baldringham, approach, and fear not their ancient servant."

The hound sunk down to his couchant posture when she spoke, and, excepting the red glare of his eyes, might have seemed a hieroglyphical emblem, lying at the feet of some ancient priestess of Woden or Freya; so strongly did the appearance of Ermengarde, with her rod and her chaplet, correspond with the ideas of the days of Paganism. Yet he who had thus deemed of her would have done therein much injustice to a venerable Christian matron, who had given many a hide of land to holy church, in honour of God and Saint Dunstan.

Ermengarde's reception of Eveline was of the same antiquated and formal cast with her mansion and her exterior. She did not at first arise from her seat when the noble maiden approached her, nor did she even admit her to the salute which she advanced to offer; but, laying her hand on Eveline's arm, stopped her as she advanced, and perused her countenance with an earnest and unsparing eye of minute observation.

"Berwine," she said to the most favoured of the two attendants, "our niece hath the skin and eyes of the Saxon hue; but the hue of her eye-brows and hair is from the foreigner and alien.—Thou art, nevertheless, welcome to my house, maiden," she added, addressing Eveline, "especially if thou canst bear to hear that thou art not absolutely a perfect creature, as doubtless these flatterers around thee have taught thee to believe."

So saying, she at length arose, and saluted her niece with a kiss on the forehead. She released her not, however, from her grasp, but proceeded to give the attention to her garments which she had hitherto bestowed upon her features.

"Saint *Dunstan keep us from vanity!*" she said; "*and so this is the new guise—and modest maidens wear such tunics as these, showing the shape of* their persons as plain as if (Saint Mary defend us!) they were altogether without garments! And see, Berwine, these gauds on the neck, and that neck itself uncovered as low as the shoulder—these be the guises which strangers have brought into merry England! and this pouch, like a player's placket, hath but little to do with housewifery, I wot; and the dagger, too, like a glee-man's wife, that rides a mumming in masculine apparel—dost thou ever go to the wars, maiden, that thou wearest steel at thy girdle?"

Eveline, equally surprised and disobliged by the depreciating catalogue of her apparel, replied to the last question with some spirit,—"The mode may have altered, madam; but I only wear such garments as are now worn by those of my age and condition. For the poniard, may it please you, it is not many days since I regarded it as the last resource betwixt me and dishonour."

"The maiden speaks well and boldly, Berwine," said Dame Ermengarde; "and, in truth, pass we but over some of these vain fripperies, is attired in a comely fashion.—Thy father, I hear, fell knight-like in the field of battle."

"He did so," answered Eveline her eyes filling with tears at the recollection of her recent loss.

"I never saw him," continued Dame Ermengarde: "he carried the old Norman scorn towards the Saxon stock, whom they wed but for what they can make by them, as the bramble clings to the elm;—nay, never seek to vindicate him," she continued, observing that Eveline was about to speak, "I have known the Norman spirit for many a year ere thou wert born."

At this moment the steward appeared in the chamber, and, after a long genuflection, asked his lady's pleasure concerning the guard of Norman soldiers who remained without the mansion.

"Norman soldiers so near the house of Baldringham!" said the old lady, fiercely; "who brings them hither, and for what purpose?"

"They came, as I think," said the sewer, "to wait on and guard this gracious young lady."

"What, my daughter," said Ermengarde, in a tone of melancholy reproach, "darest thou not trust thyself unguarded for one night in the castle of thy forefathers?"

"God forbid else!" said Eveline. "But these men are not mine, nor under my authority. They are part of the train of the Constable De Lacy, who left them to watch around the castle, thinking there might be danger from robbers."

"Robbers," said Ermengarde, "have never harmed the house of Baldringham, since a Norman robber stole from it its best treasure in the person of thy grandmother.—And so, poor bird, thou art already captive—unhappy flutterer! But it is thy lot, and wherefore should I wonder or repine? When was there fair maiden with a wealthy dower, but she was ere maturity destined to be the slave of some of those petty kings, who allow us to call nothing ours that their passions can covet? Well—I cannot aid thee—I am but a poor and neglected woman, feeble both from sex and age.—And to which of these De Lacys art thou the destined household drudge?"

A question so asked, and by one whose prejudices were of such a determined character, was not likely to draw from Eveline any confession of the real circumstances in which she was placed, since it was but too plain her Saxon relation could have afforded her neither sound counsel nor useful assistance. She replied therefore briefly, that as the Lacys, and the Normans in general, were unwelcome to her kinswoman, she would entreat of the commander of the patrol to withdraw it from the neighbourhood of Baldringham.

"Not so, my niece," said the old lady; "as we cannot escape the Norman neighbourhood, or get beyond the sound of their curfew, it signifies not whether they be near our walls or more far off so that they enter them not.—And, Berwine, bid Hundwolf drench the Normans with liquor and gorge them with food—food of the best, and liquor of the strongest. Let them not say the old Saxon hag's churlish of her bare-

pitality. Bronch a piece of wine, for I warrant their gentle stomachs brook no ale."

Berwine, her huge bunch of keys jangling at her girdle, withdrew to give the necessary directions, and presently returned. Mean while Ermengarde proceeded to question her niece more closely. "Is it that thou wilt not, or canst not, tell me to which of the De Lacys thou art to be boudswoman ?—to the overweening Constable, who, sheathed in impenetrable armour, and mounted on a swift and strong horse as invulnerable as himself, takes pride that he rides down and stabs at his ease, and with perfect safety, the naked Welshmen ?—or is it to his nephew, the beardless Damian ?—or must thy possessions go to mend a breuch in the fortunes of that other cousin, Randal Lacy, the decayed reveller, who, they say can no longer ruffle it among the debauched crusaders for want of means ?"

"My honoured aunt," replied Eveline, naturally displeased with this discourse, "to none of the Lacys, and I trust to none other, Saxon or Norman, will your kinswoman become a household drudge. There was, before the death of my honourable father, some treaty betwixt him and the Constable, on which account I cannot at present decline his attendance; but what maybe the issue of it, fate must determine."

"But I can show thee, niece, how the balance of fate inclines," said Ermengarde, in a low and mysterious voice. "Those united with us by blood have, in some sort, the privilege of looking forward beyond the points of present time, and seeing in their very bud the thorns or flowers which are one day to encircle their head."

"For my own sake, noble kinswoman," answered Eveline, "I would decline such foreknowledge, even were it possible to acquire it without trangressing the rules of the Church. Could I have foreseen what has befallen me within these last unhappy days, I had lost the enjoyment of every happy moment before that time."

"Nevertheless, daughter," said the Lady of Baldringham, "thou, like others of thy race, must within this house conform to the rule, of passing one night within the chamber of the Red-Finger.—Berwine, see that it be prepared for my niece's reception."

"I—I—have heard speak of that chamber, gracious aunt," said Eveline, timidly, "and if it may consist with your good pleasure, I would not now choose to pass the night there. My health has suffered by my late perils and fatigues, and with your good-will I will delay to another time the usage, which I have heard is peculiar to the daughters of the house of Baldringham."

"And which, notwithstanding, you would willingly avoid," said the old Saxon lady, bending her brows angrily. "Has not such disobedience cost your house enough already ?"

"Indeed, honoured and gracious lady," said Berwine, unable to forbear interference, though well knowing the obstinacy of her patroness, "that chamber is in disrepair, and cannot easily on a sudden be made fit for the Lady Eveline; and the noble damsel looks so pale, and hath lately suffered so much, that, might I have the permission to advise, this were better delayed."

"Thou art a fool, Berwine," said the old lady, sternly; "thinkest thou I will bring anger and misfortune on my house, by suffering this girl to leave it without rendering the usual homage to the Red-Finger? Go to—let the room be made ready—small preparation may serve, if she cherish not tho Norman nicety about bed and lodging. Do not reply; but do as I command thee.—And you, Eveline—are you so far degenerated from the brave spirit of your ancestry that you dare not pass a few hours in an ancient apartment ?"

"You are my hostess, gracious madam," said Eveline, "and must assign my apartment where you judge proper—my courage is such as innocence and some pride of blood and birth have given me. It has *been, of late, severely tried*; but, since such is your *pleasure, and the custom of your house*, my heart is *yet strong enough to encounter* what you propose to *subject me to.*"

She paused here in displeasure; for she resented, in some measure, her aunt's conduct, as unkind and inhospitable. And yet when she reflected upon the foundation of the legend of the chamber to which she was consigned, she could not but regard the Lady of Baldringham as having considerable reason for her conduct, according to the traditions of the family, and the belief of the times, in which Eveline herself was devout.

CHAPTER XIV.

Sometimes, methinks, I hear the groans of ghosts,
Then hollow sounds and lamentable screams;
Then, like a dying echo from afar,
My mother's voice, that cries, "Wed not, Almeyda—
Forewarned, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime."

Don Sebastian.

THE evening at Baldringham would have seemed of portentous and unendurable length, had it not been that apprehended danger makes time pass quickly betwixt us and the dreaded hour, and that if Eveline felt little interested or amused by the conversation of her aunt and Berwine, which turned upon the long deduction of their ancestors from the warlike Horsa, and the feats of Saxon champions, and the miracles of Saxon monks, she was still better pleased to listen to these legends, than to anticipate her retreat to the destined and dreaded apartment where she was to pass the night. There lacked not, however, such amusement as the house of Baldringham could afford to pass away the evening. Blessed by a grave old Saxon monk, the chaplain of the house, a sumptuous entertainment, which might have sufficed twenty hungry men, was served up before Ermengarde and her niece, whose sole assistants, besides the reverend man, were Berwine and Rose Flammock. Eveline was the less inclined to do justice to this excess of hospitality, that the dishes were all of the gross and substantial nature which the Saxons admired, but which contrasted disadvantageously with the refined and delicate cookery of the Normans, as did the moderate cup of light and high-flavoured Gascon wine, tempered with more than half its quantity of the purest water, with the mighty ale, the high-spiced pigment and hippocras, and the other potent liquors, which, one after another, were in vain proffered for her acceptance by the steward Hundwolf, in honour of the hospitality of Baldringham.

Neither were the stated amusements of the evening more congenial to Eveline's taste, than the profusion of her aunt's solid refection. When the boards and tresses, on which the viands had been served, were withdrawn from the apartment, the menials, under direction of the steward, proceeded to light several long waxen torches, one of which was graduated for the purpose of marking the passing time, and dividing it into portions. These were announced by means of brasen balls, suspended by threads from the torch, the spaces betwixt them being calculated to occupy a certain time in burning; so that, when the flame reached the thread, and the balls fell, each in succession, into a brasen basin, placed for its reception, the office of a modern clock was in some degree discharged. By this light the party was arranged for the evening.

The ancient Ermengarde's lofty and ample chair was removed, according to ancient custom, from the middle of the apartment to the warmest side of a large grate, filled with charcoal, and her guest was placed on her right, as the seat of honour. Berwine then arranged in due order the females of the household, and having seen that each was engaged with her own proper task, sat herself down to ply the spindle and distaff. The men, in a more remote circle, betook themselves to the repairing of their implements of husbandry, or new furbishing weapons of the chase, under the direction of the steward Hundwolf. For the amusement of the family thus assembled, an old glee-man sung to a harp, which had but four strings, a long and apparently interminable legend, upon some religious subject, which was rendered almost unintelligible to Eveline, by the extreme

and complicated affectation of the poet, who, in order to indulge in the alliteration which was accounted one great ornament of Saxon poetry, had sacrificed sense to sound, and used words in the most forced and remote sense, provided they could be compelled into his service. There was also all the obscurity arising from elision, and from the most extravagant and hyperbolical epithets.

Eveline, though well acquainted with the Saxon language, soon left off listening to the singer, to reflect for a moment on the gay *fabliaux* and imaginative *lais* of the Norman minstrels, and then to anticipate, with anxious apprehension, what nature of visitation she might be exposed to in the mysterious chamber in which she was doomed to pass the night.

The hour of parting at length approached. At half an hour before midnight, a period ascertained by the consumption of the huge waxen torch, the ball which was secured to it fell clanging into the brasen basin placed beneath, and announced to all the hour of rest. The old glee-man paused in his song instantaneously, and in the middle of a stanza, and the household were all on foot at the signal, some retiring to their own apartments, others lighting torches or bearing lamps to conduct the visiters to their places of repose. Among these last was a bevy of bower-women, to whom the duty was assigned of conveying the Lady Eveline to her chamber for the night. Her aunt took a solemn leave of her, crossed her forehead, kissed it, and whispered in her ear, "Be courageous, and be fortunate."

"May not my bower-maiden, Rose Flammock, or my tirewoman, Dame Gillian, Raoul's wife, remain in the apartment with me for this night?" said Eveline.

"Flammock—Raoul!" repeated Ermengarde, angrily; "is thy household thus made up? The Flemings are the cold palsy to Britain, the Normans the burning fever!"

"And the poor Welsh will add," said Rose, whose resentment began to surpass her awe for the ancient Saxon dame, "that the Anglo-Saxons were the original disease, and resemble a wasting pestilence."

"Thou art too bold, sweetheart," said the Lady Ermengarde, looking at the Flemish maiden from under her dark brows; "and yet there is wit in thy words. Saxon, Dane, and Norman, have rolled like successive billows over the land, each having strength to subdue what they lacked wisdom to keep. When shall it be otherwise?"

"When Saxon, and Briton, and Norman, and Fleming," answered Rose boldly, "shall learn to call themselves by one name, and think themselves like children of the land they are born in."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Lady of Baldringham, in the tone of one half surprised, half pleased. Then turning to her relation, she said, "There are words and wit in this maiden; see that she use, but do not abuse them."

"She is as kind and faithful, as she is prompt and ready-witted," said Eveline. "I pray you, dearest aunt, let me use her company for this night."

"It may not be—it were dangerous to both. Alone you must learn your destiny, as have all the females of our race, excepting your grandmother; and what have been the consequences of her neglecting the rules of our house? Lo! her descendant stands before me an orphan, in the very bloom of youth."

"I will go then," said Eveline, with a sigh of resignation; "and it shall never be said I incurred future woe, to shun present terror."

"Your attendants," said the Lady Ermengarde, may occupy the anteroom, and be almost within our call. Berwine will show you the apartment—I cannot; for *me*, thou knowest, who have once entered it, return not thither again. Farewell, my child, and may heaven bless thee!"

With more of human emotion and sympathy than she had yet shown, the lady again saluted Eveline, and signed to her to follow Berwine, who, attended by two damsels bearing torches, waited to conduct her to the dreaded *apartment.*

Their torches glared along the rudely built *walls and dark arched roofs of one or two long* winding passages; these by their light enabled them to descend the steps of a winding stair, whose inequality and ruggedness showed its antiquity; and finally led into a tolerably large chamber on the lower story of the edifice, to which some old hangings, a lively fire on the hearth, the moonbeams stealing through a latticed window, and the bough.s of a myrtle plant which grew around the casement, gave no uncomfortable appearance.

"This," said Berwine, "is the resting-place of your attendants," and she pointed to the couches which had been prepared for Rose and Dame Gillian; "we," she added, "proceed farther."

She then took a torch from the attendant maidens both of whom seemed to shrink back with fear, which was readily caught by Dame Gillian, although she was not probably aware of the cause. But Rose Flammock, unbidden, followed her mistress without hesitation, as Berwine conducted her through a small wicket at the upper end of the apartment, clenched with many an iron nail, into a second but smaller anteroom or wardrobe, at the end of which was a similar door. This wardrobe had also its casement mantled with evergreens, and, like the former, it was faintly enlightened by the moonbeam.

Berwine paused here, and pointing to Rose, demanded of Eveline, "Why does *she* follow?"

"To share my mistress's danger, be it what it may," answered Rose, with her characteristic readiness of speech and resolution. "Speak," she said, "my dearest lady," grasping Eveline's hand, while she addressed her; "You will not drive your Rose from you? If I am less high-minded than one of your boasted race, I am bold and quick-witted in all honest service.—You tremble like the aspen! Do not go into this apartment—do not be gulled by all this pomp and mystery of terrible preparation; bid defiance to this antiquated, and, I think, half-pagan superstition."

"The Lady Eveline must go, minion," replied Berwine, sternly; "and she must go without any malapert adviser or companion."

"Must go—*must* go!" repeated Rose; "Is this language to a free and noble maiden?—Sweet lady, give me once but the least hint that you wish it, and their '*must* go' shall be put to the trial. I will call from the casement on the Norman cavaliers, and tell them we have fallen into a den of witches, instead of a house of hospitality."

"Silence, madwoman!" said Berwine, her voice quivering with anger and fear; "you know not who dwells in the next chamber!"

"I will call those who will soon see to that," said Rose, flying to the casement, when Eveline, seizing her arm in her turn, compelled her to stop.

"I thank thy kindness, Rose," she said, "but it cannot help me in this matter. She who enters yonder door, must do so alone."

"Then I will enter it in your stead, my dearest lady," said Rose. "You are pale—you are cold—you will die of terror if you go on. There may be as much of trick as of supernatural agency in this matter—me they shall not deceive—or if some stern spirit craves a victim,—better Rose than her lady."

"Forbear, forbear," said Eveline, rousing up her own spirits; "you make me ashamed of myself. This is an ancient ordeal, which regards the females descended from the house of Baldringham as far as in the third degree, and them only. I did not indeed expect, in my present circumstances, to have been called upon to undergo it; but, since the hour summons me, I will meet it as freely as any of my ancestors."

So saying, she took the torch from the hand of Berwine, and wishing good-night to her and Rose, gently disengaged herself, from the hold of the latter and advanced into the mysterious chamber. Rose pressed after her so far as to see that it was an apartment of moderate dimensions, resembling that through which they had last passed, and lighted by the moonbeams, which came through a window lying on the same range with those of the anterooms. More she could not see, for Eveline turned on the threshold, and kissing her at the same time, thrust

her gently back into the smaller apartment which she had just left, shut the door of communication, and barred and bolted it, as if in security against her well-meant intrusion.

Berwine now exhorted Rose, as she valued her life, to retire into the first anteroom, where the beds were prepared, and betake herself, if not to rest, at least to silence and devotion; but the faithful Flemish girl stoutly refused her entreaties, and resisted her commands.

"Talk not to me of danger," she said; "here I remain, that I may be at least within hearing of my mistress's danger, and wo betide those who shall offer her injury!—Take notice, that twenty Norman spears surround this inhospitable dwelling, prompt to avenge whatsoever injury shall be offered to the daughter of Raymond Berenger."

"Reserve your threats for those who are mortal," said Berwine, in a low, but piercing whisper; "the owner of yonder chamber fears them not. Farewell —thy danger be on thine own head!"

She departed leaving Rose strangely agitated by what had passed, and somewhat appalled at her last words. "These Saxons," said the maiden, within herself, "are but half converted after all, and hold many of their old hellish rites in the worship of elementary spirits. Their very saints are unlike to the saints of any Christian country, and have, as it were, a look of something savage and fiendish—their very names sound pagan and diabolical. It is fearful being alone here—and all is silent as death in the apartment into which my lady has been thus strangely compelled. Shall I call up Gillian?—but no—she has neither sense, nor courage, nor principle, to aid me on such an occasion—better alone than have a false friend for company. I will see if the Normans are on their post, since it is to them I must trust, if a moment of need should arrive."

Thus reflecting, Rose Flammock went to the window of the little apartment, in order to satisfy herself of the vigilance of the sentinels, and to ascertain the exact situation of the corps de garde. The moon was at the full, and enabled her to see with accuracy the nature of the ground without. In the first place, she was rather disappointed to find, that instead of being so near the earth as she supposed, the range of windows, which gave light as well to the two anterooms as to the mysterious chamber itself, looked down upon an ancient moat, by which they were divided from the level ground on the farther side. The defence which this fosse afforded seemed to have been long neglected, and the bottom, entirely dry, was choked in many places with bushes and low trees, which rose up against the wall of the castle, and by means of which it seemed to Rose the windows might be easily scaled, and the mansion entered. From the level plain beyond, the space adjoining to the castle was in a considerable degree clear, and the moonbeams slumbered on its close and beautiful turf, mixed with long shadows of the towers and trees. Beyond this esplanade lay the forest ground, with a few gigantic oaks scattered individually along the skirt of its dark and ample domain, like champions who take their ground of defiance in front of a line of arrayed battle.

The calm beauty and repose of a scene so lovely, the stillness of all around, and the more matured reflections which the whole suggested, quieted, in some measure, the apprehensions which the events of the evening had inspired. "After all," she reflected, "why should I be so anxious on account of the Lady Eveline? There is among the proud Normans and the dogged Saxons scarce a single family of note, but must needs be held distinguished from others by some superstitious observance peculiar to their race, as if they thought it scorn to go to Heaven like a poor simple Fleming, such as I am.—Could I but see a Norman sentinel, I would hold myself satisfied of my mistress's security.—And yonder one stalks along the gloom, wrapt in his long white mantle, and the moon tipping the point of his lance with silver.—*What ho, Sir Cavalier!*"

The Norman turned his steps, and approached the *pitch as she spoke.* "*What is your pleasure damsel?*" *be demanded*

"The window next to mine is that of the Lady E Berenger, whom you are appointed to guard. to give heedful watch upon this side of the ca

"Doubt it not, lady," answered the cavalier enveloping himself in his long *chappe*, or watch-cloak, he withdrew to a large oak- some distance, and stood there with folded arm leaning on his lance, more like a trophy of than a living warrior.

Emboldened by the consciousness, that in need succour was close at hand, Rose drew ba her little chamber, and having ascertained by li that there was no noise or stirring in that of E she began to make some preparations for h repose. For this purpose she went into the o anteroom, where Dame Gillian, whose fea given way to the soporiferous effects of a draught of *lithe-ales*, (mild ale, of the first and quality,) slept as sound a sleep as that g Saxon beverage could procure.

Muttering an indignant censure on her slo indifference, Rose caught, from the empty which had been destined for her own use th covering, and dragging it with her into th anteroom, disposed it so as, with the assist the rushes which strewed that apartment, to sort of couch upon which, half seated, half r she resolved to pass the night in as close atte upon her mistress as circumstances permitted.

Thus seated, her eye on the pale planet sailed in full glory through the blue sky of mi she proposed to herself that sleep should not v eyelids till the dawn of morning should ass of Eveline's safety.

Her thoughts, mean while rested on the bo and shadowy world beyond the grave and great and perhaps yet undecided question, the separation of its inhabitants from those temporal sphere is absolute and decided, or v influenced by motives which we cannot apr they continue to hold shadowy communicati those yet existing in earthly reality of flesh and To have denied this, would, in the age of c and of miracles, have incurred the guilt of but Rose's firm good sense led her to doubt the frequency of supernatural interference, a comforted herself with an opinion, contr however, by her own involuntary starts and s ings at every leaf which moved, that, in sub to the performance of the rite imposed on her, incurred no real danger, and only sacrificed t solete family superstition.

As this conviction strengthened on Rose's m purpose of vigilance began to decline—her t wandered to objects towards which they w directed, like sheep which stray beyond the of their shepherd—her eyes no longer broug to her a distinct apprehension of the broad silvery orb on which they continued to gr length they closed, and seated on the folded her back resting against the wall of the apa and her white arms folded on her bosom, Ros mock fell fast asleep.

Her repose was fearfully broken by a sh piercing shriek from the apartment where l reposed. To start up and fly to the door work of a moment with the generous girl, wh permitted fear to struggle with love or dut door was secured with both bar and bolt; and fainter scream, or rather groan, seemed to must be instant, or in vain. Rose next rush window, and screamed rather than calle Norman soldier, who distinguished by the wh of his watch-cloak, still retained his position u old oak-tree.

At the cry of "Help, help!—the Lady is murdered!" the seeming statue, starting into active exertion, sped with the swiftn race-horse to the brink of the moat, and wh to cross it, opposite to the spot where Rose the open casement, urging him to speed by v gesture.

"Not here—not here!" she exclaimed, wit less precipitation, as she saw him make tow

low to the right—scale it, for God's sake, the door of communication."
dier seemed to comprehend her—he dashed oat without hesitation, securing himself by at the boughs of trees as he descended. In ent he vanished among the underwood; and r, availing himself of the branches of a t, Rose saw him upon her right, and close idow of the fatal apartment. One fear re- the casement might be secured against en- om without—but no! at the thrust of the t yielded, and its clasps or fastenings being h time, fell inward with a crash which even lian's slumbers were unable to resist.
g scream upon scream, in the usual fashion nd cowards, she entered the cabinet from om, just as the door of Eveline's chamber id the soldier appeared, bearing in his arms undressed and lifeless form of the Norman erself. Without speaking a word, he placed e's arms, and with the same precipitation ch he had entered, threw himself out of d window from which Rose had summoned

half distracted with fear and wonder, heap- iations on questions, and mingled questions for help, till Rose sternly rebuked her in a h seemed to recall her scattered senses. me then composed enough to fetch a lamp nained lighted in the room she had left, ider herself at least partly useful in suggest- pplying the usual modes for recalling the sense. In this they at length succeeded, e fetched a fuller sigh, and opened her presently shut them again, and letting her on Rose's bosom, fell into a strong shud- ; while her faithful damsel, chafing her d her temples alternately with affectionate and mingling caresses with these efforts, aloud, "She lives!—She is recovering!— God!"
d be God!" was echoed in a solemn tone window of the apartment; and turning to- n terror, Rose beheld the armed and plumed e soldier who had come so opportunely to tance, and who, supported by his arms, had self so high as to be able to look into the the cabinet.
mmediately ran towards him. "Go—go— id," she said; "the lady recovers—your all await you another time. Go—begone! !—keep on your post, and I will call you if rther need. Begone—be faithful, and be

lier obeyed without answering a word, and tly saw him descend into the moat. Rose ned back to her mistress, whom she found by Gillian, moaning feebly, and muttering d unintelligible ejaculations, all intimating boured under a violent shock sustained from ming cause.
illian had no sooner recovered some degree session, than her curiosity became active in . "What means all this?" she said to Rose; s been doing among you?"
ot know," replied Rose.
do not," said Gillian, "who should?—Shall other women, and raise the house?"
or your life," said Rose, "till my lady is ve her own orders; and for this apartment, e Heaven, as I will do my best to discover t it contains!—Support my mistress the

ing, she took the lamp in her hand, and, ier brow, stepped boldly across the mysteri- old, and, holding up the light, surveyed the t.
merely an old vaulted chamber, of very dimensions. In one corner was an image gin, rudely cut, and placed above a Saxon rious workmanship. *There were two seats, ch, covered with coarse tapestry, on which hat Eveline had been reposing.* The frag- e *shattered casement lay on the floor*; but that opening had been only made when the soldier forced it in, and she saw no other access by which a stranger could have entered an apartment, the ordinary access to which was barred and bolted.

Rose felt the influence of those terrors which she had hitherto surmounted; she cast her mantle hastily around her head, as if to shroud her sight from some blighting vision, and tripping back to the cabinet, with more speed and a less firm step than when she left it, she directed Gillian to lend her assistance in conveying Eveline to the next room; and having done so, carefully secured the door of communication, as if to put a barrier betwixt them and the suspected danger.

The Lady Eveline was now so far recovered that she could sit up, and was trying to speak, though but faintly. "Rose," she said at length, "I have seen her—my doom is sealed."

Rose immediately recollected the imprudence of suffering Gillian to hear what her mistress might say at such an awful moment, and hastily adopting the proposal she had before declined, desired her to go and call other two maidens of her mistress's household.

"And where am I to find them in this house," said Dame Gillian, "where strange men run about one chamber at midnight, and devils, for aught I know, frequent the rest of the habitation?"

"Find them where you can," said Rose, sharply; "but begone presently."

Gillian withdrew lingeringly, and muttering at the same time something which could not distinctly be understood. No sooner was she gone, than Rose, giving way to the enthusiastic affection which she felt for her mistress, implored her, in the most tender terms, to open her eyes, (for she had again closed them,) and speak to Rose, her own Rose, who was ready, if necessary, to die by her mistress's side.

"To-morrow—to-morrow, Rose," murmured Eveline—"I cannot speak at present."

"Only disburden your mind with one word—tell what has thus alarmed you—what danger you apprehend."

"I have seen her, answered Eveline—"I have seen the tenant of yonder chamber—the vision fatal to my race!—Urge me no more—to-morrow you shall know all."*

As Gillian entered with two of the maidens of her mistress's household, they removed the Lady Eveline, by Rose's directions, into a chamber at some distance

* BAHR-GEIST.—The idea of the Bahr-Geist was taken from a passage in the Memoirs of Lady Fanshaw, which have since been given to the public, and received with deserved approbation.

The original runs as follows. Lady Fanshaw, shifting among her friends in Ireland, like other sound loyalists of the period, tells her story thus:—

"From thence we went to the Lady Honor O'Brien's, a lady that went for a maid, but few believed it. She was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Thomond. There we staid three nights—the first of which I was surprised at being laid in a chamber, where, when about one o'clock, I heard a voice that awakened me. I drew the curtain, and in the casement of the window saw, by the light of the moon, a woman leaning through the casement into the room, in white, with red hair and pale and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud, and in a tone I had never heard, thrice, "A horse;" and then, with a sigh more like the wind than breath, she vanished, and to me her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much frightened that my hair stood on end, and my night clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your father, who never awoke during the disorder I was in, but at last was much surprised to see me in this fright, and more so when I related the story and showed him the window opened. Neither of us slept any more that night; but he entertained me by telling me how much more these apparitions were common in this country than in England; and we concluded the cause to be the great superstition of the Irish, and the want of that knowing faith which should defend them from the power of the devil, which he exercises among them very much. About five o'clock the lady of the house came to see us, saying she had not been in bed all night, because a cousin O'Brien of hers, whose ancestors had owned that house, had desired her to stay with him in his chamber, and that he died at two o'clock; and she said, I wish you to have had no disturbance, for 'tis the custom of the place, that, when any of the family are dying, the shape of a woman appears every night in the window until they be dead. This woman was many ages ago, got with child by the owner of this place, who murdered her in his garden, and flung her into the river under the window; but truly I thought not of it when I lodged you here, it being the best room in the house. We made little reply to her speech but disputed ourselves to be gone suddenly."

which the latter had occupied, and placed her in one of their beds, where Rose, dismissing the others (Gillian excepted) to seek repose where they could find it, continued to watch her mistress. For some time she continued very much disturbed, but, gradually, fatigue, and the influence of some narcotic which Gillian had sense enough to recommend and prepare, seemed to compose her spirits. She fell into a deep slumber, from which she did not awaken until the sun was high over the distant hills.

CHAPTER XV.

I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away;
I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay.

MALLET.

WHEN Eveline first opened her eyes, it seemed to be without any recollection of what had passed on the night preceding. She looked round the apartment, which was coarsely and scantily furnished, as one destined for the use of domestics and menials, and said to Rose, with a smile, "Our good kinswoman maintains the ancient Saxon hospitality at a homely rate, so far as lodging is concerned. I could have willingly parted with last night's profuse supper, to have obtained a bed of a softer texture. Methinks my limbs feel as if I had been under all the flails of a Franklin's barn-yard."

"I am glad to see you so pleasant, madam," answered Rose, discreetly avoiding any reference to the events of the night before.

Dame Gillian was not so scrupulous. "Your ladyship last night lay down on a better bed than this," she said, "unless I am much mistaken; and Rose Flammock and yourself know best why you left it."

If a look could have killed, Dame Gillian would have been in deadly peril from that which Rose shot at her by way of rebuke for this ill-advised communication. It had instantly the effect which was to be apprehended, for Lady Eveline seemed at first surprised and confused; then, as recollections of the past arranged themselves in her memory, she folded her hands, looked on the ground, and wept bitterly, with much agitation.

Rose entreated her to be comforted, and offered to fetch the old Saxon chaplain of the house to administer spiritual consolation, if her grief rejected temporal comfort.

"No—call him not," said Eveline, raising her head and drying her eyes—"I have had enough of Saxon kindness. What a fool was I to expect, in that hard and unfeeling woman, any commiseration for my youth—my late sufferings—my orphan condition! I will not permit her a poor triumph over the Norman blood of Berenger, by letting her see how much I have suffered under her inhuman infliction. But first, Rose, answer me truly, was any inmate of Baldringham witness to my distress last night?"

Rose assured her that she had been tended exclusively by her own retinue, herself and Gillian, Blanche and Ternotte. She seemed to receive satisfaction from this assurance. "Hear me, both of you," she said, "and observe my words, as you love and as you fear me. Let no syllable be breathed from your lips of what has happened this night. Carry the same charge to my maidens. Lend me thine instant aid, Gillian, and thine, my dearest Rose, to change these disordered garments, and arrange this dishevelled hair. It was a poor vengeance she sought, and all because of my country. I am resolved she shall not see the slightest trace of the sufferings she has inflicted."

As she spoke thus, her eyes flashed with indignation, which seemed to dry up the tears that had before filled them. Rose saw the change of her manner with a mixture of pleasure and concern, being aware that her mistress's predominant failing was incident to her, as a spoiled child, who, accustomed to be treated with kindness, deference, and indulgence, by all around her, was apt to resent warmly whatever resembled neglect or contradiction.

"God knows," said the faithful bower-maiden, "I would hold my hand out to catch drops of lead, rather than endure your tears; and y sweet mistress, I would rather at present grieved than angry. This ancient lady hath, it seem, but acted according to some old super rite of her family, which is in part yours. He is respectable, both from her conduct and sions; and, hard-pressed as you are by the No with whom your kinswoman, the Prioress, to take part, I was in hope you might ha some shelter and countenance from the L Baldringham."

"Never, Rose, never," answered Eveline; know not—you cannot guess what she has m suffer—exposing me to witchcraft and fiends. self said it, and said it truly—the Saxons a half Pagans, void of Christianity, as of nurtu kindliness."

"Ay, but," replied Rose, "I spoke then to di you from a danger; now that the danger is and over, I may judge of it otherwise."

"Speak not for them, Rose," replied Eveli grily; "no innocent victim was ever offered the altar of a fiend with more indifference th father's kinswoman delivered up me—me an o bereaved of my natural and powerful support. her cruelty—I hate her house—I hate the thou all that has happened here—of all, Rose, exc matchless faith and fearless attachment. Go, train saddle directly—I will be gone instantly not attire myself," she added, rejecting the assi she had at first required—"I will have no cer —tarry for no leave-taking."

In the hurried and agitated manner of her m Rose recognised with anxiety another mood same irritable and excited temperament, whi before discharged itself in tears and fits. B ceiving, at the same time, that remonstrance vain, she gave the necessary orders for coll their company, saddling, and preparing for dep hoping that, as her mistress removed to a distance from the scene where her mind had re so severe a shock, her equanimity might, by d be restored.

Dame Gillian, accordingly, was busied with a ing the packages of her lady, and all the rest o Eveline's retinue, in preparing for instant dep when, preceded by her steward, who acted als sort of gentleman-usher, leaning upon her cor tial Berwine, and followed by two or three n the most distinguished of her household, with of displeasure on her ancient yet lofty brow, the Ermengarde entered the apartment.

Eveline, with a trembling and hurried h burning cheek, and other signs of agitation, wh self busied about the arrangement of some ba when her relation made her appearance. A to Rose's great surprise, she exerted a strong mand over herself, and, repressing every ex appearance of disorder, she advanced to me relation, with a calm and haughty stateliness to her own.

"I come to give you good morning, our niece Ermengarde, haughtily indeed, yet with more ence than she seemed at first to have intend much did the bearing of Eveline impose respec her;—"I find that you have been pleased to shi chamber which was assigned you, in conformit the ancient custom of this household, and yourself to the apartment of a menial."

"Are you surprised at that, lady?" demande line in her turn; "or are you disappointed th find me not a corpse, within the limits of the ch which your hospitality and affection allotted to

"Your sleep, then, has been broken?" sa mengarde, looking fixedly at the Lady Eveli she spoke.

"If I complain not, madam, the evil must be d of little consequence. What has happened i and past, and it is not my intention to troub with a recital."

"She of the ruddy finger," replied Ermen triumphantly, "loves not the blood of the stran

"She had less reason, while she walked th

to love that of the Saxon," said Eveline, "unless her legend speaks false in that matter; and unless, as I well suspect, your house is haunted, not by the soul of the dead who suffered within its walls, but by evil spirits, such as the descendants of Hengist and Horsa are said still in secret to worship."

"You are pleasant, maiden," replied the old lady, scornfully, "or, if your words are meant in earnest, the shaft of your censure has glanced aside. A house, blessed by the holy Saint Dunstan, and by the royal and holy Confessor, is no abode for evil spirits."

"The house of Baldringham," replied Eveline, "is no abode for those who fear such spirits; and as I will, with all humility, avow myself of the number, I shall presently leave it to the custody of Saint Dunstan."

"Not till you have broken your fast, I trust?" said the Lady of Baldringham; "you will not, I hope, do my years and our relationship such foul disgrace?"

"Pardon me, madam," replied the Lady Eveline; "those who have experienced your hospitality at night have little occasion for breakfast in the morning.—Rose, are not those loitering knaves assembled in the court-yard, or are they yet on their couches, making up for the slumber they have lost by midnight disturbances?"

Rose announced that her train was in the court, and mounted; when, with a low reverence, Eveline endeavoured to pass her relation, and leave the apartment without farther ceremony. Ermengarde at first confronted her with a grim and furious glance, which seemed to show a soul fraught with more rage than the thin blood and rigid features of extreme old age had the power of expressing, and raised her ebony staff as if about even to proceed to some act of personal violence. But she changed her purpose, and suddenly made way for Eveline, who passed without further parley; and as she descended the staircase, which conducted from the apartment to the gateway, she heard the voice of her aunt behind her, like that of an aged and offended sybil, denouncing wrath and woe upon her insolence and presumption.

"Pride," she exclaimed, "goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. She who scorneth the house of her forefathers, a stone from its battlements shall crush her! She who mocks the gray hairs of a parent, never shall one of her own locks be silvered with age! She who weds with a man of war and of blood, her end shall neither be peaceful nor bloodless!"

Hurrying to escape from these and other ominous denunciations, Eveline rushed from the house, mounted her palfrey with the precipitation of a fugitive, and, surrounded by her attendants, who had caught a part of her alarm, though without conjecturing the cause, rode hastily into the forest; old Raoul, who was well acquainted with the country, acting as their guide.

Agitated more than she was willing to confess to herself, by thus leaving the habitation of so near a relation, loaded with maledictions instead of the blessings which are usually bestowed on a departing kinswoman, Eveline hastened forward, until the huge oak-trees with intervening arms had hidden from her view the fatal mansion.

The trampling and galloping of horse was soon after heard, announcing the approach of the patrol left by the Constable for the protection of the mansion, and who now, collecting from their different stations, came prepared to attend the Lady Eveline on her farther road to Gloucester, great part of which lay through the extensive forest of Deane, then a silvan region of large extent, though now much denuded of trees for the service of the iron mines. The cavaliers came up to join the retinue of Lady Eveline, with armour glittering in the morning rays, trumpets sounding, horses prancing, neighing, and thrown, each by his chivalrous rider, into the attitude best qualified to exhibit the beauty of the steed and dexterity of the horseman; while the lances, streaming with long penoncelles, were brandished in every manner which could display elation of heart and readiness of hand. The sense of the military character of her countrymen of Normandy gave to Eveline a feeling at once of security and of triumph, which operated towards the dispelling of her gloomy thoughts and of the feverish disorder which affected her nerves. The rising sun also—the song of the birds among the bowers—the lowing of the cattle as they were driven to pasture—the sight of the hind, who, with her fawn trotting by her side, often crossed some forest glade within view of the travellers,—all contributed to dispel the terror of Eveline's nocturnal visions, and soothe to rest the more angry passions which had agitated her bosom at her departure from Baldringham. She suffered her palfrey to slacken his pace, and, with female attention to propriety, began to adjust her riding robes, and compose her head-dress, disordered in her hasty departure. Rose saw her cheek assume a paler but more settled hue, instead of the angry hectic which had coloured it—saw her eye become more steady as she looked with a sort of triumph upon her military attendants, and pardoned (what on other occasions she would probably have made some reply to) her enthusiastic exclamations in praise of her countrymen.

"We journey safe," said Eveline, "under the care of the princely and victorious Normans. Theirs is the noble wrath of the lion, which destroys or is appeased at once—there is no guile in their romantic affection, no sullenness mixed with their generous indignation—they know the duties of the hall as well as those of battle; and were they to be surpassed in the arts of war (which will only be when Plinlimmon is removed from its base,) they would still remain superior to every other people in generosity and courtesy."

"If I do not feel all their merits so strongly as if I shared their blood," said Rose, "I am at least glad to see them around us, in woods which are said to abound with dangers of various kinds. And I confess, my heart is the lighter, that I can now no longer observe the least vestige of that ancient mansion, in which we passed so unpleasant a night, and the recollection of which will always be odious to me."

Eveline looked sharply at her. "Confess the truth, Rose; thou wouldst give thy best kirtle to know all of my horrible adventure."

"It is but confessing that I am a woman," answered Rose; "and did I say a man, I dare say the difference of sex would imply but a small abatement of curiosity."

"Thou makest no parade of other feelings, which prompt thee to inquire into my fortunes," said Eveline; "but, sweet Rose, I give thee not the less credit for them. Believe me, thou shalt know all—but, I think, not now."

"At your pleasure," said Rose; "and yet, methinks, the bearing in your solitary bosom such a fearful secret will only render the weight more intolerable. On my silence you may rely as on that of the Holy Image, which hears us confess what it never reveals. Besides, such things become familiar to the imagination when they have been spoken of, and that which is familiar gradually becomes stripped of its terrors."

"Thou speakest with reason, my prudent Rose; and surely in this gallant troop, borne like a flower on a bush by my good palfrey Yseulte—fresh gales blowing round us, flowers opening and birds singing, and having thee by my bridle-rein, I ought to feel this a fitting time to communicate what thou hast so good a title to know. And—yes!—thou shalt know all!—Thou art not, I presume, ignorant of the qualities of what the Saxons of this land call a *Bahr-geist?*"

"Pardon me, lady," answered Rose, "my father discouraged my listening to such discourses. I might see evil spirits enough, he said, without my imagination being taught to form such as were fantastical. The word Bahr-geist, I have heard used by Gillian and other Saxons; but to me it only conveys some idea of indefinite terror, of which I have never asked nor received an explanation."

"Know then," said Eveline, "it is a spectre, usually the image of a departed person, who, either for wrong sustained in some particular place during life, or through treasure hidden there, or from some such

other cause, haunts the spot from time to time, becomes familiar to those who dwell there, takes an interest in their fate, occasionally for good, in other instances or times for evil. The Bahr-geist is, therefore, sometimes regarded as a good genius, sometimes as the avenging fiend, attached to particular families and classes of men. It is the lot of the family of Baldringham (of no mean note in other respects), to be subject to the visits of such a being."

"May I ask the cause (if it be known) of such visitation?" said Rose, desirous to avail herself to the uttermost of the communicative mood of her young lady, which might not perhaps last very long.

"I know the legend but imperfectly," replied Eveline, proceeding with a degree of calmness, the result of strong exertion over her mental anxiety, "but in general it ran thus: Baldrick, the Saxon hero who first possessed yonder dwelling, became enamoured of a fair Briton, said to have been descended from those Druids of whom the Welsh speak so much, and deemed not unacquainted with the arts of sorcery which they practised, when they offered up human sacrifices amid those circles of unhewn and living rock, of which thou hast seen so many. After more than two years wedlock, Baldrick became weary of his wife to such a point, that he formed the cruel resolution of putting her to death. Some say he doubted her fidelity—some that the matter was pressed on him by the church, as she was suspected of heresy—some that he removed her to make way for a more wealthy marriage—but all agree in the result. He sent two of his Cnichts to the house of Baldringham, to put to death the unfortunate Vanda, and commanded them to bring him the ring which had circled her finger on the day of wedlock, in token that his orders were accomplished. The men were ruthless in their office; they strangled Vanda in yonder apartment, and as the hand was so swollen that no effort could draw off the ring, they obtained possession of it by severing the finger. But long before the return of those cruel perpetrators of her death, the shadow of Vanda had appeared before her appalled husband, and, holding up to him her bloody hand, made him fearfully sensible how well his savage commands had been obeyed. After haunting him in peace and war, in desert, court, and camp, until he died despairingly on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the Bahr-geist, or ghost of the murdered Vanda, became so terrible in the House of Baldringham, that the succour of Saint Dunstan was itself scarcely sufficient to put bounds to her visitation. Yea, the blessed saint, when he had succeeded in his exorcism, did, in requital of Baldrick's crime, impose a strong and enduring penalty upon every female descendant of the house in the third degree; namely, that once in their lives, and before their twenty-first year, they should each spend a solitary night in the chamber of the murdered Vanda, saying therein certain prayers, as well for her repose, as for the suffering soul of her murderer. During that awful space, it is generally believed that the spirit of the murdered person appears to the female who observes the vigil, and shows some sign of her future good or bad fortune. If favourable, she appears with a smiling aspect, and crosses them with her unbloodied hand; but she announces evil fortune by showing the hand from which the finger was severed, with a stern countenance, as if resenting upon the descendant of her husband his inhuman cruelty. Sometimes she is said to speak. These particulars I learned long since from an old Saxon dame, the mother of our Margery, who had been an attendant on my grandmother, and left the House of Baldringham when she made her escape from it with my father's father."

"Did your grandmother ever render this homage," said Rose, "which seems to me—under favour of Saint Dunstan—to bring humanity into too close intercourse with a being of a doubtful nature?"

"My grandfather thought so, and never permitted my grandmother to revisit the House of Baldringham after her marriage; hence disunion betwixt him *and his son on the one part, and the members of that family on the other. They laid* sundry misfortunes, *and particularly the loss of* male heirs which at that time befell them, to my parent's not l done the hereditary homage to the bloody-fi Bahr-geist."

"And how could you, my dearest lady," said "knowing that they held among them a su hideous, think of accepting the invitation of Ermengarde?"

"I can hardly answer you the question," Eveline. "Partly I feared my father's recent ca to be slain (as I have heard him say his aun prophesied of him) by the enemy he most de might be the result of this rite having been neg and partly I hoped, that if my mind should be a at the danger, when it presented itself closer eye, it could not be urged on me in courte humanity. You saw how soon my cruel-h relative pounced upon the opportunity, and h possible it became for me, bearing the name, trust, the spirit of Berenger, to escape from the which I had involved myself."

"No regard for name or rank should have e me," replied Rose, "to place myself where app sion alone, even without the terrors of a real vis might have punished my presumption with in But what, in the name of Heaven, did you see horrible rendezvous?"

"Ay, there is the question," said Eveline, her hand to her brow—"how I could witne which I distinctly saw, yet be able to retain cor of thought and intellect!—I had recited the pre devotions for the murderer and his victim, and down on the couch which was assigned me, h aside such of my clothes as might impede my I had surmounted, in short, the first shock w experienced in committing myself to this myst chamber, and I hoped to pass the night in s as sound as my thoughts were innocent. Bu fearfully disappointed. I cannot judge how lon slept, when my bosom was oppressed by an u weight, which seemed at once to stifle my voi the beating of my heart, and prevent me from ing my breath; and when I looked up to disco cause of this horrible suffocation, the form murdered British matron stood over my couch than life, shadowy, and with a countenance traits of dignity and beauty were mingled with expression of vengeful exultation. She held o the hand which bore the bloody marks of h band's cruelty, and seemed as if she signed th devoting me to destruction; while, with an un tone, she uttered these words:—

'Widow'd wife, and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd!'

The phantom stooped over me as she spok lowered her gory fingers, as if to touch my face terror giving me the power of which at first it d me, I screamed aloud—the casement of the apa was thrown open with a loud noise,—and—Bu signifies my telling all this to thee, Rose, wh so plainly, by the movement of eye and lip, th consider me as a silly and childish dreamer?"

"Be not angry, my dear lady," said Rose; indeed believe that the witch we call Mara* h dealing with you; but she, you know, is by considered as no real phantom, but solely the c of our own imagination, disordered by causes arise from bodily indisposition."

"Thou art learned, maiden," said Eveline, peevishly; "but when I assure thee that my angel came to my assistance in a human form at his appearance the fiend vanished—and transported me in his arms out of the chan terror, I think thou wilt, as a good Christi more faith in that which I tell you."

"Indeed, indeed, my sweetest mistress, I co replied Rose. "It is even that circumstance guardian angel which makes me consider the as a dream. A Norman sentinel, whom I called from his post on purpose, did indeed c your assistance, and, breaking into your apa transported you to that where I myself receiv from his arms in a lifeless condition."

"A Norman soldier, ha!" said Eveline, co

* Ephialtes, or Nightmare.

; "and to whom, maiden, did you dare give
on to break into my sleeping-chamber?"
eyes flash anger, madam, but is it reason-
should?—Did I not hear your screams of
d was I to stand fettered by ceremony at
mer?—no more than if the castle had been

you again, Rose," said her mistress, still
mposure, though less angrily than at first,
ou directed to break into my apartment?"
d, I know not, lady," said Rose; "for be-
he was muffled in his mantle, little chance
of my knowing his features, even had I
fully. But I can soon discover the cavalier;
set about it that I may give him the reward
d, and warn him to be silent and discreet in
r."
" said Eveline; "and if you find him among
liers who attend us, I will indeed lean to
ion, and think that fantasy had the chief
ne evils I have endured the last night."
ruck her palfrey with the rod, and accom-
her mistress, rode up to Philip Guarine, the
's squire, who for the present commanded
escort. "Good Guarine," she said, "I had
one of these sentinels last night from my
and he did me some service, for which I
him recompense—Will you inquire for the
I may pay him his guerdon?"
, I will owe him a guerdon also, pretty
answered the squire; "for if a lance of them
d near enough the house to hold speech from
ws, he transgressed the precise orders of his

you must forgive that for my sake," said
warrant, had I called on yourself, stout
should have had influence to bring you
chamber window."
laughed, and shrugged his shoulders.—
is," he said, "when women are in place,
is in danger."
n went to make the necessary inquiries
s band, and returned with the assurance,
soldiers, generally and severally, denied
proached the mansion of the Lady Ermen-
the preceding night.
seest, Rose," said Eveline, with a significant
r attendant.
oor rogues are afraid of Guarine's severity,"
"and dare not tell the truth—I shall have
in private claiming the reward of me."
ld I had the privilege myself, damsel," said
"but for these fellows, they are not so ti-
you suppose them, being even too ready to
eir roguery when it hath less excuse—Be-
mised them impunity. Have you any thing
order?"
ag, good Guarine," said Eveline; "only this
ative to procure wine for thy soldiers, that
spend the next night more merrily than the
I now he is gone,—Maiden, thou must, I
now well aware, that what thou sawest,
rthly being?"
t believe mine own ears and eyes, madam,"
se.
ut allow me the same privilege," answered
Believe me that my deliverer (for so I must
bore the features of one who neither was,
be, in the neighbourhood of Baldringham.
ut one thing—What dost thou think of this
ary prediction—

'Widow'd wife, and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betrayed?'

t say it is an idle invention of my brain—
it for a moment the speech of a true diviner,
wouldst thou say of it?"
you may be betrayed, my dearest lady, but
a be a betrayer," answered Rose, with ani-

reached her hand out to her friend, and as
ed affectionately that which Rose gave in
e whispered to her with energy, "I thank
the judgment, which my own heart con-

A cloud of dust now announced the approach of the Constable of Chester and his retinue, augmented by the attendance of his host Sir William Herbert, and some of his neighbours and kinsmen, who came to pay their respects to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, by which appellation Eveline was known upon her passage through their territory.

Eveline remarked, that, at their greeting, De Lacy looked with displeased surprise at the disarrangement of her dress and equipage, which her hasty departure from Baldringham had necessarily occasioned; and she was, on her part, struck with an expression of countenance which seemed to say, "I am not to be treated as an ordinary person, who may be received with negligence, and treated slightly with impunity." For the first time, she thought that, though always deficient in grace and beauty, the Constable's countenance was formed to express the more angry passions with force and vivacity, and that she who shared his rank and name must lay her account with the implicit surrender of her will and wishes to those of an arbitrary lord and master.

But the cloud soon passed from the Constable's brow; and in the conversation which he afterwards maintained with Herbert and the other knights and gentlemen, who from time to time came to greet and accompany them for a little way on their journey, Eveline had occasion to admire his superiority, both of sense and expression, and to remark the attention and deference with which his words were listened to by men too high in rank, and too proud, readily to admit any pre-eminence that was not founded on acknowledged merit. The regard of women is generally much influenced by the estimation which an individual maintains in the opinion of men; and Eveline, when she concluded her journey in the Benedictine nunnery in Gloucester, could not think without respect upon the renowned warrior, and celebrated politician, whose acknowledged abilities appeared to place him above every one whom she had seen approach him. His wife, Eveline thought (and she was not without ambition,) if relinquishing some of those qualities in a husband which are in youth most captivating to the female imagination, must be still generally honoured and respected, and have contentment, if not romantic felicity, within her reach.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Lady Eveline remained nearly four months with her aunt, the Abbess of the Benedictine nunnery, under whose auspices the Constable of Chester saw his suit advance and prosper as it would probably have done under that of the deceased Raymond Berenger, her brother. It is probable, however, that, but for the supposed vision of the Virgin, and the vow of gratitude which that supposed vision had called forth, the natural dislike of so young a person to a match so unequal in years might have effectually opposed his success. Indeed Eveline, while honouring the Constable's virtues, doing justice to his high character, and admiring his talents, could never altogether divest herself of a secret fear of him, which, while it prevented her from expressing any direct disapprobation of his addresses, caused her sometimes to shudder, she scarce knew why, at the idea of their becoming successful.

The ominous words, "betraying and betrayed," would then occur to her memory; and when her aunt (the period of the deepest mourning being elapsed) had fixed a day for her betrothal, she looked forward to it with a feeling of terror, for which she was unable to account to herself, and which, as well as the particulars of her dream, she concealed even from Father Aldrovand in the hours of confession. It was not aversion to the Constable—it was far less preference to any other suitor—it was one of those instinctive movements and emotions by which Nature seems to warn us of approaching danger, though furnishing no information respecting its nature, and suggesting no means of escaping from it.

So strong were these intervals of apprehension, that if they had been seconded by the remonstrances of Rose Flammock, as formerly, they might perhaps

have led to Eveline's even yet forming some resolution unfavourable to the suit of the Constable. But, still more zealous for her lady's honour than even for her happiness, Rose had strictly forborne every effort which could affect Eveline's purpose, when she had once expressed her approbation of De Lacy's addresses; and whatever she thought or anticipated concerning the proposed marriage, she seemed from that moment to consider it as an event which must necessarily take place.

De Lacy himself, as he learned more intimately to know the merit of the prize which he was desirous of possessing, looked forward with different feelings towards the union, than those with which he had first proposed the measure to Raymond Berenger. It was then a mere match of interest and convenience, which had occurred to the mind of a proud and politic feudal lord, as the best mode of consolidating the power and perpetuating the line of his family. Nor did even the splendour of Eveline's beauty make that impression upon De Lacy, which it was calculated to do on the fiery and impassioned chivalry of the age. He was past that period of life when the wise are captivated by outward form, and might have said with truth, as well as with discretion, that he could have wished his beautiful bride several years older, and possessed of a more moderate portion of personal charms, in order to have rendered the match more fitted for his own age and disposition. This stoicism, however, vanished, when, on repeated interviews with his destined bride, he found that she was indeed inexperienced in life, but desirous to be guided by superior wisdom; and that, although gifted with high spirit, and a disposition which began to recover its natural elastic gayety, she was gentle, docile, and, above all, endowed with a firmness of principle, which seemed to give assurance that she would tread uprightly, and without spot, the slippery paths in which youth, rank, and beauty, are doomed to move.

As feelings of a warmer and more impassioned kind towards Eveline began to glow in De Lacy's bosom, his engagements as a crusader became more and more burdensome to him. The Benedictine Abbess, the natural guardian of Eveline's happiness, added to these feelings by her reasoning and remonstrances. Although a nun and a devotee, she held in reverence the holy state of matrimony, and comprehended so much of it as to be aware, that its important purposes could not be accomplished while the whole continent of Europe was interposed betwixt the married pair; for as to a hint from the Constable, that his young spouse might accompany him into the dangerous and dissolute precints of the Crusaders' camp, the good lady crossed herself with horror at the proposal, and never permitted it to be a second time mentioned in her presence.

It was not however, uncommon for kings, princes, and other persons of high consequence, who had taken upon them the vow to rescue Jerusalem, to obtain delays, and even a total remission of their engagement, by proper application to the Church of Rome. The Constable was sure to possess the full advantage of his sovereign's interest and countenance, in seeking permission to remain in England, for he was the noble to whose valour and policy Henry had chiefly intrusted the defence of the disorderly Welsh marches; and it was by no means with his good-will that so useful a subject had ever assumed the cross.

It was settled, therefore, in private betwixt the Abbess and the Constable, that the latter should solicit at Rome, and with the Pope's Legate in England, a remission of his vow for at least two years; a favour which it was thought could scarce be refused to one of his wealth and influence, backed as it was with the most liberal offers of assistance towards the redemption of the Holy Land. His offers were indeed munificent; for he proposed, if his own personal attendance were dispensed with, to send a hundred lances at his own cost, each lance accompanied by two squires, three archers, and a varlet or horse-boy; being double *the retinue by* which his own person was to have *been accompanied. He offered* besides to deposit the *sum of two thousand bezants* to the general expenses *of the expedition, to surrender* to the use of the Christian armament those equipped vessels wh provided, and which even now awaited t ation of himself and his followers.

Yet, while making these magnificent Constable could not help feeling they woul quate to the expectations of the rigid prela who, as he had himself reached the cr brought the Constable and many others holy engagement, must needs see with dis work of his eloquence endangered, by the so important an associate from his favourite To soften, therefore, his disappointment a possible, the Constable offered to the Archb in the event of his obtaining license to Britain, his forces should be led by his ne miun Lacy, already renowned for his ea chivalry, the present hope of his house, heirs of his own body, its future head and

The Constable took the most prudent communicating this proposal to the Archbi win, through a mutual friend, on whose g he could depend, and whose interest with was regarded as great. But notwithsta splendour of the proposal, the Prelate he sullen and obstinate silence, and referred to a personal conference with the Constabl pointed day, when concerns of the church the Archbishop to the city of Gloucester. of the mediator was such as induced the to expect a severe struggle with the proud ful churchman; but, himself proud and po backed by the favour of his sovereign, he pect to be foiled in the contest.

The necessity that this point should be adjusted, as well as the recent loss of E ther, gave an air of privacy to De Lacy's and prevented its being signalized by to and feats of military skill, in which he w been otherwise desirous to display his add eyes of his mistress. The rules of the co vented his giving entertainments of danci or other more pacific revels; and although stable displayed his affection by the mos gifts to his future bride and her attendants, affair, in the opinion of the experienced Dan proceeded more with the solemnity of a fu the light pace of an approaching bridal.

The bride herself felt something of this, a occasionally it might have been lightened b of young Damian, in whose age, so nea ponding to her own, she might have expe relief from the formal courtship of his gra But he came not; and from what the Con concerning him, she was led to imagine th lations had, for a time at least, exchange tions and character. The elder De Lacy indeed, in nominal observance of his vow in a pavilion by the gates of Gloucester; dom donned his armour, substituted costl and silk for his war-worn shamoy double fected at his advanced time of life more attire than his contemporaries remember tinguishing his early youth. His nephew, o trary, resided almost constantly on the m Wales, occupied in settling by prudence, o by main force, the various disturbances these provinces were continually agitated; line learned with surprise, that it was with his uncle had prevailed on him to be pres ceremony of their being betrothed to each as the Normans entitled the ceremony, t *cailles*. This engagement, which preceded marriage for a space more or less, accordi cumstances, was usually celebrated with a corresponding to the rank of the contractin

The Constable added, with expressions that Damian gave himself too little rest, co his early youth, slept too little, and indulg restless a disposition—that his health was —and that a learned Jewish leech, whose opi been taken, had given his advice that the wa more genial climate was necessary to restore stitution to its general and natural vigour.

Eveline heard this with much regret, a

ered Damian as the angel of good tidings, who rought her news of deliverance from the forces Welsh; and the occasions on which they had hough mournful, brought a sort of pleasure in ction, so gentle had been the youth's deport- and so consoling his expressions of sympathy. ished she could see him, that she might herself of the nature of his illness; for, like other dam- that age, she was not entirely ignorant of the healing, and had been taught by Father Aldro- himself no mean physician, how to extract essences from plants and herbs gathered un- metary hours. She thought it possible that ents in this art, slight as they were, might per- e of service to one already her friend and or, and soon about to become her very near re-

as therefore with a sensation of pleasure, d with some confusion, (at the idea, doubtless, uming the part of medical adviser to so young rt,) that one evening, while the convent was led about some business of their chapter, she Gillian announce that the kinsman of the Constable desired to speak with her. She ed up the veil, which she wore in compliance e customs of the house, and hastily descended arlour, commanding the attendance of Gillian, evertheless, did not think proper to obey the

n she entered the apartment, a man whom she ver seen before advanced, kneeled on one knee, ing up the hem of her veil, saluted it with an he most profound respect. She stepped back, ed and alarmed, although there was nothing appearance of the stranger to justify her ap- ion. He seemed to be about thirty years of l of stature, and bearing a noble though wasted nd a countenance on which disease, or per- outhful indulgence, had anticipated the traces

His demeanour seemed courteous and re- , even in a degree which approached to ex- He observed Eveline's surprise, and said, in a pride, mingled with emotion, "I fear that I en mistaken, and that my visit is regarded as elcome intrusion."

e, sir," answered Eveline, "and let me know me and business. I was summoned to a kins- the Constable of Chester."

l you expected the stripling Damian," an- the stranger. "But the match with which d rings will connect you with others of the esides that young person; and amongst these, e luckless Randal de Lacy. Perhaps," con- ue, "the fair Eveline Berenger may not even ard his name breathed by his more fortunate n—more fortunate in every respect, but *most* te in his present prospects."

compliment was accompanied by a deep ce. and Eveline stood much embarrassed how to his civilities; for although she now well ered to have heard this Randal slightly men- y the Constable when speaking of his family, in terms which implied that there was no nderstanding betwixt them. She therefore urned his courtesy by general thanks for the of his visit, trusting he would then retire; h was not his purpose.

mprehend," he said, "from the coldness with he Lady Eveline Berenger receives me, that e has heard of me from my kinsman (if in- thought me worthy of being mentioned to all) has been, to say the least, unfavourable. et my name once stood as high in fields rts, as that of the Constable; nor is it aught graceful than what is indeed often esteemed rst of disgraces—poverty, which prevents my piring to places of honour and fame. If my l follies have been numerous, I have paid for y the loss of my fortune, and the degradation condition; and therein my happy kinsman if he pleased, do me some aid—I mean not is purse or estate; for, poor as I am, I would on alms *extorted from the reluctant* hand of *nged friend; but his countenance* would put him to no cost, and, in so far, I might expect some favour."

"In that my Lord Constable," said Eveline, "must judge for himself. I have—as yet, at least—no right to interfere in his family affairs; and if I should ever have such right, it will well become me to be cautious how I use it."

"It is prudently answered," replied Randal; "but what I ask of you is merely, that you, in your gentleness, would please to convey to my cousin a suit, which I find it hard to bring my ruder tongue to utter with sufficient submission. The usurers, whose claims have eaten like a canker into my means, now menace me with a dungeon; a threat which they dared not mutter, far less attempt to execute, were it not that they see me an outcast, unprotected by the natural head of my family, and regard me rather as they would some unfriended vagrant, than as a descendant of the powerful House of Lacy."

"It is a sad necessity," replied Eveline; "but I see not how I can help you in such extremity."

"Ensily," replied Randal de Lacy. "The day of your betrothal is fixed, as I hear, reported; and it is your right to select what witnesses you please to the solemnity, which may the saints bless! To every one but myself, presence or absence on that occasion is a matter of mere ceremony—to me it is almost life or death. So am I situated, that the marked instance of slight or contempt, implied by my exclusion from this meeting of our family, will be held for the signal of my final expulsion from the House of the De Lacys, and for a thousand bloodhounds to assail me without mercy or forbearance, whom, cowards as they are, even the slightest show of countenance from my powerful kinsman would compel to stand at bay. But why should I occupy your time in talking thus? —Farewell, madam—be happy—and do not think of me the more harshly, that for a few minutes I have broken the tenor of your happy thoughts, by forcing my misfortunes on your notice."

"Stay, sir," said Eveline, affected by the tone and manner of the noble suppliant; "you shall not have it to say that you have told your distress to Eveline Berenger, without receiving such aid as is in her power to give. I will mention your request to the Constable of Chester."

"You must do more, if you really mean to assist me," said Randal de Lacy, "you must make that request your own. You do not know," said he, continuing to bend on her a fixed and expressive look, "how hard it is to change the fixed purpose of a De Lacy—a twelvemonth hence you will probably be better acquainted with the firm texture of our resolutions. But, at present, what can withstand your wish should you deign to express it?"

"Your suit, sir, shall not be lost for want of my advancing it with my good word and good wishes," replied Eveline; "but you must be well aware that its success or failure must rest with the Constable himself."

Randal de Lacy took his leave with the same air of deep reverence which had marked his entrance; only that, as he then saluted the skirt of Eveline's robe, he now rendered the same homage by touching her hand with his lip. She saw him depart with a mixture of emotions, in which compassion was predominant; although in his complaints of the Constable's unkindness to him there was something offensive, and his avowal of follies and excess seemed uttered rather in the spirit of wounded pride, than in that of contrition.

When Eveline next saw the Constable, she told him of the visit of Randal, and of his request; and strictly observing his countenance while she spoke, she saw, that at the first mention of his kinsman's name, a gleam of anger shot along his features. He soon subdued it, however, and fixing his eyes on the ground, listened to Eveline's detailed account of the visit, and her request "that Randall might be one of the invited witnesses to their *fiancailles*."

The Constable paused for a moment, as if he were considering how to elude the solicitation. At length he replied, "You do not know for whom you ask this, or you would perhaps have forborne your request."

neither are you apprised of its full import, though my crafty cousin well knows, that when I do him this grace which he asks, I bind myself, as it were, in the eye of the world once more—and it will be for the third time—to interfere in his affairs, and place them on such a footing as may afford him the means of re-establishing his fallen consequence, and repairing his numerous errors."

"And wherefore not, my lord?" said the generous Eveline. "If he has been ruined only through follies, he is now of an age when these are no longer tempting snares; and if his heart and hand be good, he may yet be an honour to the House of De Lacy."

The Constable shook his head. "He hath indeed," he said, "a heart and hand fit for service, God knoweth, whether in good or evil. But never shall it be said that you, my fair Eveline, made request of Hugh de Lacy, which he was not to his uttermost willing to comply with. Randall shall attend at our *fiancailles*;—there is indeed the more cause for his attendance, as I somewhat fear we may lack that of our valued nephew Damian, whose malady rather increases than declines, and, as I hear, with strange symptoms of unwonted disturbance of mind and starts of temper, to which the youth hath not hitherto been subject."

CHAPTER XVII.

Ring out the merry bells, the bride approaches.
The blush upon her cheek has shamed the morning,
For that is dawning palely. Grant, good saints,
These clouds betoken naught of evil omen!—*Old Play.*

THE day of the *fiancailles*, or espousals, was now approaching; and it seems that neither the profession of the Abbess, nor her practice at least, were so rigid as to prevent her selecting the great parlour of the convent for that holy rite, although necessarily introducing many male guests within those vestal precincts, and notwithstanding that the rite itself was the preliminary to a state which the inmates of the cloister had renounced for ever. The Abbess's Norman pride of birth, and the real interest which she took in her niece's advancement, overcame all scruples; and the venerable mother might be seen in unwonted bustle, now giving orders to the gardener for decking the apartment with flowers—now to her cellaress, her precentrix, and the lay-sisters of the kitchen, for preparing a splendid banquet, mingling her commands on these worldly subjects with an occasional ejaculation on their vanity and worthlessness, and every now and then converting the busy and anxious looks which she threw upon her preparations into a solemn turning upward of eyes and folding of hands, as one who sighed over the mere earthly pomp which she took such trouble in superintending. At another time the good lady might have been seen in close consultation with Father Aldrovand, upon the ceremonial, civil and religious, which was to accompany a solemnity of such consequence to her family.

Mean while the reins of discipline, although relaxed for a season, were not entirely thrown loose. The outer court of the convent was indeed for the time opened for the reception of the male sex; but the younger sisters and novices of the house being carefully secluded in the more inner apartments of the extensive building, under the immediate eye of a grim old nun, or, as the conventual rule designed her, an ancient, sad, and virtuous person, termed Mistress of the Novices, were not permitted to pollute their eyes by looking on waving plumes and rustling mantles. A few sisters, indeed, of the Abbess's own standing, were left at liberty, being such goods as it was thought could not, in shopman's phrase, take harm from the air, and which are therefore left lying loose on the counter. These antiquated dames went mumping about with much affected indifference, and a great deal of real curiosity, endeavouring indirectly to get information concerning names, and dresses, and decorations, without daring to show such interest in these vanities as actual questions on the subject might *have implied*.

A stout band of the Constable's spearmen guarded *the gate of the nunnery*, admitting within the hallowed precinct the few only who were to be present at the solemnity, with their principal attendants; and while the former were ushered with all due ceremony into the apartments dressed out for the occasion, the attendants, although detained in the outer court, were liberally supplied with refreshments of the most substantial kind; and had the amusement, so dear to the menial classes, of examining and criticising their masters and mistresses, as they passed into the interior apartments prepared for their reception.

Amongst the domestics who were thus employed, were old Raoul the huntsman and his jolly dame;—he gay and glorious, in a new cassock of green velvet, she gracious and comely, in a kirtle of yellow silk, fringed with minivair, and that at no mean cost, were equally busied in beholding the gay spectacle. The most inveterate wars have their occasional terms of truce; the most bitter and boisterous weather its hours of warmth and of calmness; and so was it with the matrimonial horizon of this amiable pair, which, usually cloudy, had now for a brief space cleared up. The splendour of their new apparel, the mirth of the spectacle around them, with the aid, perhaps, of a bowl of muscadine quaffed by Raoul, and a cup of hippocras sipped by his wife, had rendered them rather more agreeable in each other's eyes than was their wont; good cheer being in such cases, as oil is to a rusty lock, the means of making those valves move smoothly and glibly, which otherwise work not together at all, or by shrieks and groans express their reluctance to move in union. The pair had stuck themselves into a kind of niche, three or four steps from the ground, which contained a small stone bench, whence their curious eyes could scrutinize with advantage every guest who entered the court.

Thus placed, and in their present state of temporary concord, Raoul with his frosty visage formed an unapt representative of January, the bitter father of the year; and though Gillian was past the delicate bloom of youthful May, yet the melting fire of a full black eye, and the genial glow of a ripe and crimson cheek, made her a lively type of the fruitful and jovial August. Dame Gillian used to make it her boast, that she could please every body with her gossip, when she chose it, from Raymond Berenger down to Robin the horse-boy; and like a good housewife, who, to keep her hand in use, will sometimes even condescend to dress a dish for her husband's sole eating, she now thought proper to practise her powers of pleasing on old Raoul, fairly conquering, in her successful sallies of mirth and satire, not only his cynical temperament towards all human kind, but his peculiar and special disposition to be testy with his spouse. Her jokes, such as they were, and the coquetry with which they were enforced, had such an effect on this Timon of the woods, that he curled up his cynical nose, displayed his few straggling teeth like a cur about to bite, broke out into a barking laugh, which was more like the cry of one of his own hounds—stopped short in the explosion, as if he had suddenly recollected that it was out of character yet, ere he resumed his acrimonious gravity, shot such a glance at Gillian as made his nut-cracker jaws, pinched eyes, and convolved nose, bear no small resemblance to one of those fantastic faces which decorate the upper end of old bass viols.

"Is not this better than laying your dog-leash on your loving wife, as if she were a brach of the kennel?" said August to January.

"In troth is it," answered January, in a frost-bitten tone;—"and so it is also better than doing the brach-tricks which bring the leash into exercise."

"Humph!" said Gillian, in the tone of one who thought her husband's proposition might bear being disputed; but instantly changing the note to that of tender complaint, "Ah! Raoul," she said, "do you not remember how you once beat me because our late lord—Our Lady assoilzie him!—took my crimson breastknot for a peony rose?"

"Ay, ay," said the huntsman; "I remember our old master would make such mistakes—Our Lady assoilzie him! as you say—The best hound will hunt counter."

"And how could you think, dearest Raoul, to let the wife of thy bosom go so long without a new kirtle?" said his helpmate.

"Why, thou hast got one from our young lady that might serve a countess," said Raoul, his concord jarred by her touching this chord—"how many kirtles wouldst thou have?"

"Only two, kind Raoul; just that folk may not count their children's age by the date of Dame Gillian's last new gown."

"Well, well—it is hard that a man cannot be in good humour once and away without being made to pay for it. But thou shalt have a new kirtle at Michaelmas, when I sell the bucks' hides for the season. The very antlers should bring a good penny this year."

"Ay, ay," said Gillian; "I ever tell thee, husband, the horns would be worth the hide in a fair market."

Raoul turned briskly round as if a wasp had stung him, and there is no guessing what his reply might have been to this seemingly innocent observation, had not a gallant horseman at that instant entered the court, and, dismounting like the others, gave his horse to the charge of a squire, or equerry, whose attire blazed with embroidery.

"By Saint Hubert, a proper horseman, and a *destrier* for an earl," said Raoul; "and my Lord Constable's liveries withal—yet I know not the gallant."

"But I do," said Gillian; "It is Randal de Lacy, the Constable's kinsman, and as good a man as ever came of the name!"

"Oh! by Saint Hubert, I have heard of him—men say he is a reveller, and a jangler, and a waster of his goods."

"Men lie now and then," said Gillian, drily.

"And women also," replied Raoul;—"why, methinks he winked on thee just now."

"That right eye of thine saw never true since our good lord—Saint Mary rest him!—flung a cup of wine in thy face, for pressing over boldly into his withdrawing room."

"I marvel," said Raoul, as if he heard her not, "that yonder ruffler comes hither. I have heard that he is suspected to have attempted the Constable's life, and that they have not spoken together for five years."

"He comes on my young lady's invitation, and that I know full well," said Dame Gillian; "and he is less like to do the Constable wrong than to have wrong at his hand, poor gentleman, as indeed he has had enough of that already."

"And who told thee so?" said Raoul, bitterly.

"No matter, it was one who knew all about it very well," said the dame, who began to fear that, in displaying her triumph of superior information, she had been rather over-communicative.

"It must have been the devil, or Randal himself," said Raoul, "for no other mouth is large enough for such a lie.—But hark ye, Dame Gillian, who is he that presses forward next, like a man that scarce sees how he goes?"

"Even your angel of grace, my young Squire Damian," said Dame Gillian.

"It is impossible!" answered Raoul—"Call me blind if thou wilt;—but I have never seen man so changed in a few weeks—and his attire is flung on him so wildly as if he wore a horse-cloth round him instead of a mantle—What can ail the youth?—he has made a dead pause at the door, as if he saw something on the threshold that debarred his entrance.—Saint Hubert, but he looks as if he were elf-stricken!"

"You ever thought him such a treasure!" said Gillian; "and now look at him as he stands by the side of a real gentleman, how he stares and trembles as if he were distraught."

"I will speak to him," said Raoul, forgetting his lameness, and springing from his elevated station—"I will speak to him; and, if he be unwell, I have my lancets and fleams to bleed man as well as brute."

"And a fit physician for such a patient," muttered Gillian,—"*a dog-leech for a dreamy madman, that neither knows his own disease nor the way to cure it.*"

Mean while the old huntsman made his way towards the entrance, before which Damian remained standing, in apparent uncertainty whether he should enter or not, regardless of the crowd around, and at the same time attracting their attention by the singularity of his deportment.

Raoul had a private regard for Damian; for which, perhaps, it was a chief reason, that of late his wife had been in the habit of speaking of him in a tone more disrespectful than she usually applied to handsome young men. Besides, he understood the youth was a second Sir Tristrem in silvan sports by wood and river, and there needed no more to fetter Raoul's soul to him with bands of steel. He saw with great concern his conduct attract general notice, mixed with some ridicule.

"He stands," said the town-jester, who had crowded into the gay throng, "before the gate, like Balaam's ass in the Mystery, when the animal sees so much more than can be seen by any one else."

A cut from Raoul's ready leash rewarded the felicity of this application, and sent the fool howling off to seek a more favourable audience for his pleasantry. At the same time Raoul pressed up to Damian, and with an earnestness very different from his usual dry causticity of manner, begged him for God's sake not to make himself the general spectacle, by standing there as if the devil sat on the doorway, but either to enter, or, what might be as becoming, to retire, and make himself more fit in apparel for attending on a solemnity so nearly concerning his house.

"And what ails my apparel, old man?" said Damian, turning sternly on the huntsman, as one who has been hastily and uncivilly roused from a reverie.

"Only, with respect to your valour," answered the huntsman, "men do not usually put old mantles over new doublets; and methinks, with submission, that of yours neither accords with your dress nor is fitted for this noble presence."

"Thou art a fool!" answered Damian, "and as green in wit as gray in years. Know you not that in these days the young and old consort together—contract together—wed together? and should we take more care to make our apparel consistent than our actions?"

"For God's sake, my lord," said Raoul, "forbear these wild and dangerous words! they may be heard by other ears than mine, and construed by worse interpreters. There may be here those who will pretend to track mischief from light words, as I would find a buck from his frayings. Your cheek is pale, my lord, your eye is bloodshot; for Heaven's sake retire!"

"I will not retire," said Damian, with yet more distemperature of manner, "till I have seen the Lady Eveline."

"For the sake of all the saints," ejaculated Raoul, "not now!—You will do my lady incredible injury by forcing yourself into her presence in this condition."

"Do you think so?" said Damian, the remark seeming to operate as a sedative which enabled him to collect his scattered thoughts—"Do you really think so?—I thought that to have looked upon her once more—but no—you are in the right, old man."

He turned from the door as if to withdraw, but ere he could accomplish his purpose, he turned yet more pale than before, staggered, and fell on the pavement ere Raoul could afford him his support, useless as that might have proved. Those who raised him were surprised to observe that his garments were soiled with blood, and that the stains upon his cloak, which had been criticised by Raoul, were of the same complexion. A grave-looking personage, wrapped in a sad-coloured mantle, came forth from the crowd.

"I knew how it would be," he said; "I made venesection this morning, and commanded repose and sleep according to the aphorisms of Hippocrates; but if young gentlemen will neglect the ordinance of their physician, medicine will avenge herself. It is impossible that my bandage or ligature, knit by these fingers, should have started but to avenge the neglect of the precepts of art."

"What means this prate?" said the voice of the Constable, before which all others were silent. He had been summoned forth just as the rite of espousal or betrothing was concluded, on the confusion occasioned by Damian's situation, and now sternly commanded the physician to replace the bandages which had slipped from his nephew's arm, himself assisting in the task of supporting the patient, with the anxious and deeply agitated feelings of one who saw a near and justly valued relative—as yet, the heir of his fame and family—stretched before him in a condition so dangerous.

But the griefs of the powerful and the fortunate are often mingled with the impatience of interrupted prosperity. "What means this?" he demanded sternly of the leech. "I sent you this morning to attend my nephew on the first tidings of his illness, and commanded that he should make no attempt to be present on this day's solemnity, yet I find him in this state, and in this place."

"So please your lordship," replied the leech, with a conscious self-importance, which even the presence of the Constable could not subdue—"*Curatio est canonica, non coacta;* which signifieth, my lord, that the physician acteth his cure by rules of art and science—by advice and prescription, but not by force or violence upon the patient, who cannot be at all benefited unless he be voluntarily amenable to the orders of his medicum."

"Tell me not of your jargon," said De Lacy; "if my nephew was lightheaded enough to attempt to come hither in the heat of a delirious distemper, you should have had sense to prevent him, had it been by actual force."

"It may be," said Randal de Lacy, joining the crowd, who, forgetting the cause which had brought them together, were now assembled about Damian, "that more powerful was the magnet which drew our kinsman hither, than aught the leech could do to withhold him."

The Constable, still busied about his nephew, looked up as Randal spoke, and, when he was done, asked, with formal coldness of manner, "Ha, fair kinsman, of what magnet do you speak?"

"Surely of your nephew's love and regard to your lordship," answered Randal, "which, not to mention his respect for the Lady Eveline, must have compelled him hither, if his limbs were able to bear him. —And here the bride comes I think, in charity, to thank him for his zeal."

"What unhappy case is this?" said the Lady Eveline, pressing forward, much disordered with the intelligence of Damian's danger, which had been suddenly conveyed to her. "Is there nothing in which my poor service may avail?"

"Nothing, lady," said the Constable, rising from beside his nephew, and taking her hand; "your kindness is here mistimed. This motley assembly, this unseeming confusion, become not your presence."

"Unless it could be helpful, my lord," said Eveline, eagerly. "It is your nephew who is in danger: - my deliverer—one of my deliverers, I would say."

"He is fitly attended by his chirurgeon," said the Constable, leading back his reluctant bride into the convent, while the medical attendant triumphantly exclaimed,

"Well judgeth my Lord Constable, to withdraw his noble lady from the host of petticoated empirics, who, like so many Amazons, break in upon and derange the regular course of physical practice, with their petulant prognostics, their rash recipes, their mithridate, their febrifuges, their amulets, and their charms. Well speaketh the Ethnic poet,

> 'Non audet, nisi qui didicit, dare quod medicorum est;
> Promittunt medici—tractant fabrilia fabri.'"

As he repeated these lines with much emphasis, the doctor permitted his patient's arm to drop from his hand, that he might aid the cadence with a flourish of his own. "There," said he to the spectators, "is what none of you understand—no, by Saint Luke, *nor the Constable himself.*"

"*But he knows how to whip in* a hound that babbles *when he should be busy*," said Raoul; and, silenced by this hint, the chirurgeon betook himself to his proper duty, of superintending the removal of young Damian to an apartment in the neighbouring street, where the symptoms of his disorder seemed rather to increase than diminish, and speedily required all the skill and attention which the leech could bestow.

The subscription of the contract of marriage had, as already noticed, been just concluded, when the company assembled on the occasion were interrupted by the news of Damian's illness. When the Constable led his bride from the court-yard into the apartment where the company was assembled, there was discomposure and uneasiness on the countenance of both; and it was not a little increased by the bride pulling her hand hastily from the hold of the bridegroom, on observing that the latter was stained with recent blood, and had in truth left the same stamp upon her own. With a faint exclamation she showed the marks to Rose, saying, at the same time, "What bodes this?—Is this the revenge of the Bloody-finger already commencing?"

"It bodes nothing, my dearest lady," said Rose—"it is our own fears that are prophets, not those trifles which we take for augury. For God's sake, speak to my lord! He is surprised at your agitation."

"Let him ask me the cause himself," said Eveline; "fitter it should be told at his bidding, than be offered by me unasked."

The Constable, while his bride stood thus conversing with her maiden, had also observed, that in his anxiety to assist his nephew, he had transferred part of his blood from his own hands to Eveline's dress. He came forward to apologize for what at such a moment seemed almost ominous. "Fair lady," said he, "the blood of a true De Lacy can never bode aught but peace and happiness to you."

Eveline seemed as if she would have answered, but could not immediately find words. The faithful Rose, at the risk of incurring the censure of being over forward, hastened to reply to the compliment. "Every damsel is bound to believe what you say, my noble lord," was her answer, "knowing how readily that blood hath ever flowed for protecting the distressed, and so lately for our own relief."

"It is well spoken, little one," answered the Constable; "and the Lady Eveline is happy in a maiden who so well knows how to speak when it is her own pleasure to be silent.—Come, lady," he added, "let us hope this mishap of my kinsman is but like a sacrifice to fortune, which permits not the brightest hour to pass without some intervening shadow. Damian, I trust, will speedily recover; and he we mindful that the blood-drops which alarm you have been drawn by a friendly steel, and are symptoms rather of recovery than of illness.—Come, dearest lady, your silence discourages our friends, and wakes in them doubts whether we be sincere in the welcome due to them. Let me be your sewer," he said; and, taking a silver ewer and napkin from the standing cupboard, which was loaded with plate, he presented them on his knee to his bride.

Exerting herself to shake off the alarm into which she had been thrown by some supposed coincidence of the present accident with the apparition of Baldringham, Eveline, entering into her betrothed husband's humour, was about to raise him from the ground, when he was interrupted by the arrival of a hasty messenger, who, coming into the room without ceremony, informed the Constable that his nephew was so extremely ill, that, if he hoped to see him alive, it would be necessary he should come to his lodgings instantly.

The Constable started up, made a brief adieu to Eveline and to the guests, who, dismayed at this new and disastrous intelligence, were preparing to disperse themselves, when, as he advanced towards the door, he was met by a Paritor, or Summoner of the Ecclesiastical Court, whose official dress had procured him unobstructed entrance into the precincts of the abbey.

"*Deus vobiscum*," said the paritor; "I would know which of this fair company is the Constable of Chester?"

"I am he," answered the elder De Lacy; "but if thy business be not the more hasty, I cannot now speak with thee—I am bound on matters of life and death."

"I take all Christian people to witness that I have discharged my duty," said the paritor, putting into the hand of the Constable a slip of parchment.

"How is this, fellow?" said the Constable in great indignation—"for whom or what does your master the Archbishop take me, that he deals with me in this discourteous fashion, citing me to compear before him more like a delinquent than a friend or a nobleman."

"My gracious lord," answered the paritor, haughtily, "is accountable to no one but our Holy Father the Pope, for the exercise of the power which is intrusted to him by the canons of the Church. Your lordship's answer to my citation?"

"Is the Archbishop present in this city?" said the Constable, after a moment's reflection—"I knew not of his purpose to trave. hither, still less of his purpose to exercise authority within these bounds."

"My gracious lord the Archbishop," said the paritor, "is but now arrived in this city, of which he is metropolitan; and besides, by his apostolical commission, a legate *a latere* hath plenary jurisdiction throughout all England, as those may find (whatsoever be their degree) who may dare to disobey his summons."

"Hark thee, fellow," said the Constable, regarding the paritor with a grim and angry countenance, "were it not for certain respects, which I promise thee thy tawny hood hath little to do with, thou wert better have swallowed thy citation, seal and all, than delivered it to me with the addition of such saucy terms. Go hence, and tell your master I will see him within the space of an hour, during which time I am delayed by the necessity of attending a sick relation."

The paritor left the apartment with more humility in his manner than when he had entered, and left the assembled guests to look upon each other in silence and dismay.

The reader cannot fail to remember how severely the yoke of the Roman supremacy pressed both on the clergy and laity of England during the reign of Henry II. Even the attempt of that wise and courageous monarch to make a stand for the independence of his throne in the memorable case of Thomas a Becket, had such an unhappy issue, that, like a suppressed rebellion, it was found to add new strength to the domination of the Church. Since the submission of the king in that ill-fated struggle, the voice of Rome had double potency whenever it was heard, and the boldest peers of England held it more wise to submit to her imperious dictates, than to provoke a spiritual censure which had so many secular consequences. Hence the slight and scornful manner in which the Constable was treated by the prelate Baldwin struck a chill of astonishment into the assembly of friends whom he had collected to witness his espousals: and as he glanced his haughty eye around, he saw that many who would have stood by him through life and death in any other quarrel, had it even been with his sovereign, were turning pale at the very thought of a collision with the Church. Embarrassed, and at the same time incensed at their timidity, the Constable hasted to dismiss them, with the general assurance that all would be well—that his nephew's indisposition was a trifling complaint, exaggerated by a conceited physician, and by his own want of care—and that the message of the Archbishop, so unceremoniously delivered, was but the consequence of their mutual and friendly familiarity, which induced them sometimes, for the jest's sake, to reverse or neglect the ordinary forms of intercourse.—"If I wanted to speak to the prelate Baldwin on express business and in haste, such is the humility and indifference to form of that worthy pillar of the Church, that I should not fear offence," said the Constable, "did I send the meanest horse-boy in my troop to ask an *audience of him.*"

So he spoke—but there was something in his countenance *which contradicted* his words; and his friends and relations retired from the splendid and joyful ceremony of his espousals as from a funeral feast, with anxious thoughts and with downcast eyes.

Randal was the only person, who, having attentively watched the whole progress of the affair during the evening, ventured to approach his cousin as he left the house, and asked him, "in the name of their reunited friendship, whether he had nothing to command him?" assuring him, with a look more expressive than his words, that he would not find him cold in his service.

"I have naught which can exercise your zeal, fair cousin," replied the Constable, with the air of one who partly questioned the speaker's sincerity; and the parting reverence with which he accompanied his words, left Randal no pretext for continuing his attendance, as he seemed to have designed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oh, were I seated high as my ambition,
I'd place this naked foot on necks of monarchs.
Mysterious Mother.

THE most anxious and unhappy moment of Hugo de Lacy's life, was unquestionably that in which, by espousing Eveline with all civil and religious solemnity, he seemed to approach to what for some time he had considered as the prime object of his wishes. He was assured of the early possession of a beautiful and amiable wife, endowed with such advantage of worldly goods, as gratified his ambition as well as his affections—Yet, even in this fortunate moment, the horizon darkened around him in a manner which presaged naught but storm and calamity. At his nephew's lodging he learned that the pulse of the patient had risen, and his delirium had augmented, and all around him spoke very doubtfully of his chance of recovery, or surviving a crisis which seemed speedily approaching. The Constable stole towards the door of the apartment which his feelings permitted him not to enter and listened to the raving which the fever gave rise to. Nothing can be more melancholy than to hear the mind at work concerning its ordinary occupations, when the body is stretched in pain and danger upon the couch of severe sickness; the contrast betwixt the ordinary state of health, its joys or its labours, renders doubly affecting the actual helplessness of the patient before whom these visions are rising, and we feel a corresponding degree of compassion for the sufferer whose thoughts are wandering so far from his real condition.

The Constable felt this acutely, as he heard his nephew shout the war-cry of the family repeatedly, appearing, by the words of command and direction, which he uttered from time to time, to be actively engaged in leading his men-at-arms against the Welsh. At another time he muttered various terms of the *manege*, of falconry, and of the chase—he mentioned his uncle's name repeatedly on these occasions, as if the idea of his kinsmen had been connected alike with his martial encounters, and with his sports by wood and river. Other sounds there were, which he muttered so low as to be altogether undistinguishable.

With a heart even still more softened towards his kinsman's sufferings from hearing the points on which his mind wandered, the Constable twice applied his hand to the latch of the door, in order to enter the bedroom, and twice forbore, his eyes running faster with tears than he chose should be witnessed by the attendants. At length, relinquishing his purpose, he hastily left the house, mounted his horse, and, followed only by four of his personal attendants, rode towards the palace of the Bishop, where, as he learned from public rumour, the Archprelate Baldwin had taken up his temporary residence.

The train of riders and of led horses, of sumpter mules, and of menials and attendants, both lay and ecclesiastical, which thronged around the gate of the episcopal mansion, together with the gaping crowd of inhabitants who had gathered around, some to gaze upon the splendid slave, some to bay

the chance of receiving the benediction of the Holy Prelate, was so great as to impede the Constable's approach at the palace-door; and when this obstacle was surmounted, he found another in the obstinacy of the Archbishop's attendants, who permitted him not, though announced by name and title, to cross the threshold of the mansion, until they should receive the express command of their master to that effect.

The Constable felt the full effect of this slighting reception. He had dismounted from his horse in full confidence of being instantly admitted into the palace at least, if not into the Prelate's presence; and as he now stood on foot among the squires, grooms, and horse-boys of the spiritual lord, he was so much disgusted, that his first impulse was to remount his horse, and return to his pavilion, pitched for the time before the city walls, leaving it to the Bishop to seek him there, if he really desired an interview. But the necessity of conciliation almost immediately rushed on his mind, and subdued the first haughty impulse of his offended pride. "If our wise King," he said to himself, "hath held the stirrup of one Prelate of Canterbury when living, and submitted to the most degrading observances before his shrine when dead, surely I need not be more scrupulous towards his priestly successor in the same overgrown authority." Another thought, which he dared hardly to acknowledge, recommended the same humble and submissive course. He could not but feel that, in endeavouring to evade his vows as a crusader, he was incurring some just censure from the church; and he was not unwilling to hope, that his present cold and scornful reception on Baldwin's part, might be meant as a part of the penance which his conscience informed him his conduct was about to receive.

After a short interval, De Lacy was at length invited to enter the palace of the Bishop of Gloucester, in which he was to meet the Primate of England; but there was more than one brief pause, in hall and anteroom, ere he at length was admitted to Baldwin's presence.

The successor of the celebrated Becket had neither the extensive views, nor the aspiring spirit, of that redoubted personage; but, on the other hand, saint as the latter had become, it may be questioned, whether, in his professions for the weal of Christendom, he was half so sincere as was the present Archbishop. Baldwin was, in truth, a man well qualified to defend the powers which the Church had gained, though perhaps of a character too sincere and candid to be active in extending them. The advancement of the Crusade was the chief business of his life, his success the principal cause of his pride; and, if the sense of possessing the powers of eloquent persuasion, and skill to bend the minds of men to his purpose, was blended with his religious zeal, still the tenor of his life, and afterwards his death before Ptolemais, showed that the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels was the unfeigned object of all his exertions. Hugo de Lacy well knew this; and the difficulty of managing such a temper appeared much greater to him on the eve of the interview in which the attempt was to be made, than he had suffered himself to suppose when the crisis was yet distant.

The Prelate, a man of a handsome and stately form, with features rather too severe to be pleasing, received the Constable in all the pomp of ecclesiastical dignity. He was seated on a chair of oak, richly carved with Gothic ornaments, and placed above the rest of the floor under a niche of the same workmanship. His dress was the rich episcopal robe, ornamented with costly embroidery, and fringed around the neck and cuffs; it opened from the throat and in the middle, and showed an under vestment of embroidery, betwixt the folds of which, as if imperfectly concealed, peeped the close shirt of haircloth which the Prelate constantly wore under all his pompous attire. His mitre was placed beside him on an oaken table of the same workmanship with his throne, against which also rested his pastoral staff, representing a shepherd's crook of the simplest form, yet which had proved more powerful and fearful than lance or cimeter, when wielded by the hand of Thomas a Becket.

A chaplain in a white surplice kneeled at a little distance before a desk, and read forth from an illuminated volume some portion of a theological treatise, in which Baldwin appeared so deeply interested, that he did not seem to notice the entrance of the Constable, who, highly displeased at this additional slight, stood on the floor of the hall, undetermined whether to interrupt the reader and address the Prelate at once, or to withdraw without saluting him at all. Ere he had formed a resolution, the chaplain had arrived at some convenient pause in the lecture, where the Archbishop stopped him with, "*Satis est, mi fili.*"

It was in vain that the proud secular Baron strove to conceal the embarrassment with which he approached the Prelate, whose attitude was plainly assumed for the purpose of impressing him with awe and solicitude. He tried, indeed, to exhibit a demeanour of such ease as might characterize their old friendship, or at least of such indifference as might infer the possession of perfect tranquillity; but he failed in both, and his address expressed mortified pride, mixed with no ordinary degree of embarrassment. The genius of the Catholic Church was on such occasions sure to predominate over the haughtiest of the laity.

"I perceive," said De Lacy, collecting his thoughts, and ashamed to find he had difficulty in doing so,—"I perceive that an old friendship is here dissolved. Methinks Hugo de Lacy might have expected another messenger to summon him to this reverend presence, and that another welcome should wait him on his arrival."

The Archbishop raised himself slowly in his seat, and made a half inclination towards the Constable, who, by an instinctive desire of conciliation, returned it lower than he had intended, or than the scanty courtesy merited. The Prelate at the same time signing to his chaplain, the latter arose to withdraw, and receiving permission in the phrase "*Do veniam*," retreated reverentially, without either turning his back or looking upwards, his eyes fixed on the ground, his hands still folded in his habit, and crossed over his bosom.

When this mute attendant had disappeared, the Prelate's brow became more open, yet retained a dark shade of grave displeasure, and he replied to the address of De Lacy, but still without rising from his seat. "It skills not now, my lord, to say what the brave Constable of Chester has been to the poor priest Baldwin, or with what love and pride we beheld him assume the holy sign of salvation, and, to honour Him by whom he has himself been raised to honour, vow himself to the deliverance of the Holy Land. If I still see that noble lord before me, in the same holy resolution, let me know the joyful truth, and I will lay aside rochet and mitre, and tend his horse like a groom, if it be necessary by such menial service to show the cordial respect I bear to him."

"Reverend father," answered De Lacy, with hesitation, "I had hoped that the propositions which were made to you on my part by the Dean of Hereford, might have seemed more satisfactory in your eyes." Then, regaining his native confidence, he proceeded with more assurance in speech and manner; for the cold inflexible looks of the Archbishop irritated him. "If these proposals can be amended, my lord, let me know in what points, and, if possible, your pleasure shall be done, even if it should prove somewhat unreasonable. I would have peace, my lord, with Holy Church, and am the last who would despise her mandates. This has been known by my deeds in field, and counsels in the state; nor can I think my services have merited cold looks and cold language from the Primate of England."

"Do you upbraid the Church with your services, vain man?" said Baldwin. "I tell thee, Hugh de Lacy, that what Heaven hath wrought for the Church by thy hand, could, had it been the divine pleasure, have been achieved with as much ease by the meanest horse-boy in thy host. It is thus that we honour

ed, in being the chosen instrument by which great things have been wrought in Israel.—Nay, interrupt me not—I tell thee, proud baron, that, in the sight of Heaven, thy wisdom is but as folly—thy courage, which thou dost boast, but the cowardice of a village maiden—thy strength weakness—thy spear an osier, and thy sword a bulrush."

"All this I know, good father," said the Constable, "and have ever heard it repeated when such poor services as I may have rendered are gone and past. Marry, when there was need for my helping hand, I was the very good lord of priest and prelate, and one who should be honoured and prayed for with patrons and founders who sleep in the choir and under the high altar. There was no thought, I trow, of osier or of bulrush, when I have been prayed to couch my lance or draw my weapon; it is only when they are needless that they and their owner are undervalued. Well, my reverend father, be it so—if the Church can cast the Saracens from the Holy Land by grooms and horse-boys, wherefore do you preach knights and nobles from the homes and the countries which they are born to protect and defend?"

The Archbishop looked steadily on him as he replied, "Not for the sake of their fleshly arm do we disturb your knights and barons in their prosecution of barbarous festivities, and murderous feuds, which you call enjoying their homes and protecting their domains,—not that Omnipotence requires their arm of flesh to execute the great predestined work of liberation,—but for the weal of their immortal souls." These last words he pronounced with great emphasis.

The Constable paced the floor impatiently, and muttered to himself, "Such is the airy guerdon for which hosts on hosts have been drawn from Europe to drench the sands of Palestine with their gore—such the vain promises for which we are called upon to barter our country, our lands, and our lives!"

"Is it Hugo de Lacy speaks thus?" said the Archbishop, arising from his seat, and qualifying his tone of censure with the appearance of shame and of regret—"Is it he who underprizes the renown of a knight—the virtue of a Christian—the advancement of his earthly honour—the more incalculable profit of his immortal soul?—Is it he who desires a solid and substantial recompense in lands or treasure, to be won by warring on his less powerful neighbours at home, while knightly honour and religious faith, his vow as a knight and his baptism as a Christian, call him to a more glorious and more dangerous strife?—Can it be indeed Hugo de Lacy, the mirror of the Anglo-Norman chivalry, whose thoughts can conceive such sentiments, whose words can utter them?"

"Flattery and fair speech, suitably mixed with taunts and reproaches, my lord," answered the Constable, colouring and biting his lip, "may carry your point with others; but I am of a temper too solid to be either wheedled or goaded into measures of importance. Forbear, therefore, this strain of affected amazement; and believe me, that whether he goes to the Crusade or abides at home, the character of Hugh Lacy will remain as unimpeached in point of courage as that of the Archbishop Baldwin in point of sanctitude."

"May it stand much higher," said the Archbishop, "than the reputation with which you vouchsafe to compare it! but a blaze may be extinguished as well as a spark; and I tell the Constable of Chester, that the fame which has sat on his basnet for so many years, may flit from it in one moment, never to be recalled?"

"Who dares to say so?" said the Constable, tremblingly alive to the honour for which he had encountered so many dangers.

"A friend," said the Prelate, "whose stripes should be received as benefits. You think of pay, Sir Constable, and of guerdon, as if you still stood in the market, free to chaffer on the terms of your service. I tell you, you are no longer your own master—you are, by the blessed badge you have voluntarily assumed, the soldier of God *himself; nor* can you fly *from your standard without such infamy* as even *coistrels or grooms are unwilling to incur.*"

"*You deal all too hardly with us, my lord,*" said Hugo de Lacy, stopping short in his troubled walk. "You of the spirituality make us laymen the pack-horses of your own concerns, and climb to ambitious heights by the help of our overburdened shoulders; but all hath its limits—Becket transgressed it, and"——

A gloomy and expressive look corresponded with the tone in which he spoke this broken sentence; and the Prelate, at no loss to comprehend his meaning, replied, in a firm and determined voice, "And he was *murdered!*—that is what you dare to hint to me—even to me, the successor of that glorified saint—as a motive for complying with your fickle and selfish wish to withdraw your hand from the plough. You know not to whom you address such a threat. True, Becket, from a saint militant on earth, arrived, by the bloody path of martyrdom, to the dignity of a saint in Heaven; and no less true is it, that, to attain a seat a thousand degrees beneath that of his blessed predecessor, the unworthy Baldwin were willing to submit, under our Lady's protection, to whatever the worst of wicked men can inflict on his earthly frame."

"There needs not this show of courage, reverend father," said De Lacy, recollecting himself, "where there neither is, nor can be, danger. I pray you, let us debate this matter more deliberately. I have never meant to break off my purpose for the Holy Land, but only to postpone it. Methinks the offers that I have made are fair, and ought to obtain for me what has been granted to others in the like case—a slight delay in the time of my departure."

"A slight delay on the part of such a leader as you, noble De Lacy," answered the Prelate, "were a death-blow to our holy and most gallant enterprise. To meaner men we might have granted the privilege of marrying and giving in marriage, even although they care not for the sorrows of Jacob; but you, my lord, are a main prop of our enterprise, and, being withdrawn, the whole fabric may fall to the ground. Who in England will deem himself obliged to press forward, when Hugo de Lacy falls back? Think, my lord, less upon your plighted bride, and more on your plighted word; and believe not that a union can ever come to good, which shakes your purpose towards our blessed undertaking for the honour of Christendom."

The Constable was embarrassed by the pertinacity of the Prelate, and began to give way to his arguments, though most reluctantly, and only because the habits and opinions of the time left him no means of combating his arguments, otherwise than by solicitation. "I admit," he said, "my engagements for the Crusade, nor have I—I repent it—further desire than that brief interval which may be necessary to place my important affairs in order. Mean while, my vassals led by my nephew"——

"Promise that which is within thy power," said the Prelate. "Who knows whether, in resentment of thy seeking after other things than his most holy cause, thy nephew may not be called hence, even while we speak together?"

"God forbid!" said the Baron, starting up, as if about to fly to his nephew's assistance; then suddenly pausing, he turned on the Prelate a keen and investigating glance. "It is not well," he said, "that your reverence should thus trifle with the dangers which threaten my house. Damian is dear to me for his own good qualities—dear for the sake of my only brother.—May God forgive us both! he died when we were in unkindness with each other.—My lord, your words import that my beloved nephew suffers pain and incurs danger on account of my offences?"

The Archbishop perceived he had at length touched the chord to which his refractory penitent's heart-strings must needs vibrate. He replied with circumspection, as well knowing with whom he had to deal,—"Far be it from me to presume to interpret the councils of Heaven! but we read in Scripture, that when the fathers eat sour grapes, the teeth of the children are set on edge. What so reasonable as that we should be punished for our pride and contumacy by a judgment specially calculated to abate and bend that spirit of surquedry?* You yourself best know

* Self-importance, or assumption.

if this disease clung to thy nephew before you had meditated defection from the banner of the Cross."

Hugo de Lacy hastily recollected himself, and found that it was indeed true, that, until he thought of his union with Eveline, there had appeared no change in his nephew's health. His silence and confusion did not escape the artful Prelate. He took the hand of the warrior as he stood before him overwhelmed in doubt, lest his preference of the continuance of his own house to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre should have been punished by the disease which threatened his nephew's life. "Come," he said, "noble De Lacy—the judgment provoked by a moment's presumption may be even yet averted by prayer and penitence. The dial went back at the prayer of the good King Hezekiah—down, down upon thy knees, and doubt not that, with confession, and penance, and absolution, thou mayst yet atone for thy falling away from the cause of Heaven."

Borne down by the dictates of the religion in which he had been educated, and by the fears lest his delay was punished by his nephew's indisposition and danger, the Constable sunk on his knees before the Prelate, whom he had shortly before well nigh braved, confessed, as a sin to be deeply repented of, his purpose of delaying his departure for Palestine, and received, with patience at least, if not with willing acquiescence, the penance inflicted by the Archbishop; which consisted in a prohibition to proceed farther in his proposed wedlock with the Lady Eveline, until he was returned from Palestine, where he was bound by his vow to abide for the term of three years.

"And now, noble De Lacy," said the Prelate, "once more my best beloved and most honoured friend—is not thy bosom lighter since thou hast thus nobly acquitted thee of thy debt to Heaven, and cleansed thy gallant spirit from those selfish and earthly stains which dimmed its brightness?"

The Constable sighed. "My happiest thoughts at this moment," he said, "would arise from knowledge that my nephew's health is amended."

"Be not discomforted on the score of the noble Damian, your hopeful and valorous kinsman," said the Archbishop, "for well I trust shortly ye shall hear of his recovery; or that, if it shall please God to remove him to a better world, the passage shall be so easy, and his arrival in yonder haven of bliss so speedy, that it were better for him to have died than to have lived."

The Constable looked at him, as if to gather from his countenance more certainty of his nephew's fate than his words seemed to imply; and the Prelate, to escape being farther pressed on a subject on which he was perhaps conscious he had adventured too far, rung a silver bell which stood before him on the table, and commanded the chaplain who entered at the summons, that he should despatch a careful messenger to the lodging of Damian Lacy, to bring particular accounts of his health.

"A stranger," answered the chaplain, "just come from the sick chamber of the noble Damian Lacy, waits here even now to have speech of my Lord Constable."

"Admit him instantly," said the Archbishop—"my mind tells me he brings us joyful tidings.—Never knew I such humble penitence,—such willing resignation of natural affections and desires to the doing of Heaven's service, but it was rewarded with a guerdon either temporal or spiritual."

As he spoke, a man singularly dressed entered the apartment. His garments, of various colours and showily disposed, were none of the newest or cleanest, neither were they altogether fitting for the presence in which he now stood.

"How now sirrah!" said the Prelate; "when was it that jugglers and minstrels pressed into the company of such as we without permission?"

"So please you," said the man, "my instant business was not with your reverend lordship, but with my lord the Constable, to whom I will hope that my *good news may atone for my* evil apparel."

"*Speak, sirrah, does my kinsman* live?" said the Constable eagerly.

"*And is like to live, my lord,*" answered the man—"a favourable crisis (so the leeches call it) hath taken place in his disorder, and they are no longer under any apprehensions for his life."

"Now, God be praised, that hath granted me so much mercy!" said the Constable.

"Amen, amen!" replied the Archbishop solemnly; —"About what period did this blessed change take place?"

"Scarcely a quarter of an hour since," said the messenger, "a soft sleep fell on the sick youth, like dew upon a parched field in summer—he breathed freely—the burning heat abated—and, as I said, the leeches no longer fear for his life."

"Marked you the hour, my Lord Constable?" said the Bishop, with exultation—"even then you stooped to those counsels which Heaven suggested through the meanest of its servants! But two words avouching penitence—but one brief prayer—and some kind saint has interceded for an instant hearing, and a liberal granting of thy petition. Noble Hugo," he continued, grasping his hand in a species of enthusiasm, "surely Heaven designs to work high things by the hand of him whose faults are thus readily forgiven—whose prayer is thus instantly heard. For this shall *Te Deum Laudamus* be said in each church, and each convent of Gloucester, ere the world be a day older."

The Constable, no less joyful, though perhaps less able to perceive an especial providence in his nephew's recovery, expressed his gratitude to the messenger of the good tidings, by throwing him his purse.

"I thank you, noble lord," said the man; "but if I stoop to pick up this taste of your bounty, it is only to restore it again to the donor."

"How now, sir?" said the Constable, "methinks thy coat seems not so well lined as needs make thee spurn at such a guerdon."

"He that designs to catch larks, my lord," replied the messenger, "must not close his net upon sparrows—I have a greater boon to ask of your lordship, and therefore I decline your present gratuity."

"A greater boon, ha!" said the Constable,—"I am no knight-errant, to bind myself by promise to grant it ere I know its import; but do thou come to my pavilion to-morrow, and thou wilt not find me unwilling to do what is reason."

So saying, he took leave of the prelate, and returned homeward, failing not to visit his nephew's lodging as he passed, where he received the same pleasant assurances which had been communicated by the messenger of the parti-coloured mantle.

CHAPTER XIX.

He was a minstrel—in his mood
Was wisdom mix'd with folly;
A tame companion to the good,
But wild and fierce among the rude,
And jovial with the jolly.

Archibald Armstrong.

The event of the preceding day had been of a nature so interesting, and latterly so harassing, that the Constable felt weary as after a severely contested battle-field, and slept soundly until the earliest beams of dawn saluted him through the opening of the tent. It was then that, with a mingled feeling of pain and satisfaction, he began to review the change which had taken place in his condition since the preceding morning. He had then arisen an ardent bridegroom, anxious to find favour in the eyes of his fair bride, and scrupulous about his dress and appointments, as if he had been as young in years as in hopes and wishes. This was over, and he had now before him the painful task of leaving his betrothed for a term of years, even before wedlock had united them indissolubly, and reflecting that she was exposed to all the dangers which assail female constancy in a situation thus critical. When the immediate anxiety for his nephew was removed, he was tempted to think that he had been something hasty in listening to the arguments of the Archbishop, and in believing that Damian's death or recovery depended upon his own accomplishing, to the letter, and without delay, his vow for the Holy Land. "How many princes and

n," he thought to himself, "have assumed the
s, and delayed or renounced it, yet lived and died
ealth and honour, without sustaining such a visita-
as that with which Baldwin threatened me; and
hat case or particular did such men deserve more
lgence than I? But the die is now cast, and it
ifies little to inquire whether my obedience to the
dates of the Church has saved the life of my
ew, or whether I have not fallen, as laymen are
t to fall, whenever there is an encounter of wits
rixt them and those of the spirituality. I would
lod it may prove otherwise, since, girding on my
rd as Heaven's champion, I might the better ex-
Heaven's protection for her whom I must un-
ily leave behind me."

these reflections passed through his mind, he
d the warders at the entrance of his tent chal-
e some one whose footsteps were heard approach-
t. The person stopped on their challenge, and pre-
ly after was heard the sound of a rote, (a small
ies of lute,) the strings of which were managed
eans of a small wheel. After a short prelude, a
ily voice, of good compass, sung verses, which,
slated into modern language, might run nearly
:

I.

"Soldier, wake—the day is peeping,
Honour ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill:
'Tis when they are glinted back
From axe and armour, spear and jack,
That they promise future story,
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's terror,
Ever are the morning's mirror.

II.

"Arm and up—the morning beam
Hath call'd the rustic to his team,
Hath call'd the falc'ner to the lake,
Hath call'd the huntsman to the brake;
The early student ponders o'er
His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
Soldier, wake—thy harvest, fame;
Thy study, conquest; war, thy game.
Shield, that would be foeman's terror,
Still should gleam the morning's mirror.

III.

"Poor hire repays the rustic's pain;
More paltry still the sportsman's gain:
Vainest of all, the student's theme
Ends in some metaphysic dream:
Yet each is up, and each has toil'd
Since first the peep of dawn has smiled;
And each is eagerer in his aim
Than he who barters life for fame.
Up, up, and arm thee, son of terror!
Be thy bright shield the morning's mirror."

hen the song was finished, the Constable heard
talking without, and presently Philip Guarine
ed the pavilion to tell that a person, come hither
e said by the Constable's appointment, waited
ission to speak with him.

By my appointment?" said De Lacy; "admit
immediately."

e messenger of the preceding evening entered
ent, holding in one hand his small cap and
er, in the other the rote on which he had been
laying. His attire was fantastic, consisting of
than one inner dress of various colours, all of
rightest and richest dyes, and disposed so as to
ast with each other—the upper garment was a
short Norman cloak of bright green. An em-
ered girdle sustained, in lieu of offensive weapons,
khorn with its appurtenances on the one side,
e other a knife for the purposes of the table. His
was cut in imitation of the clerical tonsure, which
designed to intimate that he had arrived to a
in rank in his profession; for the Joyous Science,
e profession of minstrelsy was termed, had its
ns ranks, like the degrees in the church and in
ilry. The features and manners of the man
ed to be at variance with his profession and
; for, as the latter was gay and fantastic, the
er had *a cast of gravity, and almost of stern-*
which, unless when kindled by the enthusiasm
poetical and musical exertions, seemed rather
to indicate deep reflection, than the thoughtless viva-
city of observation which characterized most of his
brethren. His countenance, though not handsome,
had therefore something in it striking and impressive,
even from its very contrast with the party-coloured
hues and fluttering shape of his vestments; and the
Constable felt something inclined to patronise him,
as he said, "Good morrow, friend, and I thank thee
for thy morning greeting; it was well sung and well
meant, for when we call forth any one to bethink
him how time passes, we do him the credit of sup-
posing that he can employ to advantage that flitting
treasure."

The man, who had listened in silence, seemed to
pause and make an effort ere he replied, "My inten-
tions, at least, were good, when I ventured to disturb
my lord thus early; and I am glad to learn that my
boldness hath not been evil received at his hand."

"True," said the Constable, "you had a boon to
ask of me. Be speedy, and say thy request—my
leisure is short."

"It is for permission to follow you to the Holy
Land, my lord," said the man.

"Thou hast asked what I can hardly grant my
friend," answered De Lacy—"Thou art a minstrel,
art thou not?"

"An unworthy graduate of the Gay Science, my
lord," said the musician; "yet let me say for myself,
that I will not yield to the king of minstrels, Geoffrey
Rudel, though the King or England hath given him
four manors for one song. I would be willing to
contend with him in romance, lay, or fable, were the
judge to be King Henry himself."

"You have your own good word, doubtless," said
De Lacy; "nevertheless, Sir Minstrel, thou goest not
with me. The Crusade has been already too much
encumbered by men of thy idle profession; and if thou
dost add to the number, it shall not be under my pro-
tection. I am too old to be charmed by thy art,
charm thou never so wisely."

"He that is young enough to seek for and to win the
love of beauty," said the minstrel, but in a submissive
tone, as if fearing his freedom might give offence,
"should not term himself too old to feel the charms
of minstrelsy."

The Constable smiled, not insensible to the flattery
which assigned to him the character of a younger
gallant. "Thou art a jester," he said, "I warrant me,
in addition to thy other qualities?"

"No," replied the minstrel, "it is a branch of our
profession which I have for some time renounced—
my fortunes have put me out of tune for jesting."

"Nay, comrade," said the Constable, "if thou hast
been hardly dealt with in the world, and canst comply
with the rules of a family so strictly ordered as mine,
it is possible we may agree together better than I
thought. What is thy name and country? thy speech,
methinks, sounds somewhat foreign."

"I am an Armorican, my lord, from the merry
shores of Morbihan; and hence my tongue hath some
touch of my country speech. My name is Renault
Vidal."

"Such being the case, Renault," said the Con-
stable, "thou shalt follow me, and I will give orders to
the master of my household to have thee attired some-
thing according to thy function, but in more orderly
guise than thou now appearest in. Dost thou under-
stand the use of a weapon?"

"Indifferently, my lord," said the Armoricon; at
the same time taking a sword from the wall, he drew
it, and made a pass with it so close to the Constable's
body as he sat on the couch, that he started up, cry-
ing, "Villain, forbear!"

"La you! noble sir," replied Vidal, lowering with
all submission the point of his weapon—"I have
already given you a proof of sleight which has alarmed
even your experience—I have an hundred other be-
sides."

"It may be so," said De Lacy, somewhat ashamed
at having shown himself moved by the sudden and
lively action of the juggler; "but I love not jesting
with edgetools, and have too much to do with sword
and sword-blows in earnest, to toy with them; so I
pray you let us have no more of this, but call me my

squire and my chamberlain, for I am about to array me and go to mass."

The religious duties of the morning performed, it was the Constable's intention to visit the Lady Abbess, and communicate, with the necessary precautions and qualifications, the altered relations in which he was placed towards her niece, by the resolution he had been compelled to adopt, of departing for the Crusade before accomplishing his marriage, in the terms of the precontract already entered into. He was conscious that it would be difficult to reconcile the good lady to this change of measures, and he delayed some time ere he could think of the best mode of communicating and softening the unpleasant intelligence. An interval was also spent in a visit to his nephew, whose state of convalescence continued to be as favourable, as if in truth it had been a miraculous consequence of the Constable's having complied with the advice of the Archbishop.

From the lodging of Damian, the Constable proceeded to the convent of the Benedictine Abbess. But she had been already made acquainted with the circumstances which he came to communicate, by a still earlier visit from the Archbishop Baldwin himself. The Primate had undertaken the office of mediator on this occasion, conscious that his success of the evening before must have placed the Constable in a delicate situation with the relations of his betrothed bride, and willing, by his countenance and authority, to reconcile the disputes which might ensue. Perhaps he had better have left Hugo de Lacy to plead his own cause; for the Abbess, though she listened to the communication with all the respect due to the highest dignitary of the English Church, drew consequences from the Constable's change of resolution which the Primate had not expected. She ventured to oppose no obstacle to De Lacy's accomplishment of his vows, but strongly argued that the contract with her niece should be entirely set aside, and each party left at liberty to form a new choice.

It was in vain that the Archbishop endeavoured to dazzle the Abbess with the future honours to be won by the Constable in the Holy Land; the splendour of which would attach not to his lady alone, but to all in the remotest degree allied to or connected with her. All his eloquence was to no purpose, though upon so favourite a topic he exerted it to the utmost. The Abbess, it is true, remained silent for a moment after his arguments had been exhausted, but it was only to consider how she should intimate, in a suitable and reverent manner, that children, the usual attendants of a happy union, and the existence of which he looked to for the continuation of the house of her father and brother, could not be hoped for with any probability, unless the precontract was followed by marriage, and the residence of the married parties in the same country. She therefore insisted, that the Constable having altered his intentions in this most important particular, the *fiancailles* should be entirely abrogated and set aside; and she demanded of the Primate, as an act of justice, that, as he had interfered to prevent the bridegroom's execution of his original purpose, he should now assist with his influence wholly to dissolve an engagement which had been thus materially innovated upon.

The Primate, who was sensible he had himself occasioned De Lacy's breach of contract, felt himself bound in honour and reputation to prevent consequences so disagreeable to his friend, as the dissolution of an engagement in which his interest and inclinations were alike concerned. He reproved the Lady Abbess for the carnal and secular views which she, a dignitary of the church, entertained upon the subject of matrimony, and concerning the interest of her house. He even upbraided her with selfishly preferring the continuation of the line of Berenger to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and denounced to her that Heaven would be avenged of the short-sighted and merely human policy, which postponed the interests of Christendom to those of an individual family.

After this severe homily, the Prelate took his departure, *leaving the Abbess* highly incensed, though *she prudently forbore returning* any irreverent answer *to his paternal admonition.*

In this humour the venerable lady was found by the Constable himself, when, with some embarrassment, he proceeded to explain to her the necessity of his present departure for Palestine.

She received the communication with sullen dignity; her ample black robe and scalpular seeming, as it were, to swell out in yet prouder folds as she listened to the reasons and the emergencies which compelled the Constable of Chester to defer the marriage, which he avowed was the dearest wish of his heart, until after his return from the Crusade, for which he was about to set forth.

"Methinks," replied the Abbess, with much coldness, "if this communication is meant for earnest,—and it were no fit business—I myself no fit person—for jesting with, methinks the Constable's resolution should have been proclaimed to us yesterday, before the *fiancailles* had united his troth with that of Eveline Berenger, under expectations very different from those which he now announces."

"On the word of a knight and a gentleman, reverend lady," said the Constable, "I had not then the slightest thought that I should be called upon to take a step no less distressing to me, than, as I see with pain, it is unpleasing to you."

"I can scarcely conceive," replied the Abbess, "the cogent reasons, which, existing as they must have done yesterday, have nevertheless delayed their operation until to-day."

"I own," said De Lacy, reluctantly, "that I entertained too ready hopes of obtaining a remission from my vow, which my Lord of Canterbury hath, in his zeal for Heaven's service, deemed it necessary to refuse me."

"At least, then," said the Abbess, veiling her resentment under the appearance of extreme coldness, "your lordship will do us the justice to place us in the same situation in which we stood yesterday morning; and, by joining with my niece and her friends in desiring the abrogation of a marriage contract entered into with very different views from those which you now entertain, put a young person in that state of liberty of which she is at present deprived by her contract with you?"

"Ah, madam!" said the Constable, "what do you ask of me? and in a tone how cold and indifferent do you demand me to resign hopes, the dearest which my bosom ever entertained since the life-blood warmed it!"

"I am unacquainted with language belonging to such feelings, my lord," replied the Abbess; "but methinks the prospects which could be so easily adjourned for years, might, by a little, and a very little, further self-control, be altogether abandoned."

Hugo de Lacy paced the room in agitation, nor did he answer until after a considerable pause. "If your niece, madam, shares the sentiments which you have expressed, I could not, indeed, with justice to her, or perhaps to myself, desire to retain that interest in her, which our solemn espousals have given me. But I must know my doom from her own lips; and if it is as severe as that which your expressions lead me to fear, I will go to Palestine the better soldier of Heaven, that I shall have little left on earth that can interest me."

The Abbess, without farther answer, called on her Precentrix, and desired her to command her niece's attendance immediately. The Precentrix bowed reverently, and withdrew.

"May I presume to inquire," said De Lacy, "whether the Lady Eveline hath been possessed of the circumstances which have occasioned this unhappy alteration in my purpose?"

"I have communicated the whole to her, from point to point," said the Abbess, "even as it was explained to me this morning by my Lord of Canterbury, (for with him I have already spoken upon the subject,) and confirmed but now by your lordship's own mouth."

"I am little obliged to the Archbishop," said the Constable, "for having forestalled my excuses in the quarter where it was most important for me that they should be accurately stated, and favourably received."

"That," said the Abbess, "is but an item of the ccount betwixt you and the Prelate,—it concerns ot us."

"Dare I venture to hope," continued De Lacy, rithout taking offence at the dryness of the Abbess's anner, "that Lady Eveline has heard this most nhappy change of circumstances without emotion, -I would say, without displeasure?"

"She is the daughter of a Berenger, my lord," answered the Abbess, "and it is our custom to punish a reach of faith, or to contemn it—never to grieve over . What my niece may do in this case, I know not. am a woman of religion, sequestered from the orld, and would advise peace and Christian forgiveess, with a proper sense of contempt for the unworhy treatment which she has received. She has llowers and vassals, and friends, doubtless, and dvisers, who may not, in blinded zeal for worldly onour, recommend to her to sit down slightly with is injury, but desire she should rather appeal to the ing, or to the arms of her father's followers, unless er liberty is restored to her by the surrender of the ontract into which she has been enticed.—But she omes, to answer for herself."

Eveline entered at the moment, leaning on Rose's rm. She had laid aside mourning since the ceremony f the *fiancailles*, and was dressed in a kirtle of white, ith an upper robe of pale blue. Her head was covered with a veil of white gauze, so thin, as to float bout her like the misty cloud usually painted around he countenance of a seraph. But the face of Eveline, hough in beauty not unworthy one of this angelic rder, was at present far from resembling that of a eraph in tranquillity of expression. Her limbs trembled, her cheeks were pale, the tinge of red around the yelids expressed recent tears; yet amidst these natual signs of distress and uncertainty, there was an air f profound resignation—a resolution to discharge her uty in every emergence, reigning in the solemn expression of her eye and eyebrow, and showing her prepared to govern the agitation which she could not entirely subdue. And so well were these opposing qualities f timidity and resolution mingled on her cheek, that veline, in the utmost pride of her beauty, never looked nore fascinating than at that instant; and Hugo de acy, hitherto rather an unimpassioned lover, stood in er presence with feelings as if all the exaggerations of omance were realized, and his mistress were a being f a higher sphere, from whose doom he was to reeive happiness or misery, life or death.

It was under the influence of such a feeling, that the arrior dropped on one knee before Eveline, took the and which she rather resigned than gave to him, ressed it to his lips fervently, and, ere he parted with , moistened it with one of the few tears which he as ever known to shed. But, although surprised, nd carried out of his character by a sudden impulse, e regained his composure on observing that the Abess regarded his humiliation, if it can be so termed, ith an air of triumph; and he entered on his defence efore Eveline with a manly earnestness, not devoid f fervour, nor free from agitation, yet made in a tone f firmness and pride, which seemed assumed to meet nd control that of the offended Abbess.

"Lady," he said, addressing Eveline, "you have eard from the venerable Abbess in what unhappy osition I have been placed since yesterday by the igour of the Archbishop—perhaps I should rather say y his just though severe interpretation of my engagement in the Crusade. I cannot doubt that all this as been stated with accurate truth by the venerable ady; but as I must no longer call her my friend, let ne fear whether she has done me justice in her comentary upon the unhappy necessity which must presently compel me to leave my country, and with my ountry to forego—at best to postpone—the fairest opes which man ever entertained. The venerable ady hath upbraided me, that being myself the cause hat the execution of yesterday's contract is postoned, I would fain keep it suspended over your head or an indefinite term of years. No one resigns willingly *such rights as yesterday gave me*; and, let me *speak a boastful word, sooner than yield them* up to *an of woman born, I would hold a fair field* against all comers, with grinded sword and sharp spear, from sunrise to sunset, for three days' space. But what I would retain at the price of a thousand lives, I am willing to renounce if it would cost you a single sigh. If, therefore, you think you cannot remain happy as the betrothed of De Lacy, you may command my assistance to have the contract annulled, and make some more fortunate man happy."

He would have gone on, but felt the danger of being overpowered again by those feelings of tenderness so new to his steady nature, that he blushed to give way to them.

Eveline remained silent. The Abbess took the word. "Kinswoman," she said, "you hear that the generosity—or the justice of the Constable of Chester, proposes, in consequence of his departure upon a distant and perilous expedition, to cancel a contract entered into upon the specific and precise understanding that he was to remain in England for its fulfilment. You cannot, methinks, hesitate to accept of the freedom which he offers you, with thanks for his bounty. For my part, I will reserve mine own until I shall see that your joint application is sufficient to win to your purpose his Grace of Canterbury, who may again interfere with the actions of his friend the Lord Constable, over whom he has already exerted so much influence —for the weal, doubtless, of his spiritual concerns."

"If it is meant by your words, venerable lady," said the Constable, "that I have any purpose of sheltering myself behind the Prelate's authority, to avoid doing that which I proclaim my readiness, though not my willingness, to do, I can only say, that you are the first who has doubted the faith of Hugh de Lacy."—And while the proud Baron thus addressed a female and a recluse, he could not prevent his eye from sparkling and his cheek from flushing.

"My gracious and venerable kinswoman," said Eveline, summoning together her resolution, "and you, my good lord, be not offended if I pray you not to increase by groundless suspicions and hasty resentments your difficulties and mine. My lord, the obligations which I lie under to you are such as I can never discharge, since they comprehend fortune, life, and honour. Know that, in my anguish of mind, when besieged by the Welsh in my castle of the Garde Doloureuse, I vowed to the Virgin, that (my honour safe) I would place myself at the disposal of him whom our Lady should employ as her instrument to relieve me from yonder hour of agony. In giving me a deliverer, she gave me a master; nor could I desire a more noble one than Hugo de Lacy."

"God forbid, lady," said the Constable, speaking eagerly, as if he was afraid his resolution should fail him ere he could get the renunciation uttered, "that I should, by such a tie, to which you subjected yourself in the extremity of your distress, bind you to any resolution in my favour which can put force on your own inclinations!"

The Abbess herself could not help expressing her applause of this sentiment, declaring it was spoken like a Norman gentleman; but, at the same time, her eyes, turned towards her niece, seemed to exhort her to beware how she declined to profit by the candour of De Lacy.

But Eveline proceeded, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and a slight colour overspreading her face, to state her own sentiments, without listening to the suggestions of any one. "I will own, noble sir," she said, "that when your valour had rescued me from approaching destruction, I could have wished—honouring and respecting you, as I had done your late friend—my excellent father—that you could have accepted a daughter's service from me. I do not pretend entirely to have surmounted these sentiments, although I have combated them, as being unworthy of me, and ungrateful to you. But, from the moment you were pleased to honour me by a claim on this poor hand, I have studiously examined my sentiments towards you, and taught myself so far to make them coincide with my duty, that I may call myself assured that De Lacy would not find in Eveline Berenger an indifferent, far less an unworthy bride. In this, sir, you may boldly confide, whether the union you have sought for takes place instantly, or is delayed till a

longer season. Still farther, I must acknowledge that the postponement of these nuptials will be more agreeable to me than their immediate accomplishment. I am at present very young, and totally inexperienced. Two or three years will, I trust, render me yet more worthy the regard of a man of honour."

At this declaration in his favour, however cold and qualified, De Lacy had as much difficulty to restrain his transports as formerly to moderate his agitation.

"Angel of bounty and of kindness!" he said, kneeling once more, and again possessing himself of her hand, "perhaps I ought in honour to resign voluntarily those hopes which you decline to ravish from me forcibly. But who could be capable of such unrelenting magnanimity?—Let me hope that my devoted attachment—that which you shall hear of me when at a distance—that which you shall know of me when near you—may give to your sentiments a more tender warmth than they now express; and, in the mean while, blame me not that I accept your plighted faith anew, under the conditions which you attach to it. I am conscious my wooing has been too late in life to expect the animated returns proper to youthful passion—Blame me not if I remain satisfied with those calmer sentiments which make life happy, though they cannot make passion rapturous. Your hand remains in my grasp, but it acknowledges not my pressure—Can it be that it refuses to ratify what your lips have said?"

"Never, noble De Lacy!" said Eveline, with more animation than she had yet expressed; and it appeared that the tone was at length sufficiently encouraging, since her lover was emboldened to take the lips themselves for guarantee.

It was with an air of pride, mingled with respect, that, after having received this pledge of fidelity, he turned to conciliate and to appease the offended Abbess. "I trust, venerable mother," he said, "that you will resume your former kind thoughts of me, which I am aware were only interrupted by your tender anxiety for the interest of her who should be dearest to us both. Let me hope that I may leave this fair flower under protection of the honoured lady who is her next in blood, happy and secure as she must ever be, while listening to your counsels, and residing within these sacred walls."

But the Abbess was too deeply displeased to be propitiated by a compliment, which perhaps it had been better policy to have delayed till a calmer season. "My lord," she said, "and you, fair kinswoman, you ought needs to be aware how little my counsels—not frequently given where they are unwillingly listened to—can be of avail to those embarked in worldly affairs. I am a woman dedicated to religion, to solitude, and seclusion—to the service, in brief, of Our Lady and Saint Benedict. I have been already censured by my superior because I have, for love of you, fair niece, mixed more deeply in secular affairs than became the head of a convent of recluses—I will merit no farther blame on such an account; nor can you expect it of me. My brother's daughter, unfettered by worldly ties, had been the welcome sharer of my poor solitude. But this house is too mean for the residence of the vowed bride of a mighty baron; nor do I, in my lowliness and inexperience, feel fitness to exercise over such a one that authority, which must belong to me over every one whom this roof protects. The grave tenor of our devotions, and the serener contemplation to which the females of this house are devoted," continued the Abbess, with increasing heat and vehemence, "shall not, for the sake of my worldly connexions, be disturbed by the intrusion of one whose thoughts must needs be on the worldly toys of love and marriage."

"I do indeed believe, reverend mother," said the Constable, in his turn giving way to displeasure, "that a richly-dowered maiden, unwedded, and unlikely to wed, were a fitter and more welcome inmate to the convent, than one who cannot be separated from the world, and whose wealth is not likely to increase the treasure's revenues."

The Constable did the Abbess great injury in this hasty insinuation, and it only went to confirm her purpose of rejecting all charge of her niece during his absence. She was in truth as disinterested as haughty; and her only reason for anger against her niece was, that her advice had not been adopted without hesitation, although the matter regarded Eveline's happiness exclusively.

The ill-timed reflection of the Constable confirmed her in the resolution which she had already, and hastily adopted. "May heaven forgive you, Sir Knight," she replied, "your injurious thoughts of His servants! It is indeed time, for your soul's sake, that you do penance in the Holy Land, having such rash judgments to repent of.—For you, my niece, you cannot want that hospitality, which, without verifying, or seeming to verify, unjust suspicions, I cannot now grant to you, while you have, in your kinswoman of Baldringham, a secular relation, whose nearness of blood approaches mine, and who may open her gates to you without incurring the unworthy censure, that she means to enrich herself at your cost."

The Constable saw the deadly paleness which came over Eveline's cheek at this proposal, and, without knowing the cause of her repugnance, he hastened to relieve her from the apprehensions which she seemed evidently to entertain. "No, reverend mother," he said; "since you so harshly reject the care of your kinswoman, she shall not be a burden to any of her other relatives. While Hugo de Lacy hath six gallant castles, and many a manor besides, to maintain fire upon their hearths, his betrothed bride shall burden no one with her society, who may regard it as otherwise than a great honour; and methinks I were much poorer than Heaven hath made me, could I not furnish friends and followers sufficient to serve, obey, and protect her."

"No, my lord," said Eveline, recovering from the dejection into which she had been thrown by the unkindness of her relative; "since some unhappy destiny separates me from the protection of my father's sister, to whom I could so securely have resigned myself, I will neither apply for shelter to any more distant relation, nor accept of that which you, my lord, so generously offer; since my doing so might excite harsh, and, I am sure, undeserved reproaches, against her by whom I was driven to choose a less advisable dwelling-place. I have made my resolution. I have, it is true, only one friend left, but she is a powerful one, and is able to protect me against the particular evil fate which seems to follow me, as well as against the ordinary evils of human life."

"The Queen, I suppose?" said the Abbess, interrupting her impatiently.

"The Queen of Heaven! venerable kinswoman," answered Eveline; "our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, ever gracious to our house, and so lately my especial guardian and protectress. Methinks, since the vowed votaress of the Virgin rejects me, it is to her holy patroness whom I ought to apply for succour."

The venerable dame, taken somewhat at unawares by this answer, pronounced the interjection "Umph!" in a tone better befitting a Lollard or an Iconoclast, than a Catholic Abbess, and a daughter of the House of Berenger. Truth is, the Lady Abbess's hereditary devotion to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse was much decayed since she had known the full merits of another gifted image, the property of her own convent.

Recollecting herself, however, she remained silent, while the Constable alleged the vicinity of the Welsh, as what might possibly again render the abode of his betrothed bride at the Garde Doloureuse as perilous as she had on a former occasion found it. To this Eveline replied, by reminding him of the great strength of her native fortress—the various sieges which it had withstood—and the important circumstance, that, upon the late occasion, it was only endangered, because, in compliance with a point of honour, her father Raymond had sallied out with the garrison, and fought at disadvantage a battle under the walls. She farther suggested, that it was easy for the Constable to name, from among his own vassals or kin, a seneschal of such approved prudence and valour

ensure the safety of the place, and of its

Lacy could reply to her arguments the Ab-
, and, pleading her total inability to give
secular affairs, and the rules of her order,
led her, as she said, with a heightened co-
raised voice, "to the simple and peaceful
of her conventual duties," she left the be-
arties in the locutory, or parlour, without
any, save Rose, who prudently remained at
ance.

e of their private conference seemed agree-
th; and when Eveline told Rose that they
turn presently to the Garde Doloureuse, un-
icient escort, and were to remain there du-
eriod of the Crusade, it was in a tone of
satisfaction, which her follower had not
make use of for many days. She spoke
y in praise of the kind acquiescence of the
in her wishes, and of his whole conduct,
armth of gratitude approaching to a more
ling.

'et, my dearest lady," said Rose, "if you
unfeignedly, you must, I am convinced,
you look upon this interval of years, inter-
vixt your contract and your marriage, rather
e than in any other light."

ess it," said Eveline, "nor have I concealed
uture lord that such are my feelings, ungra-
they may seem. But it is my youth, Rose,
e youth, which makes me fear the duties
by's wife. Then those evil auguries hang
about me. Devoted to evil by one kins-
xpelled almost from the roof of another,
myself, at present, a creature who must
ess with her, pass where she will. This evil
what is more, the apprehensions of it, will
o time. When I shall have attained the
nty, Rose, I shall be a full-grown woman,
e soul of a Berenger strong within me, to
those doubts and tremours which agitate
seventeen."

ay sweet mistress," answered Rose, "may
ur Lady of the Garde Doloureuse guide all
ir!—But I would that this contract had not
e, or, having taken place, that it could have
ed by your immediate union."

CHAPTER XX.

King called down his merry-men all
one, and by two, and three;
Marshal was wont to be the foremost man,
t the hindmost man was he.—*Old Ballad.*

ady Eveline retired satisfied and pleased
private interview with De Lacy, the joy on
f the Constable arose to a higher pitch of
an he was in the habit of feeling or express-
it was augmented by a visit of the leeches
ded his nephew, from whom he received a
d particular account of his present disorder,
assurance of a speedy recovery.

istable caused alms to be distributed to the
and to the poor, masses to be said, and
e lighted. He visited the Archbishop, and
om him his full approbation of the course
proposed to pursue, with the promise, that
plenary power which he held from the Pope,
was willing, in consideration of his instant
to limit his stay in the Holy Land to the
ree years, to become current from his leav-
, and to include the space necessary for his
his native country. Indeed, having suc-
the main point, the Archbishop judged it
ncede every inferior consideration to a per-
Constable's rank and character, whose
to the proposed expedition was perhaps as
o its success as his bodily presence.

, the Constable returned to his pavilion
isfied with the manner in which he had
himself from those difficulties which in the
seemed almost *insuperable; and when his
assembled to disrobe him (for great feudal
hair lovees and coachees, in imitation* of
sovereign princes,) he distributed gratuities among them, and jested and laughed in a much gayer humour than they had ever before witnessed.

"For thee," he said, turning to Vidal the minstrel, who, sumptuously dressed, stood to pay his respects among the other attendants, "I will give thee naught at present; but do thou remain by my bedside until I am asleep, and I will next morning reward thy minstrelsy as I like it."

"My lord," said Vidal, "I am already rewarded, both by the honour, and by the liveries, which better befit a royal minstrel than one of my mean fame; but assign me a subject, and I will do my best, not out of greed of future largesses, but gratitude for past favours."

"Gramercy, good fellow," said the Constable. "Guarine," he added, addressing his squire, "let the watch be posted, and do thou remain within the tent—stretch thyself on the bear-hide, and sleep, or listen to the minstrelsy, as thou likest best. Thou thinkest thyself a judge, I have heard, of such gear."

It was usual, in those insecure times, for some faithful domestic to sleep at night within the tent of every great baron, that, if danger arose, he might not be unsupported or unprotected. Guarine accordingly drew his sword, and, taking it in his hand, stretched himself on the ground in such a manner, that, on the slightest alarm, he could spring up sword in hand. His broad black eyes, in which sleep contended with a desire to listen to the music, were fixed on Vidal, who saw them glittering in the reflection of the silver lamp, like those of a dragon or basilisk.

After a few preliminary touches on the chords of his rote, the minstrel requested of the Constable to name the subject on which he desired the exercise of his powers.

"The truth of woman," answered Hugo de Lacy, as he laid his head upon his pillow.

After a short prelude, the minstrel obeyed, by singing nearly as follows:—

"Woman's faith, and woman's trust—
Write the characters in dust;
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

II.

"I have strain'd the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weigh'd a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and hand;
I told my true love of the token,
How her faith proved light, and her word was broken:
Again her word and truth she plight,
And I believed them again ere night."

"How now, sir knave," said the Constable, raising himself on his elbow, "from what drunken rhymer did you learn that half-witted satire?"

"From an old, ragged, crossgrained friend of mine, called Experience," answered Vidal. "I pray Heaven he may never take your lordship, or any other worthy man, under his tuition."

"Go to, fellow," said the Constable, in reply, "thou art one of those wiseacres, I warrant me, that would fain be thought witty, because thou canst make a jest of those things which wiser men hold worthy of most worship—the honour of men, and the truth of women. Dost thou call thyself a minstrel, and hast no tale of female fidelity!"

"I had right many a one, noble sir, but I laid them aside when I disused my practice of the jesting part of the Joyous Science. Nevertheless, if it pleases your nobleness to listen, I can sing you an established lay upon such a subject."

De Lacy made a sign of acquiescence, and laid himself as if to slumber; while Vidal began one of those interminable and almost innumerable adventures concerning that paragon of true lovers, fair Ysolte; and of the constant and uninterrupted faith and affection which she displayed in numerous situations of difficulty and peril, to her paramour, the gallant Sir Tristrem, at the expense of her less favoured husband, the luckless King Mark of Cornwall, to

whom, as all the world knows, Sir Tristrem was nephew.

This was not the lay of love and fidelity which De Lacy would have chosen; but a feeling like shame prevented his interrupting it, perhaps because he was unwilling to yield to or acknowledge the unpleasing sensations excited by the tenor of the tale. He soon fell asleep, or feigned to do so: and the harper, continuing for a time his monotonous chant, began at length himself to feel the influence of slumber; his words, and the notes which he continued to touch upon the harp, were broken and interrupted, and seemed to escape drowsily from his fingers and voice. At length the sounds ceased entirely, and the minstrel seemed to have sunk into profound repose, with his head reclining on his breast, and one arm dropped down by his side, while the other rested on his harp. His slumber, however, was not very long, and when he awoke from it, and cast his eyes around him, reconnoitering, by the light of the night-lamp, whatever was in the tent, he felt a heavy hand, which pressed his shoulder as if gently to solicit his attention. At the same time the voice of the vigilant Philip Guarine whispered in his ear, "Thine office for the night is ended—depart to thine own quarters with all the silence thou mayst."

The minstrel wrapt himself in his cloak without reply, though perhaps not without feeling some resentment at a dismissal so unceremonious.

CHAPTER XXI.

O! then I see Queen Mab has been with you.
Romeo and Juliet.

THE subject on which the mind has last been engaged at night is apt to occupy our thoughts even during slumber, when Imagination, uncorrected by the organs of sense, weaves her own fantastic web out of whatever ideas rise at random in the sleeper. It is not surprising, therefore, that De Lacy in his dreams had some confused idea of being identified with the unlucky Mark of Cornwall; and that he awakened from such unpleasant visions with a brow more clouded than when he was preparing for his couch on the evening before. He was silent, and seemed lost in thought, while his squire assisted at his levee with the respect now only paid to sovereigns. "Guarine," at length he said, "know you the stout Fleming, who was said to have borne him so well at the siege of the Garde Doloureuse?—a tall, big, brawny man."

"Surely, my lord," answered his Squire; "I know Wilkin Flammock—I saw him but yesterday."

"Indeed!" replied the Constable—"Here, meanest thou?—In this city of Gloucester?"

"Assuredly, my good lord. He came hither partly about his merchandise, partly, I think, to see his daughter Rose, who is in attendance on the gracious young Lady Eveline."

"He is a stout soldier, is he not?"

"Like most of his kind—a rampart to a castle, but rubbish in the field," said the Norman squire.

"Faithful, also, is he not?" continued the Constable.

"Faithful as most Flemings, while you can pay for their faith," replied Guarine, wondering a little at the unusual interest taken in one whom he esteemed a being of an inferior order; when, after some farther inquiries, the Constable ordered the Fleming's attendance to be presently commanded.

Other business of the morning now occurred, (for his speedy departure required many arrangements to be hastily adopted,) when, as the Constable was giving audience to several officers of his troops, the bulky figure of Wilkin Flammock was seen at the entrance of the pavilion, in jerkin of white cloth, and having only a knife by his side.

"Leave the tent, my masters," said De Lacy, "but continue in attendance in the neighbourhood; for *here comes one I must speak to* in private."

The officers withdrew, and the Constable and Fleming *were left alone.* "You are Wilkin Flammock, who fought well against the Welsh at the Garde Doloureuse?"

"I did my best, my lord, answered Wilkin—"I was bound to it by my bargain; and I hope ever to act like a man of credit."

"Methinks," said the Constable, "that you, so stout of limb, and, as I hear, so bold in spirit, might look a little higher than this weaving trade of thine."

"No one is reluctant to mend his station, my lord," said Wilkin; "yet am I so far from complaining of mine, that I would willingly consent it should never be better, on condition I could be assured it were never worse."

"Nay, but, Flammock," said the Constable, "I mean higher things for you than your modesty apprehends—I mean to leave thee in a charge of great trust."

"Let it concern bales of drapery, my lord, and no one will perform it better," said the Fleming.

"Away! thou art too lowly minded," said the Constable. "What think'st thou of being dubbed knight, as thy valour well deserves, and left as Chattelain of the Garde Doloureuse?"

"For the knighthood, my lord, I should crave your forgiveness; for it would sit on me like a gilded helmet on a hog. For any charge, whether of castle or cottage, I trust I might discharge it as well as another."

"I fear me thy rank must be in some way mended," said the Constable, surveying the unmilitary dress of the figure before him; "it is at present too mean to befit the protector and guardian of a young lady of high birth and rank."

"I the guardian of a young lady of birth and rank!" said Flammock, his light, large eyes turning larger, lighter, and rounder as he spoke.

"Even thou," said the Constable. "The Lady Eveline proposes to take up her residence in her castle of the Garde Doloureuse. I have been casting about to whom I may intrust the keeping of her person, as well as of the stronghold. Were I to choose some knight of name, as I have many in my household, he would be setting about to do deeds of vassalage upon the Welsh, and engaging himself in turmoils, which would render the safety of the castle precarious; or he would be absent on feats of chivalry, tournaments, and hunting parties; or he would, perchance, have shows of that light nature under the walls, or even within the courts of the castle, turning the secluded and quiet abode, which becomes the situation of the Lady Eveline, into the misrule of a dissolute revel.—Thee I can confide in—thou wilt fight when it is requisite, yet wilt not provoke danger for the sake of danger itself—thy birth, thy habits, will lead thee to avoid those gayeties, which, however fascinating to others, cannot but be distasteful to thee—thy management will be as regular, as I will take care that it shall be honourable; and thy relation to her favourite, Rose, will render thy guardianship more agreeable to the Lady Eveline, than, perchance, one of her own rank—And, to speak to thee a language which thy nation readily comprehends, the reward, Fleming, for the regular discharge of this most weighty trust, shall be beyond thy most flattering hope."

The Fleming had listened to the first part of this discourse with an expression of surprise which gradually gave way to one of deep and anxious reflection. He gazed fixedly on the earth for a minute after the Constable had ceased speaking, and then raising up his eyes suddenly, said, "It is needless to seek for roundabout excuses. This cannot be your earnest my lord—but if it is, the scheme is naught."

"How and wherefore?" asked the Constable, with displeased surprise.

"Another man might grasp at your bounty," continued Wilkin, "and leave you to take chance of the value you were to receive for it; but I am a downright dealer, I will not take payment for service I cannot render."

"But I demand once more, wherefore thou canst not, or rather wilt not, accept this trust?" said the Constable. "Surely, if I am willing to confer such confidence, it is well thy part to answer it."

"True, my lord," said the Fleming; "but methinks

oble Lord De Lacy should feel, and the wise Lord
acy should foresee, that a Flemish weaver is no
g guardian for his plighted bride. Think her shut
t yonder solitary castle, under such respectable
ction, and reflect how long the place will be soli-
in this land of love and of adventure! We shall
minstrels singing ballads by the threave under
indows, and such twangling of harps as would
ough to frighten our walls from their founda-
, as clerks say happened to those of Jericho—We
have as many knights-errant around us as ever
Charlemagne, or King Arthur. Mercy on me!
s matter than a fine and noble recluse immured
will they term it—in a tower, under the guardian-
of an old Flemish weaver, would bring half the
alry in England round us, to break lances, vow
s, display love-liveries, and I know not what fol-
besides—Think you such gallants, with the blood
g through their veins like quicksilver, would much
d my bidding them begone?"

Draw bolts, up with the drawbridge, drop portcul-
said the Constable, with a constrained smile.

And thinks your lordship such gallants would
d these impediments? such are the very essence
he adventures which they come to seek.—The
ght of the Swan would swim through the moat—
f the Eagle would fly over the walls—he of the
nderbolt would burst open the gates."

Ply crossbow and mangonel," said De Lacy.

And be besieged in form," said the Fleming, "like
castle of Tintadgel in the old hangings, all for the
of fair lady?—And then those gay dames and de-
selles, who go upon adventure from castle to
le, from tournament to tournament, with bare
oms, flaunting plumes, poniards at their sides and
lins in their hands, chattering like magpies, and
tering like jays, and, ever and anon, cooing like
s—how am I to exclude such from the Lady Eve-
's privacy?"

By keeping doors shut, I tell thee," answered the
stable, still in the same tone of forced jocularity;
wooden bar will be thy warrant."

Ay, but," answered Flammock, "if the Flemish
ver say *shut*, when the Norman young lady says
n, think which has best chance of being obeyed?
a word, my lord, for the matter of guardianship,
such like, I wash my hands of it—I would not
ertake to be guardian to the chaste Susannah,
ugh she lived in an enchanted castle which no
ng thing could approach."

Thou holdest the language and thoughts," said
Lacy, "of a vulgar debauchee, who laughs at fe-
le constancy, because he has lived only with the
st worthless of the sex. Yet thou shouldst know
contrary, having, as I know, a most virtuous
ughter"——

Whose mother was not less so," said Wilkin,
aking in upon the Constable's speech with some-
at more emotion than he usually displayed. "But
r, my lord, gave me authority to govern and direct
wife, as both law and nature give me power and
rge over my daughter. That which I can govern,
an be answerable for; but how to discharge me so
ll of a delegated trust, is another question.—Stay at
me, my good lord," continued the honest Fleming,
serving that his speech made some impression upon
Lacy, "let a fool's advice for once be of avail to
ange a wise man's purpose, taken, let me say, in no
ne hour. Remain in your own land—rule your own
ssals—and protect your own bride. You only can
im her cheerful love and ready obedience; and
re I am, that, without pretending to guess what she
y do if separated from you, she will, under your own
, do the duty of a faithful and a loving spouse."

"And the Holy Sepulchre?" said the Constable,
th a sigh, his heart confessing the wisdom of the
vice, which circumstances prevented him from fol-
wing.

"Let those who lost the Holy Sepulchre regain it,
y lord," replied Flammock. "If those Latins and
reeks, as they call them, are no better men than I
ve heard, it signifies very little whether they or the
athen have the country that *has cost Europe so*
uch blood and treasure."

"In good faith," said the Constable, "there is sense
in what thou say'st; but I caution thee to repeat it
not, lest thou be taken for a heretic or a Jew. For
me, my word and oath are pledged beyond retreat,
and I have only to consider whom I may best name
for that important station, which thy caution has—
not without some shadow of reason—induced thee to
decline."

"There is no man to whom your lordship can so
naturally or honourably transfer such a charge," said
Wilkin Flammock, "as to the kinsman near to you,
and possessed of your trust; yet much better would
it be were there no such trust to be reposed in any
one."

"If," said the Constable, "by my near kinsman,
you mean Randal de Lacy, I care not if I tell you, that
I consider him as totally worthless, and undeserving
of honourable confidence."

"Nay, I mean another," said Flammock, "nearer
to you by blood, and unless I greatly mistake, much
nigher also in affection—I had in mind your lordship's
nephew, Damian de Lacy."

The Constable started as if a wasp had stung him;
but instantly replied, with forced composure, "Da-
mian was to have gone in my stead to Palestine—it
now seems I must go in his; for, since this last ill-
ness, the leeches have totally changed their minds,
and consider that warmth of the climate as danger-
ous, which they formerly decided to be salutary. But
our learned doctors, like our learned priests, must ever
be in the right, change their counsels as they may; and
we poor laymen still in the wrong. I can, it is true, rely
on Damian with the utmost confidence; but he is
young, Flammock—very young—and, in that particu-
lar, resembles but too nearly the party who might be
otherwise committed to his charge."

"Then once more, my lord," said the plain-spoken
Fleming, "remain at home, and be yourself the pro-
tector of what is naturally so dear to you."

"Once more, I repeat that I cannot," answered the
Constable. "The step which I have adopted as a
great duty, may perhaps be a great error—I only know
that it is irretrievable."

"Trust your nephew, then, my lord," replied Wilkin
—"he is honest and true; and it is better trusting
young lions than old wolves. He may err, perhaps,
but it will not be from premeditated treachery."

"Thou art right, Flammock," said the Constable;
"and perhaps I ought to wish I had sooner asked thy
counsel, blunt as it is. But let what has passed be a
secret betwixt us; and bethink thee of something that
may advantage thee more than the privilege of speak-
ing about my affairs."

"That account will be easily settled, my lord,"
replied Flammock; "for my object was to ask your
lordship's favour to obtain certain extensions of our
privileges, in yonder wild corner where we Flemings
have made our retreat."

"Thou shalt have them, so they be not exorbitant,"
said the Constable. And the honest Fleming, among
whose good qualities scrupulous delicacy was not the
foremost, hastened to detail, with great minuteness,
the particulars of his request or petition, long pursued
in vain, but to which this interview was the means of
insuring success.

The Constable eager to execute the resolution which
he had formed, hastened to the lodging of Damian
de Lacy, and to the no small astonishment of his
nephew, intimated to him his change of destination;
alleging his own hurried departure, Damian's late and
present illness, together with the necessary protection
to be afforded to the Lady Eveline, as reasons why his
nephew must needs remain behind him—to represent
him during his absence—to protect the family rights,
and assert the family honour of the house of De Lacy
—above all, to act as the guardian of the young and
beautiful bride, whom his uncle and patron had been
in some measure compelled to abandon for a time.

Damian yet occupied his bed while the Constable
communicated this change of purpose. Perhaps he
might think the circumstance fortunate, that in this
position he could conceal from his uncle's observation
the various emotions which he could not help feeling,
while the Constable, with the eagerness of one who

is desirous of hastily finishing what he has to say on an unpleasing subject, hurried over an account of the arrangements which he had made, in order that his nephew might have the means of discharging, with sufficient effect, the important trust committed to him.

The youth listened as to a voice in a dream, which he had not the power of interrupting, though there was something within him which whispered there would be both prudence and integrity in remonstrating against his uncle's alteration of plan. Something he accordingly attempted to say, when the Constable at length paused; but it was too feebly spoken to shake a resolution fully though hastily adopted, and explicitly announced, by one not in the use to speak before his purpose was fixed, or to alter it when it was declared.

The remonstrance of Damian, besides, if it could be termed such, was spoken in terms too contradictory to be intelligible. In one moment he professed his regret for the laurels which he had hoped to gather in Palestine, and implored his uncle not to alter his purpose, but permit him to attend his banner thither; and in the next sentence, he professed his readiness to defend the safety of Lady Eveline with the last drop of his blood. De Lacy saw nothing inconsistent in these feeling, though they were for the moment contradictory to each other. It was natural, he thought, that a young knight should be desirous to win honour —natural also that he should willingly assume a charge so honourable and important as that with which he proposed to invest him; and therefore he thought it was no wonder that, assuming his new office willingly, the young man should yet feel regret at losing the prospect of honourable adventure, which he must abandon. He therefore only smiled in reply to the broken expostulations of his nephew; and, having confirmed his former arrangement, left the young man to reflect at leisure on his change of destination, while he himself, in a second visit to the Benedictine Abbey, communicated the purpose which he had adopted, to the Abbess, and to his bride-elect.

The displeasure of the former lady was in no measure abated by this communication; in which, indeed, she affected to take very little interest. She pleaded her religious duties, and her want of knowledge of secular affairs, if she should chance to mistake the usages of the world; yet she had always, she said, understood, that the guardians of the young and beautiful of her own sex were chosen from the more mature of the other.

"Your own unkindness, lady," answered the Constable, "leaves me no better choice than I have made. Since the Lady Eveline's nearest friends deny her the privilege of their roof, on account of the claim with which she has honoured me, I, on my side, were worse than ungrateful did I not secure for her the protection of my nearest male heir. Damian is young, but he is true and honourable; nor does the chivalry of England afford me a better choice."

Eveline seemed surprised, and even struck with consternation, at the resolution which her bridegroom thus suddenly announced; and perhaps it was fortunate that the remark of the Lady Abbess made the answer of the Constable necessary, and prevented him from observing that her colour shifted more than once from pale to deep red.

Rose, who was not excluded from the conference, drew close up to her mistress; and, by affecting to adjust her veil, while in secret she strongly pressed her hand, gave her time and encouragement to compose her mind for a reply. It was brief and decisive, and announced with a firmness which showed that the uncertainty of the moment had passed away or been suppressed. "In case of danger," she said, "she would not fail to apply to Damian de Lacy to come to her aid, as he had once done before; but she did not apprehend any danger at present, within her own secure castle of the Garde Doloureuse, where it was her purpose to dwell, attended only by her own household. She was resolved," she continued, "in consideration of her peculiar condition, to observe the strictest retirement, which she expected would not be violated *even by the noble young* knight who was to act as her *guardian, unless some* apprehension for her safety *made his visit unavoidable.*"

The Abbess acquiesced, though coldly, in posal, which her ideas of decorum recomm and preparations were hastily made for t Eveline's return to the castle of her fathe interviews which intervened before her lea convent, were in their nature painful. The when Damian was formally presented to h uncle, as the delegate to whom he had comm charge of his own property, and, which wa dearer to him, as he affirmed, the protectio person and interest.

Eveline scarce trusted herself with one glan that single look comprehended and reported t ravage which disease, aided by secret grief, h on the manly form and handsome countenan youth before her. She received his salutati manner as embarrassed as that in which it wa and, to his hesitating proffer of service, answe she trusted only to be obliged to him for his g during the interval of his uncle's absence.

Her parting with the Constable was the n which she was to undergo. It was not withc tion, although she preserved her modest com and De Lacy his calm gravity of deportment. H faltered, however, when he came to announce, were unjust she should be bound by the engag which she had been graciously contented t under. Three years he had assigned for its t which space the Archbishop Baldwin had co to shorten the period of his absence. If I ap when these are elapsed," he said, "let th Eveline conclude that the grave holds De La seek out for her mate some happier man. She find one more grateful, though there are ma better deserve her."

On these terms they parted; and the Co speedily afterwards embarking, ploughed the seas for the shores of Flanders, where he p to unite his forces with the Count of that ri warlike country, who had lately taken the Cr to proceed by the route which should be foun practicable on their destination for the Holy The broad pennon, with the arms of the streamed forward with a favourable wind fr prow of the vessel, as if pointing to the quarte horizon where its renown was to be augmente considering the fame of the leader, and the exa of the soldiers who followed him, a more band, in proportion to their numbers, never avenge on the Saracens the evils endured Latins of Palestine.

Mean while Eveline, after a cold parting w Abbess, whose offended dignity had not yet fo the slight regard which she had paid to her c resumed her journey homeward to her paternal where her household was to be arranged in a m suggested by the Constable, and approved of self.

The same preparations were made for her c modation at every halting-place which she h perienced upon her journey to Gloucester, s before, the purveyor was invisible, although sh be at little loss to guess his name. Yet it ap as if the character of these preparations was n degree altered. All the realities of convenien accommodation, with the most perfect assuran safety, accompanied her every where on the but they were no longer mingled with that dis tender gallantry and taste, which marked th attentions were paid to a young and beautiful l The clearest fountain-head, and the most grove, were no longer selected for the noont past; but the house of some franklin, or a abbey, afforded the necessary hospitality. All s to be ordered with the most severe attention t and decorum—it seemed as if a nun of some order, rather than a young maiden of high quali a rich inheritance, had been journeying throu land, and Eveline, though pleased with the d which seemed thus to respect her unprotecte peculiar condition, would sometimes think it ecessary that, by so many indirect hints, it sho forced on her recollection.

She thought it strange also, that Damian, to

care she had been so solemnly committed, did not even pay his respects to her on the road. Something there was which whispered to her, that close and frequent intercourse might be unbecoming—even dangerous; but surely the ordinary duties of a knight and gentleman enjoined him some personal communication with the maiden under his escort, were it only to ask if her accommodations had been made to her satisfaction, or if she had any special wish which was ungratified. The only intercourse, however, which took place betwixt them, was through means of Amelot, Damian de Lacy's youthful page, who came at morn and evening to receive Eveline's commands concerning their route, and the hours of journey and repose.

These formalities rendered the solitude of Eveline's return less endurable; and had it not been for the society of Rose, she would have found herself under an intolerably irksome degree of constraint. She even hazarded to her attendant some remarks upon the singularity of De Lacy's conduct, who, authorized as he was by his situation, seemed yet as much afraid to approach her as if she had been a basalisk.

Rose let the first observation of this nature pass as if it had been unheard; but when her mistress made a second remark to the same purpose, she answered, with the truth and freedom of her character, though perhaps with less of her usual prudence, "Damian de Lacy judges well, noble lady. He to whom the safe keeping of a royal treasure is intrusted, should not indulge himself too often by gazing upon it."

Eveline blushed, wrapt herself closer in her veil, and did she again during their journey mention the name of Damian de Lacy.

When the gray turrets of the Garde Doloureuse greeted her sight on the evening of the second day, and she once more beheld her father's banner floating from its highest watch-tower in honour of her approach, her sensations were mingled with pain; but, upon the whole, she looked towards that ancient home as a place of refuge, where she might indulge the new train of thoughts which circumstances had opened to her, amid the same scenes which had sheltered her infancy and childhood.

She pressed forward her palfrey, to reach the ancient portal as soon as possible, bowed hastily to the well-known faces which showed themselves on all sides, but spoke to no one, until, dismounting at the chapel door, she had penetrated to the crypt, in which was preserved the miraculous painting. There, prostrate on the ground, she implored the guidance and protection of the Holy Virgin through those intricacies in which she had involved herself, by fulfilment of the vow which she had made in her anguish before the same shrine. If the prayer was undirected, its purport was virtuous and sincere; and we are disposed to doubt that it attained that heaven towards which it was devoutly addressed.

CHAPTER XXII.

> The Virgin's image falls—yet some, I ween,
> Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend
> As to a visible power, in which might blend
> All that was mix'd, and reconciled in her,
> Of mother's love with maiden's purity,
> Of high with low, celestial with terrene.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE household of the Lady Eveline, though of an establishment becoming her present and future rank, was of a solemn and sequestered character, corresponding to her place of residence, and the privacy connected with her situation, retired as she was from the class of maidens who are yet unengaged, and not united with that of matrons, who enjoy the protection of a married name. Her immediate female attendants, with whom the reader is already acquainted, constituted almost her whole society. The garrison of the castle, besides household servants, consisted of veterans of tried faith, the followers of Berenger and of De Lacy in many a bloody field, to whom the duties of watching and warding were as familiar as any of their *more ordinary occupations*, and *whose courage, nevertheless, tempered by age* and experience, was not likely to engage in any rash adventure or accidental quarrel. These men maintained a constant and watchful guard, commanded by the steward, but under the eye of Father Aldrovand, who, besides discharging his ecclesiastical functions was at times, pleased to show some sparkles of his ancient military education.

Whilst this garrison afforded security against any sudden attempt on the part of the Welsh to surprise the castle, a strong body of forces were disposed within a few miles of the Garde Doloureuse, ready, on the least alarm, to advance to defend the place against any more numerous body of invaders, who, undeterred by the fate of Gwenwyn, might have the hardihood to form a regular siege. To this band, which, under the eye of Damian de Lacy himself, was kept in constant readiness for action, could be added on occasion all the military force of the Marches, comprising numerous bodies of Flemings, and other foreigners, who held their establishments by military tenure.

While the fortress was thus secure from hostile violence, the life of its inmates was so unvaried and simple, as might have excused youth and beauty for wishing for variety, even at the expense of some danger. The labours of the needle were only relieved by a walk round the battlements, where Eveline, as she passed arm in arm with Rose, received a military salute from each sentinel in turn, or in the court-yard, where the caps and bonnets of the domestics paid her the same respect which she received above from the pikes and javelins of the warders. Did they wish to extend their airing beyond the castle gate, it was not sufficient that doors and bridges were to be opened and lowered; there was, besides, an escort to get under arms, who, on foot or horseback as the case might require, attended for the security of the Lady Eveline's person. Without this military attendance they could not in safety move even so far as the mills, where honest Wilkin Flammock, his warlike deeds forgotten, was occupied with his mechanical labours. But if a further disport was intended, and the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse proposed to hunt or hawk for a few hours, her safety was not confided to a guard so feeble as the garrison of the castle could afford. It was necessary that Raoul should announce her purpose to Damian by a special messenger despatched the evening before, that there might be time before daybreak to scour, with a body of light cavalry, the region in which she intended to take her pleasure; and sentinels were placed in all suspicious places while she continued in the field. In truth, she tried, upon one or two occasions, to make an excursion, without any formal announcement of her intention; but all her purposes seemed to be known to Damian as soon as they were formed, and she was no sooner abroad than parties of archers and spearmen from his camp were seen scouring the valleys, and guarding the mountain-pass, and Damian's own plume was usually beheld conspicuous among the distant soldiers.

The formality of these preparations so much allayed the pleasure derived from the sport, that Eveline seldom resorted to amusement which was attended with such bustle, and put in motion so many persons.

The day being worn out as it best might, in the evening Father Aldrovand was wont to read out of some holy legend, or from the homilies of some departed saint, such passages as he deemed fit for the hearing of his little congregation. Sometimes also he read and expounded a chapter of the Holy Scripture; but in such cases, the good man's attention was so strangely turned to the military part of the Jewish history, that he was never able to quit the books of Judges and of Kings, together with the triumphs of Judas Maccabeus; although the manner in which he illustrated the victories of the children of Israel, was much more amusing to himself than edifying to his female audience.

Sometimes, but rarely, Rose obtained permission for a strolling minstrel to entertain an hour with his ditty of love and chivalry; sometimes a pilgrim from a distant shrine, repaid by long tales of the wonders which he had seen in other lands, the hospitality

which the Garde Doloureuse afforded; and sometimes also it happened, that the interest and intercession of the tiring-woman obtained admission for travelling merchants, or pedlars, who, at the risk of their lives, found profit by carrying from castle to castle the materials of rich dresses and female ornaments.

The usual visits of mendicants, of jugglers, of travelling jesters, are not to be forgotten in this list of amusements; and though his nation subjected him to close watch and observation, even the Welsh bard, with his huge harp strung with horse hair, was sometimes admitted to vary the uniformity of their secluded life. But, saving such amusements, and saving also the regular attendance upon the religious duties at the chapel, it was impossible for life to glide away in more wearisome monotony than at the castle of the Garde Doloureuse. Since the death of its brave owner, to whom feasting and hospitality seemed as natural as thoughts of honour and deeds of chivalry, the gloom of a convent might be said to have enveloped the ancient mansion of Raymond Berenger, were it not that the presence of so many armed wardens, stalking in solemn state on the battlements, gave it rather the aspect of a state-prison; and the temper of the inhabitants gradually became infected by the character of their dwelling.

The spirits of Eveline in particular felt a depression, which her naturally lively temper was quite inadequate to resist; and as her ruminations became graver, had caught that calm and contemplative manner, which is so often united with an ardent and enthusiastical temperament. She meditated deeply upon the former accidents of her life; nor can it be wondered that her thoughts repeatedly wandered back to the two several periods on which she had witnessed, or supposed that she had witnessed, a supernatural appearance. Then it was that it often seemed to her, as if a good and evil power strove for mastery over her destiny.

Solitude is favourable to feelings of self-importance; and it is when alone, and occupied only with their own thoughts, that fanatics have reveries, and imagined saints lose themselves in imaginary ecstasies. With Eveline the influence of enthusiasm went not such a length, yet it seemed to her as if in the vision of the night she saw sometimes the aspect of the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, bending upon her glances of pity, comfort, and protection; sometimes the ominous form of the Saxon castle of Baldringham, holding up the bloody hand as witness of the injuries with which she had been treated while in life, and menacing with revenge the descendant of her murderer.

On awaking from such dreams, Eveline would reflect that she was the last branch of her house—a house to which the tutelage and protection of the miraculous Image, and the enmity and evil influence of the revengeful Vanda, had been peculiarly attached for ages. It seemed to her as if she were the prize, for the disposal of which the benign saint and vindictive fiend were now to play their last and keenest game.

Thus thinking, and experiencing little interruption of her meditations from any external circumstance of interest and amusement, she became pensive, absent, wrapt herself up in contemplations which withdrew her attention from the conversation around her, and walked in the world of reality like one who is still in a dream. When she thought of her engagement with the Constable of Chester, it was with resignation, but without a wish, and almost without an expectation, that she would be called upon to fulfil it. She had accomplished her vow by accepting the faith of her deliverer in exchange for her own; and although she held herself willing to redeem the pledge—nay, would scarce confess to herself the reluctance with which she thought of doing so—yet it is certain that she entertained unavowed hopes that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse would not be a severe creditor; but, satisfied with the readiness she had shown to accomplish her vow, would not insist upon her claim in its full rigour. It would have been the blackest ingratitude, to have wished that her gallant deliverer, whom she had so much cause to pray for, should experience any of those fatalities which in the Holy Land so often changed the laurel-wreath into cypress; but other accidents chanced, when men had been long absent to alter those purposes with which they had left home.

A strolling minstrel, who sought the Garde Doloureuse, had recited, for the amusement of the lady and household, the celebrated lay of the Count of Gleichen, who, already married in his own country, laid himself under so many obligations in the East to a Saracen princess, through whose means he achieved his freedom, that he married her also. The Pope and his conclave were pleased to approve of the double wedlock, in a case so extraordinary; and the good Count of Gleichen shared his nuptial bed between two wives of equal rank, and now sleeps between them under the same monument.

The commentaries of the inmates of the castle had been various and discrepant upon this legend. Father Aldrovand considered it as altogether false, and an unworthy calumny on the head of the church, in affirming his Holiness would countenance such irregularity. Old Margery, with the tender-heartedness of an ancient nurse, wept bitterly for pity during the tale, and, never questioning either the power of the Pope or the propriety of his decision, was pleased that a mode of extrication was found for a complication of love distresses which seemed almost inextricable.—Dame Gillian declared it unreasonable, that, since a woman was only allowed one husband, a man should, under any circumstances, be permitted to have two wives; whilst Raoul, glancing towards her a look of verjuice, pitied the deplorable idiocy of the man who could be fool enough to avail himself of such a privilege.

"Peace, all the rest of you," said the Lady Eveline; "and do you, my dear Rose, tell me your judgment upon this Count of Gleichen and his two wives."

Rose blushed, and replied, "She was not much accustomed to think of such matters; but that, in her apprehension, the wife who could be contented with but one half of her husband's affections, had never deserved to engage the slightest share of them."

"Thou art partly right, Rose," said Eveline; "and methinks the European lady, when she found herself outshone by the young and beautiful foreign princess, would have best consulted her own dignity in resigning the place, and giving the Holy Father no more trouble than in annulling the marriage, as has been done in cases of more frequent occurrence."

This she said with an air of indifference and even gayety, which intimated to her faithful attendant with how little effort she herself could have made such a sacrifice, and served to indicate the state of her affections towards the Constable. But there was another than the Constable on whom her thoughts turned more frequently, though involuntarily, than perhaps in prudence they should have done.

The recollections of Damiam de Lacy had not been erased from Eveline's mind. They were, indeed, renewed by hearing his name so often mentioned, and by knowing that he was almost constantly in the neighbourhood, with his whole attention fixed upon her convenience, interest, and safety; whilst, on the other hand, so far from waiting on her in person, he never even attempted, by a direct communication with herself, to consult her pleasure, even upon what most concerned her.

The messages conveyed by Father Aldrovand, or by Rose, to Anelot, Damian's page, while they gave an air of formality to their intercourse, which Eveline thought unnecessary, and even unkind, yet served to fix her attention upon the connexion between them, and to keep it ever present to her memory. The remark by which Rose had vindicated the distance observed by her youthful guardian, sometimes arose to her recollection; and while her soul repelled with scorn the suspicion, that, in any case, his presence, whether at intervals or constantly, could be prejudicial to his uncle's interest, she conjured up various arguments for giving him a frequent place in her memory.—Was it not her duty to think of Damian often and kindly, as the Constable's nearest, best beloved, and most trusted relative?—Was he not her former deliverer and her present guardian? And might he not be considered as an instrument specially employed by her divine patroness, in rendering

effectual the protection with which she had graced her in more than one emergency?

Eveline's mind mutinied against the restrictions which were laid on their intercourse, as against something which inferred suspicion and degradation, like the compelled seclusion to which she had heard the Paynim infidels of the East subjected their females. Why should she see her guardian only in the benefits which he conferred upon her, and the cares he took for her safety, and hear his sentiments only by the mouth of others, as if one of them had been infected with the plague, or some other fatal or infectious disorder, which might render their meeting dangerous to the other?—And if they did meet occasionally, what else could be the consequence, save that the care of a brother towards a sister—of a trusty and kind guardian to the betrothed bride of his near relative and honoured patron, might render the melancholy seclusion of the Garde Doloureuse more easy to be endured by one so young in years, and, though dejected by present circumstances, naturally so gay in temper?

Yet, though this train of reasoning appeared to Eveline, when tracing it in her own mind, so conclusive, that she several times resolved to communicate her view of the case to Rose Flammock, it so chanced that, whenever she looked on the calm steady blue eye of the Flemish maiden, and remembered that her unblemished faith was mixed with a sincerity and plain dealing proof against every consideration, she feared lest she might be subjected in the opinion of her attendant to suspicions from which her own mind freed her; and her proud Norman spirit revolted at the idea of being obliged to justify herself to another, when she stood self-acquitted to her own mind. "Let things be as they are," she said; "and let us endure all the weariness of a life which might be so easily rendered more cheerful, rather than that this zealous but punctilious friend should, in the strictness and nicety of her feelings on my account, conceive me capable of encouraging an intercourse which could lead to a less worthy thought of me in the mind of the most scrupulous of man—or of womankind." But even this vacillation of opinion and resolution tended to bring the image of the handsome young Damian more frequently before the Lady Eveline's fancy, than perhaps his uncle, had he known it, would altogether have approved of. In such reflections, however, she never indulged long, ere a sense of the singular destiny which had hitherto attended her, led her back into the more melancholy contemplations from which the buoyancy of her youthful fancy had for a short time emancipated her.

CHAPTER XXIII.

——Ours is the skie,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall flie.
RANDOLPH.

Own bright September morning, old Raoul was busy in the mews where he kept his hawks, grumbling all the while to himself as he surveyed the condition of each bird, and blaming alternately the carelessness of the under-falconer, and the situation of the building, and the weather, and the wind, and all things around him, for the dilapidation which time and disease had made in the neglected hawking establishment of the Garde Doloureuse. While in these unpleasing meditations, he was surprised by the voice of his beloved Dame Gillian, who seldom was an early riser, and yet more rarely visited him when he was in his sphere of peculiar authority. "Raoul, Raoul! where art thou, man?—Ever to seek for, when thou canst make aught of advantage for thyself or me!"

"And what want'st thou, dame?" said Raoul, "what means thy screaming worse than the sea-gull before wet weather? A murrain on thy voice! it is enough to fray every hawk from the perch."

"Hawk!" answered Dame Gillian; "is it time to be looking for hawks, when here is a cast of the bravest falcons come hither for sale, that ever flew by lake, brook, or meadow!"

"Kites! like her that brings the news," said Raoul.

"No, nor kestrels like him that hears it," replied Gillian; "but brave jerfalcons, with large nares, strongly armed, and beaks short and something bluish"——

"Pshaw, with thy jargon!—Where came they from?" said Raoul, interested in the tidings, but unwilling to give his wife the satisfaction of seeing that he was so.

"From the Isle of Man," replied Gillian.

"They must be good, then, though it was a woman brought tidings of them," said Raoul, smiling grimly at his own wit; then, leaving the mews, he demanded to know where this famous falcon-merchant was to be met withal.

"Why, between the barriers and the inner gate," replied Gillian, "where other men are admitted that have wares to utter—Where should he be?"

"And who let him in?" demanded the suspicious Raoul.

"Why, Master Steward, thou owl!" said Gillian; "he came but now to my chamber, and sent me hither to call you."

"Oh, the steward—the steward—I might have guessed as much. And he came to thy chamber, doubtless, because he could not have as easily come hither to me himself.—Was it not so, sweetheart?"

"I do not know why he chose to come to me rather than to you, Raoul," said Gillian; "and if I did know, perhaps I would not tell you. Go to—mind your bargain, or to make your bargain, I care not which—the man will not wait for you—he has good proffers from the Seneschal of Malpas, and the Welsh Lord of Dinevawr."

"I come—I come," said Raoul, who felt the necessity of embracing this opportunity of improving his hawking establishment, and hastened to the gate, where he met the merchant, attended by a servant, who kept in separate cages the three falcons which he offered for sale.

The first glance satisfied Raoul that they were of the best breed in Europe, and that, if their education were in correspondence to their race, there could scarce be a more valuable addition even to a royal mews. The merchant did not fail to enlarge upon all their points of excellence; the breadth of their shoulders, the strength of their train, their full and fierce dark eyes, the boldness with which they endured the approach of strangers, and the lively spirit and vigour with which they pruned their plumes, and shook, or, as it was technically termed, roused themselves. He expatiated on the difficulty and danger with which they were obtained from the Rock of Ramsey, on which they were bred, and which was an eyry unrivalled even on the coast of Norway.

Raoul turned apparently a deaf ear to all these commendations. "Friend merchant," said he, "I know a falcon as well as thou dost, and I will not deny that thine are fine ones; but if they be not carefully trained and reclaimed, I would rather have a goss-hawk on my perch than the fairest falcon that ever stretched wing to weather."

"I grant ye," said the merchant; "but if we agree on the price, for that is the main matter, thou shalt see the birds fly if thou wilt, and then buy them or not as thou likest. I am no true merchant if thou ever saw'st birds beat them, whether at the mount or the stoop."

"That I call fair," said Raoul, "if the price be equally so."

"It shall be corresponding," said the hawk-merchant; "for I have brought six casts from the island, by the good favour of good King Reginald of Man, and I have sold every feather of them save these; and so, having emptied my cages and filled my purse, I desire not to be troubled longer with the residue; and if a good fellow, and a judge, as thou seemest to be, should like the hawks when he has seen them fly, he shall have the price of his own making."

"Go to," said Raoul, "we will have no blind bargains; my lady, if the hawks be suitable, is more able to pay for them than thou to give them away.—Will a bezant be a conformable price for the cast?"

"A bezant, Master Falconer!—By my faith, you are no bold bodesman! nevertheless, double your offer, and I will consider it."

"If the hawks are well reclaimed," said Raoul, "I will give you a bezant and a half; but I will see them strike a heron ere I will be so rash as deal with you."

"It is well," said the merchant, "and I had better take your offer than be longer cumbered with them; for were I to carry them into Wales, I might get paid in a worse fashion by some of their long knives.—Will you to horse presently?"

"Assuredly," said Raoul; "and, though March be the fitter month for hawking at the heron, yet I will show you one of these frogpeckers for the trouble of riding the matter of a mile by the water-side."

"Content, Sir Falconer," said the merchant. "But are we to go alone, or is there no lord or lady in the castle who would take pleasure to see a piece of game gallantly struck? I am not afraid to show these hawks to a countess."

"My lady used to love the sport well enough," said Raoul; "but I wot not why, she is moped and mazed ever since her father's death, and lives in her fair castle like a nun in a cloister, without disport or revelry of any kind.—Nevertheless, Gillian, thou canst do something with her—good now, do a kind deed for once, and move her to come out and look on this morning's sport—The poor heart hath seen no pastime this summer."

"That I will do," quoth Gillian; "and, moreover, I will show her such a new riding-tire for the head, that no woman born could ever look at without the wish to toss it a little in the wind."

As Gillian spoke, it appeared to her jealous-pated husband that he surprised a glance of more intelligence exchanged betwixt her and the trader than brief acquaintance seemed to warrant, even when allowance was made for the extreme frankness of Dame Gillian's disposition. He thought also, that, on looking more closely at the merchant, his lineaments were not totally unknown to him; and proceeded to say to him dryly, "We have met before, friend, but I cannot call to remembrance where."

"Like enough," said the merchant; "I have used this country often, and may have taken money of you in the way of trade. If I were in fitting place, I would gladly bestow a pottle of wine to our better acquaintance."

"Not so fast, friend," said the old huntsman; "ere I drink to better acquaintance with any one, I must be well pleased with what I already know of him. We will see thy hawks fly, and if their breeding match thy bragging, we may perhaps crush a cup together.—And here come grooms and equerries, in faith—my lady has consented to come forth."

The opportunity of seeing this rural pastime had offered itself to Eveline, at a time when the delightful brilliancy of the day, the temperance of the air, and the joyous work of harvest, proceeding in every direction around, made the temptation to exercise almost irresistible.

As they proposed to go no farther than the side of the neighbouring river, near the fatal bridge, over which a small guard of infantry was constantly maintained, Eveline dispensed with any farther escort, and, contrary to the custom of the castle, took no one in her train save Rose and Gillian, and one or two servants, who led spaniels, or carried appurtenances of the chase. Raoul, the merchant, and an equerry, attended her of course, each holding a hawk on his wrist, and anxiously adjusting the mode in which they should throw them off, so as best to ascertain the extent of their powers and training.

When these important points had been adjusted, the party rode down the river, carefully looking on every side for the object of their game; but no heron was seen stalking on the usual haunts of the bird, although there was a heronry at no great distance.

Few disappointments of a small nature are more teasing than that of a sportsman, who, having set *out with* all means and appliances for destruction *of game, finds that there is* none to be met with; *because he conceives himself*, with his full shooting trim and his empty game-pouch, to be subjected to the sneer of every passing rustic. The party of the Lady Eveline felt all the degradation of such disappointment.

"A fair country this," said the merchant, "where, on two miles of river, you cannot find one poor heron!"

"It is the clatter those d—d Flemings make with their water-mills and fulling-mills," said Raoul;—"they destroy good sport and good company wherever they come. But were my lady willing to ride a mile or so farther to the Red Pool, I could show you a long-shanked fellow who would make your hawks cancel till their brains were giddy."

"The Red Pool!" said Rose; "thou knowest it is more than three miles beyond the bridge, and lies up towards the hills."

"Ay, ay," said Raoul, "another Flemish freak to spoil pastime! They are not so scarce on the Marches these Flemish wenches, that they should fear being hawked at by Welsh haggards"

"Raoul is right, Rose," answered Eveline; "it is absurd to be cooped up like birds in a cage, when all around us has been so uniformly quiet. I am determined to break out of bounds for once, and see sport in our old fashion, without being surrounded with armed men like prisoners of state. We will merrily to the Red Pool, wench, and kill a heron like free maids of the Marches."

"Let me but tell my father, at least, to mount and follow us," said Rose—for they were now near the re-established manufacturing houses of the stout Fleming.

"I care not if thou dost, Rose," said Eveline; "yet credit me, girl, we will be at the Red Pool, and thus far on our way home again, ere thy father has donned his best doublet, girded on his two handed sword, and accoutred his strong Flanderkin elephant of a horse, which he judiciously names Sloth—nay, frown not—and lose not, in justifying thy father, the time that may be better spent in calling him out."

Rose rode to the mills accordingly, when Wilkin Flammock, at the command of his liege mistress, readily hastened to get his steel cap and habergeon, and ordered half-a-dozen of his kinsmen and servants to get on horseback. Rose remained with him, to urge him to more despatch than his methodical disposition rendered natural to him; but in spite of all her efforts to stimulate him, the Lady Eveline had passed the bridge more than half an hour ere her escort was prepared to follow her.

Mean while, apprehensive of no evil, and riding gayly on, with the sensation of one escaped from confinement, Eveline moved forward on her lively jennet, as light as a lark; the plumes with which Dame Gillian had decked her riding-bonnet dancing in the wind, and her attendants galloping behind her, with dogs, pouches, lines, and all other appurtenances of the royal sport of hawking. After passing the river, the wild greensward path which they pursued began to wind upward among small eminences, sometimes bare and craggy, sometimes overgrown with hazel, sloe-thorn, and other dwarf shrubs, and at length suddenly descending, brought them to the verge of a mountain rivulet, that, like a lamb at play, leapt merrily from rock to rock, seemingly uncertain which way to run.

"This little stream was always my favourite, Dame Gillian," said Eveline, "and now methinks it leaps the lighter that it sees me again."

"Ah! lady," said Dame Gillian, whose turn for conversation never extended in such cases beyond a few phrases of gross flattery, "many a fair knight would leap shoulder-height for leave to look on you as free as the brook may! more especially now that you have donned that riding-cap, which, in exquisite delicacy of invention, methinks is a bowshot before aught that I ever invented—What thinkest thou, Raoul?"

"I think," answered her well-natured helpmate, "that women's tongues were contrived to drive all the game out of the country.—Here we come near to the spot where we hope to speed, or nowhere wherefore, pray, my sweet lady, be silent yourself

ep your followers as much so as their natures
rmit, while we steal along the bank of the
nder the wind, with the hawks' hoods cast
ll ready for a flight."
spoke, they advanced about a hundred yards
brawling stream, until the little vale through
it flowed, making a very sudden turn to one
owed them the Red Pool, the superfluous
f which formed the rivulet itself.
mountain-lake, or tarn, as it is called in some
s, was a deep basin of about a mile in cir-
nce, but rather oblong than circular. On the
t to our falconers arose a ridge of rock, of
red hue, giving name to the pool, which, re-
this massive and dusky barrier, appeared
ke of its colour. On the opposite side was a
hill, whose autumnal bloom had not yet
om purple to russet; its surface was varied
lark green furze and the fern, and in many
ray cliffs, or loose stones of the same colour,
a contrast to the ruddy precipice to which
opposed. A natural road of beautiful sand
med by a beach, which, extending all the
und the lake, separated its waters from the
ous rock on the one hand, and on the other
e steep and broken hill; and being nowhere
n five or six yards in breadth, and in most
reatly more, offered around its whole circuit
ing opportunity to the rider, who desired to
and breathe the horse on which he was
d. The verge of the pool on the rocky side
e and there strewed with fragments of large
ached from the precipice above, but not in
antity as to encumber this pleasant horse-
Many of these rocky masses having passed
gin of the water in their fall, lay immersed
ie small islets; and, placed amongst a little
ago, the quick eye of Raoul detected the
hich they were in search of.
ment's consultation was held to consider in
anner they should approach the sad and
bird, which, unconscious that itself was the
a formidable ambuscade, stood motionless on
by the brink of the lake, watching for such
h or water-reptiles as might chance to pass
onely station. A brief debate took place
Raoul and the hawk-merchant on the best
starting the quarry, so as to allow Lady
and her attendants the most perfect view of
t. The facility of killing the heron at the
e or at the *jettee ferré*—that is, upon the
farther side of the pool—was anxiously de-
anguage of breathless importance as if some
perilous enterprise was about to be executed.
th the arrangements were fixed, and the
an to advance towards the aquatic hermit,
this time aware of their approach, drew
up to his full height, erected his long lean
read his broad fan-like wings, uttered his
nging cry, and, projecting his length of thin
ehind him, rose upon the gentle breeze. It
, with a loud whoop of encouragement,
erchant threw off the noble hawk he bore,
rst unhooded her to give her a view of her

as a frigate in chase of some rich galleon
e falcon towards the enemy, which she had
ht to pursue, while preparing for defence, if he
unable to escape by flight, the heron exerted
wers of speed to escape from an enemy so
le. Plying his almost unequalled strength
he ascended high and higher in the air, by
ations, that the hawk might gain no van-
nd for pouncing at him; while his spiked
the extremity of so long a neck as enabled
rike an object at a yard's distance in every
possessed for any less spirited assailant all
s of a Moorish javelin.
r hawk was now thrown off, and encou-
the halloos of the falconer to join her com-
Both kept mounting, or scaling the air, as
y a succession of small circles, endeavour-
n that *superior height which the heron on
ras bent to preserve; and to the exquisite* delight of the spectators, the contest was continued until all three were well nigh mingled with the fleecy clouds, from which was occasionally heard the harsh and plaintive cry of the quarry, appealing as it were to the heaven which he was approaching, against the wanton cruelty of those by whom he was persecuted.

At length one of the falcons had reached a pitch from which she ventured to stoop at the heron; but so judiciously did the quarry maintain his defence, as to receive on his beak the stroke which the falcon, shooting down at full descent, had made against his right wing; so that one of his enemies, spiked through the body by his own weight, fell fluttering into the lake, very near the land, on the side farthest from the falconers, and perished there.

"There goes a gallant falcon to the fishes," said Raoul. "Merchant, thy cake is dough."

Even as he spoke, however, the remaining bird had avenged the fate of her sister; for the success which the heron met with on one side, did not prevent his being assailed on the other wing; and the falcon stooping boldly, and grappling with, or, as it is called in falconry, *binding* his prey, both came tumbling down together, from a great height in the air. It was then no small object on the part of the falconers to come in as soon as possible, lest the falcon should receive hurt from the beak or talons of the heron; and the whole party, the men setting spurs, and the females switching their palfreys, went off like the wind, sweeping along the fair and smooth beach betwixt the rock and the water.

Lady Eveline, far better mounted than any of her train, her spirits elated by the sport, and by the speed at which she moved, was much sooner than any of her attendants at the spot where the falcon and heron, still engaged in their mortal struggle, lay fighting upon the moss; the wing of the latter having been broken by the stoop of the former. The duty of a falconer in such a crisis was to rush in and assist the hawk, by thrusting the heron's bill into the earth, and breaking his legs, and thus permitting the falcon to despatch him on easy terms.

Neither would the sex nor quality of the Lady Eveline have excused her becoming second to the falcon in this cruel manner; but, just as she had dismounted for that purpose, she was surprised to find herself seized on by a wild form, who exclaimed in Welsh that he seized her as a *waif*, for hawking on the demesnes of Dawfyd with the one eye. At the same time many other Welshmen, to the number of more than a score, showed themselves from behind crags and bushes, all armed at point with the axes called Welsh hooks, long knives, darts, and bows and arrows.

Eveline screamed to her attendants for assistance, and at the same time made use of what Welsh phrases she possessed, to move the fears or excite the compassion of the outlawed mountaineers; for she doubted not that she had fallen under the power of such a party. When she found her requests were unheeded, and she perceived it was their purpose to detain her prisoner, she disdained to use farther entreaties; but demanded at their peril that they should treat her with respect, promising in that case that she would pay them a large ransom, and threatening them with the vengeance of the Lords Marchers, and particularly of Sir Damian de Lacy, if they ventured to use her otherwise.

The men seemed to understand her, and although they proceeded to tie a bandage over her eyes, and to bind her arms with her own veil, yet they observed in these acts of violence a certain delicacy and attention both to her feelings and her safety, which led her to hope that her request had had some effect on them. They secured her to the saddle of her palfrey and led her away with them through the recesses of the hills; while she had the additional distress to hear behind her the noise of a conflict, occasioned by the fruitless efforts of her retinue to procure her rescue.

Astonishment had at first seized the hawking party, when they saw from some distance their sport interrupted by a violent assault on their mistress. Old Raoul valiantly put spurs to his horse, and calling on

the rest to follow him to the rescue, rode furiously towards the banditti; but, having no other arms save a hawking-pole and short sword, he and those who followed him in his meritorious but ineffectual attempt were easily foiled, and Raoul and one or two of the foremost severely beaten; the banditti exercising upon them their own poles till they were broken to splinters, but generously abstaining from the use of more dangerous weapons. The rest of the retinue, completely discouraged, dispersed to give the alarm, and the merchant and Dame Gillian remained by the lake, filling the air with shrieks of useless fear and sorrow. The outlaws, mean while, drawing together in a body, shot a few arrows at the fugitives, but more to alarm than to injure them, and then marched off, as if to cover their companions who had gone before with the Lady Eveline in their custody.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Four ruffians seized me yester morn—
Alas! a maiden most forlorn!
They choked my cries with wicked might,
And bound me on a palfrey white.—COLERIDGE.

SUCH adventures as are now only recorded in works of mere fiction, were not uncommon in the feudal ages, when might was so universally superior to right; and it followed that those whose condition exposed them to frequent violence, were more prompt in repelling, and more patient in enduring it, than could otherwise have been expected from their sex and age.

The Lady Eveline felt that she was a prisoner, nor was she devoid of fears concerning the purpose of this assault; but she suffered neither her alarm, nor the violence with which she was hurried along, to deprive her of the power of observing and reflecting. From the noise of hoofs which now increased around, she concluded that the greater part of the ruffians by whom she had been seized had betaken themselves to their horses. This she knew was consonant to the practice of the Welsh marauders, who, although the small size and slightness of their nags made them totally unfit for service in battle, availed themselves of their activity and sureness of foot to transport them with the necessary celerity to and from the scenes of their rapine; ensuring thus a rapid and unperceived approach, and a secure and speedy retreat. These animals traversed without difficulty, and beneath the load of a heavy soldier, the wild mountain-paths by which the country was intersected, and in one of which Lady Eveline Berenger concluded she was now engaged, from the manner in which her own palfrey, supported by a man on foot at either rein, seemed now to labour up some precipice, and anon to descend with still greater risk on the other side.

At one of those moments, a voice which she had not yet distinguished addressed her in the Anglo-Norman language, and asked, with apparent interest, if she sat safely on her saddle, offering at the same time to have her accoutrements altered at her pleasure and convenience.

"Insult not my condition with the mention of safety," said Eveline; "you may well believe that I hold my safety altogether irreconcilable with these deeds of violence. If I or my vassals have done injury to any of the *Cymry*,* let me know, and it shall be amended—If it is ransom which you desire, name the sum, and I will send an order to treat for it; but detain me not prisoner, for that can but injure me, and will avail you nothing."

"The Lady Eveline," answered the voice, still in a tone of courtesy inconsistent with the violence which she sustained, "will speedily find that our actions are more rough than our purposes."

"If you know who I am," said Eveline, "you cannot doubt that this atrocity will be avenged—you must know by whose banner my lands are at present protected."

"Under De Lacy's," answered the voice, with a tone of indifference. "Be it so—falcons fear not falcons."

* *Cymbri*, or Welsh.

At this moment there was a halt, and a confused murmur arose amongst those around her, who had hitherto been silent, unless when muttering to each other in Welsh, and as briefly as possible, directions which way to hold, or encouragement to use haste.

These murmurs ceased, and there was a pause of several minutes; at length Eveline again heard the voice which formerly addressed her, giving directions which she could not understand. He then spoke to herself. "You will presently see," he said, "whether I have spoken truly, when I said I scorned the ties by which you are fettered. But you are at once the cause of strife and the reward of victory—your safety must be cared for as time will admit; and, strange as the mode of protection is to which we are to commit you, I trust the victor in the approaching struggle will find you uninjured."

"Do not, for the sake of the Blessed Virgin, let there be strife and bloodshed!" said Eveline; "rather unbind my eyes, and let me speak to those whose approach you dread If friends, as it would seem to me, I will be the means of peace between you."

"I despise peace," replied the speaker. "I have not undertaken a resolute and daring adventure, to resign it as a child doth his plaything, at the first frown of fortune. Please to alight, noble lady; or rather be not offended that I thus lift you from the seat, and place you on the greensward."

As he spoke, Eveline felt herself lifted from her palfrey, and placed carefully and safely on the ground, in a sitting posture. A moment after, the same peremptory valet who had aided her to dismount, disrobed her of her cap, the masterpiece of Dame Gillian, and of her upper mantle. "I must yet further require you," said the bandit leader, "to creep on hands and knees into this narrow aperture. Believe me, I regret the nature of the singular fortification to which I commit your person for safety."

Eveline crept forwards as directed, conceiving resistance to be of no avail, and thinking that compliance with the request of one who spoke like a person of consequence, might find her protection against the unbridled fury of the Welsh, to whom she was obnoxious, as being the cause of Gwenwyn's death, and the defeat of the Britons under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse.

She crept then forwards through a narrow and damp passage, built on either side with rough stones, and so low that she could not have entered it in any other posture. When she had proceeded about two or three yards, the passage opened into a concavity or apartment, high enough to permit her to sit at her ease, and of irregular, but narrow, dimensions. At the same time she became sensible, from the noise which she heard behind her, that the ruffians were stopping up the passage by which she had been thus introduced into the bowels of the earth. She could distinctly hear the clattering of stone with which they closed the entrance, and she became sensible that the current of fresh air, which had rushed thro' the opening, was gradually failing, and that the atmosphere of the subterranean apartment became yet more damp, earthy, and oppressive, than at first.

At this moment came a distant sound from without, in which Eveline thought she could distinguish cries, blows, the trampling of horse, the oaths, shouts, and screams of the combatants, but all deadened by the rude walls of her prison, into a confused hollow murmur, conveying such intelligence to her ears as we may suppose the dead to hear from the world they have quitted.

Influenced by desperation, under circumstances so dreadful, Eveline struggled for liberty with such frantic energy, that she partly effected her purpose by forcing her arms from the bonds which confined them. But this only convinced her of the impossibility to escape; for, rending off the veil which wrapt her head, she found herself in total darkness, and flinging her arms hastily around her, she discovered she was cooped up in a subterranean cavern, of very narrow dimensions. Her hands, which groped around, encountered only pieces of decayed metal, and a substance which, at another moment, would have made her shudder being, in truth, the mouldering

ing bones of the dead. At present, not even this circumstance could add to her fears, immured as she seemed to be, to perish by a strange and subterranean death, while her friends and deliverers were probably within a few yards of her. She flung her arms wildly around in search of some avenue of escape, but every effort she made for liberating herself from the ponderous circumvallation, was as ineffectual as if directed against the dome of a cathedral.

The noise by which her ears were at first assailed increased rapidly, and at one moment it seemed as if the covering of the vault under which she lay sounded repeatedly to blows, or the shock of substances which had fallen, or been thrown, against it. It was impossible that a human brain could have withstood these terrors, operating upon it so immediately; but happily this extremity lasted not long. Sounds, more hollow, and dying away in distance, argued that one or other of the parties had retreated; and at length all was silent.

Eveline was now left to the undisturbed contemplation of her own disastrous situation. The fight was over, and, as circumstances led her to infer, her own friends were conquerors; for otherwise the victor would have relieved her from her place of confinement, and carried her away captive with him, as his words had menaced. But what could the success of her faithful friends and followers avail Eveline, who, pent up under a place of concealment which, whatever was its character, must have escaped their observation, was left on the field of battle, to become again the prize of the enemy, should their band venture to return, or die in darkness and privation, a death as horrid as ever tyrant invented, or martyr underwent, and which the unfortunate young lady could not even bear to think of without a prayer that her agony might at least be shortened.

In this hour of dread she recollected the poniard which she wore, and the dark thought crossed her mind, that, when life became hopeless, a speedy death was at least within her reach. As her soul shuddered at so dreadful an alternative, the question suddenly occurred, might not this weapon be put to a more hallowed use, and aid her emancipation, instead of abridging her sufferings?

This hope once adopted, the daughter of Raymond Berenger hastened to prove the experiment, and by repeated efforts succeeded, though with difficulty, in changing her posture, so as to admit of her inspecting her place of confinement all around, but particularly the passage by which she had entered, and by which she now attempted again to return to the light of day. She crept to the extremity, and found it, as she expected, strongly blocked up with large stones and earth, rammed together in such a manner as nearly to extinguish all hope of escape. The work, however, had been hastily performed, and life and liberty were prizes to stimulate exertion. With her poniard she cleared away the earth and sods—with her hands, little accustomed to such labour, she removed several stones, and advanced in her task so far as to obtain a glimmering of light, and what was scarce less precious, a supply of purer air. But, at the same time, she had the misfortune to ascertain, that, from the size and massiveness of a huge stone which closed the extremity of the passage, there was no hope that her unassisted strength could effect her extrication. Yet her condition was improved by the admission of air and light, as well as by the opportunity afforded of calling out for assistance.

Such cries, indeed, were for some time uttered in vain—the field had probably been left to the dead and the dying; for low and indistinct groans were the only answer which she received for several minutes. At length, as she repeated her exclamation, a voice, faint as that of one just awakened from a swoon, pronounced these words in answer;—"Edris of the Earthen House, dost thou call from thy tomb to the wretch who just hastens to his own?—Are the boundaries broken down which connect me with the living?—And do I already hear, with fleshly ears, the faint and screaming accents of the dead?"

"It is no spirit who speaks," replied Eveline, overjoyed at finding she could at least communicate her existence to a living person—"no spirit, but a most unhappy maiden, Eveline Berenger by name, immured beneath this dark vault, and in danger to perish horribly, unless God send me rescue!"

"Eveline Berenger!" exclaimed he whom she addressed, in the accents of wonder. "It is impossible!—I watched her green mantle—I watched her plumy bonnet as I saw her hurried from the field, and felt my own inability to follow to the rescue; nor did force or exertion altogether leave me till the waving of the robe and the dancing of the feathers were lost to my eyes, and all hope of rescuing her abandoned my heart."

"Faithful vassal, or right true friend, or courteous stranger, whichsoever I may name thee," answered Eveline, "know thou hast been abused by the artifices of these Welsh banditti—the mantle and headgear of Eveline Berenger they have indeed with them, and may have used them to mislead those true friends, who, like thee, are anxious for my fate. Wherefore, brave sir, devise some succour, if thou canst, for thyself and me; since I dread that these ruffians, when they shall have escaped immediate pursuit, will return hither, like the robber to the hoard where he has deposited his stolen booty."

"Now, the Holy Virgin be praised," said the wounded man, "that I can spend the last breath of my life in thy just and honourable service! I would not before blow my bugle, lest I recalled from the pursuit to the aid of my worthless self some of those who might be effectually engaged in thy rescue; may Heaven grant that the recall may now be heard; that my eyes may yet see the Lady Eveline in safety and liberty!"

The words, though spoken in a feeble tone, breathed a spirit of enthusiasm, and were followed by the blast of a horn, faintly winded, to which no answer was made save the echoing of the dell. A sharper and louder blast was then sent forth, but sunk so suddenly, that it seemed the breath of him who sounded the instrument had failed in the effort.—A strange thought crossed Eveline's mind even in that moment of uncertainty and terror. "That," she said, "was the note of a De Lacy—surely you cannot be my gentle kinsman, Sir Damian!"

"I am that unhappy wretch, deserving of death for the evil care which I have taken of the treasure intrusted to me.—What was my business to trust to reports and messengers? I should have worshipped the saint who was committed to my keeping, with such vigilance as avarice bestows on the gross which he calls treasure—I should have rested nowhere, save at your gate; outwatched the brightest stars in the horizon; unseen and unknown myself, I should never have parted from your neighbourhood; then had you not been in the present danger, and—much less important consequence—thou, Damian de Lacy, had not filled the grave of a forsworn and negligent caitiff!"

"Alas! noble Damian," said Eveline, "break not my heart by blaming yourself for an imprudence which is altogether my own. Thy succour was ever near when I intimated the least want of it; and it imbitters my own misfortune to know that my rashness has been the cause of your disaster. Answer me, gentle kinsman, and give me to hope that the wounds you have suffered are such as may be cured.—Alas! how much of your blood have I seen spilled, and what a fate is mine, that I should ever bring distress on all for whom I would most willingly sacrifice my own happiness!—But do not let us imbitter the moments given us in mercy, by fruitless repinings—Try what you can to stop thine ebbing blood, which is so dear to England—to Eveline—and to thine uncle!"

Damian groaned as she spoke, and was silent; while, maddened with the idea that he might be perishing for want of aid, Eveline repeated her efforts to extricate herself for her kinsman's assistance, as well as her own. It was all in vain, and she had ceased the attempt in despair; and passing from one hideous subject of terror to another, she sat listening, with sharpened ear, for the dying groan of Damian, when—feeling of ecstasy!—the ground was shaken with

horses' feet advancing rapidly. Yet this joyful sound, if decisive of life, did not assure her of liberty—It might be the banditti of the mountains returning to seek their captive. Even then they would surely allow her leave to look upon and bind up the wounds of Damian de Lacy; for to keep him as a captive might vantage them more in many degrees, than could his death. A horseman came up—Eveline invoked his assistance, and the first word she heard was an exclamation in Flemish from the faithful Wilkin Flammock, which nothing save some spectacle of the most unusual kind was ever known to compel from that phlegmatic person.

His presence, indeed, was particularly useful on this occasion; for, being informed by the Lady Eveline in what condition she was placed, and implored at the same time to look to the situation of Sir Damian de Lacy, he began, with admirable composure and some skill, to stop the wounds of the one, while his attendants collected levers, left by the Welsh as they retreated, and were soon ready to attempt the liberation of Eveline. With much caution, and under the experienced direction of Flammock, the stone was at length so much raised, that the Lady Eveline was visible, to the delight of all, and especially of the faithful Rose, who, regardless of the risk of personal harm, fluttered around her mistress's place of confinement, like a bird robbed of her nestlings around the cage in which the truant urchin has imprisoned them. Precaution was necessary to remove the stone, lest falling inwards it might do the lady injury.

At length the rocky fragment was so much displaced that she could issue forth; while her people, as in hatred of the coercion which she had sustained, ceased not to heave, with bar and lever, till, totally destroying the balance of the heavy mass, it turned over from the little flat on which it had been placed at the mouth of the subterranean entrance, and, acquiring force as it revolved down a steep declivity, was at length put into rapid motion, and rolled, crashed, and thundered, down the hill, amid flashes of fire which it forced from the rocks, and clouds of smoke and dust, until it alighted in the channel of a brook, where it broke into several massive fragments, with a noise that might have been heard some miles off.

With garments rent and soiled through the violence she had sustained; with dishevelled hair, and disordered dress; faint from the stifling effect of her confinement, and exhausted by the efforts she had made to relieve herself, Eveline did not, nevertheless, waste a single minute in considering her own condition; but with the eagerness of a sister hastening to the assistance of an only brother, betook herself to examine the several severe wounds of Damian de Lacy, and to use proper means to stanch the blood and recall him from his swoon. We have said elsewhere, that, like other ladies of the time, Eveline was not altogether unacquainted with the surgical art, and she now displayed a greater share of knowledge than she had been thought capable of exerting. There was prudence, foresight, and tenderness, in every direction which she gave, and the softness of the female sex; with their officious humanity, ever ready to assist in alleviating human misery, seemed in her enhanced, and rendered dignified, by the sagacity of a strong and powerful understanding. After hearing with wonder for a minute or two the prudent and ready-witted directions of her mistress, Rose seemed at once to recollect that the patient should not be left to the exclusive care of the Lady Eveline, and joining, therefore, in the task, she rendered what assistance she could, while the attendants were employed in forming a litter, on which the wounded knight was to be conveyed to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse.

CHAPTER XXV.

A merry place, 'tis said, in days of yore;
But something ails it now—the place is cursed.
WORDSWORTH.

The place on which the skirmish had occurred, and *the deliverance of the Lady Eveline* had been effected, was a wild and singular spot, being a small level plain, forming a sort of stage, or resting-place, between two very rough paths, one of which winded up the rivulet from below, and another continued the ascent above. Being surrounded by hills and woods, it was a celebrated spot for finding game, and, in former days, a Welsh prince, renowned for his universal hospitality, his love of *cwrw* and of the chase, had erected a forest-lodge, where he used to feast his friends and followers with a profusion unexampled in Cambria.

The fancy of the bards, always captivated with magnificence, and having no objections to the peculiar species of profusion practised by this potentate, gave him the surname of Edris of the Goblets; and celebrated him in their odes in terms as high as those which exalt the heroes of the famous Hirlas Horn. The subject of their praises, however, fell finally a victim to his propensities, having been stabbed to the heart in one of those scenes of confusion and drunkenness which were frequently the conclusion of his renowned banquets. Shocked at this catastrophe, the assembled Britons interred the relics of the Prince on the place where he had died, within the narrow vault where Eveline had been confined, and having barricaded the entrance of the sepulchre with fragments of rock, heaped over it an immense *cairn*, or pile of stones, on the summit of which they put the assassin to death. Superstition guarded the spot; and for many a year this memorial of Edris remained unviolated, although the lodge had gone to ruin, and its vestiges had totally decayed.

In latter years, some prowling band of Welsh robbers had discovered the secret entrance, and opened it with the view of ransacking the tomb for arms and treasures, which were in ancient times often buried with the dead. These marauders were disappointed, and obtained nothing by the violation of the grave of Edris, excepting the knowledge of a secret place, which might be used for depositing their booty, or even as a place of retreat for one of their number in a case of emergency.

When the followers of Damian, five or six in number, explained their part of the history of the day to Wilkin Flammock, it appeared that Damian had ordered them to horse at break of day, with a more considerable body, to act, as they understood, against a party of insurgent peasants, when of a sudden he had altered his mind, and, dividing his force into small bands, employed himself and them in reconnoitring more than one mountain-pass betwixt Wales and the Marches of the English country, in the neighbourhood of the Garde Doloureuse.

This was an occupation so ordinary for him, that it excited no particular notice. These manœuvres were frequently undertaken by the warlike marchers, for the purpose of intimidating the Welsh in general, more especially the bands of outlaws, who, independent of any regular government, infested those wild frontiers. Yet it escaped not comment, that, in undertaking such service at this moment, Damian seemed to abandon that of dispersing the insurgents, which had been considered as the chief object of the day.

It was about noon, when, falling in, as good fortune would have it, with one of the fugitive grooms, Damian and his immediate attendants received information of the violence committed on the Lady Eveline, and, by their perfect knowledge of the country, were able to intercept the ruffians at the Pass of Edris, as it was called, by which the Welsh rovers ordinarily returned to their strongholds in the interior. It is probable that the banditti were not aware of the small force which Damian headed in person, and at the same time knew that there would be an immediate and hot pursuit in their rear; and these circumstances led their leader to adopt the singular expedient of hiding Eveline in the tomb, while one of their own number, dressed in her clothes, might serve as a decoy to deceive their assailants, and lead them from the spot where she was really concealed, to which it was no doubt the purpose of the banditti to return, when they had eluded their pursuers.

Accordingly, the robbers had already drawn up in

ore the tomb for the purpose of regularly retreating, ntil they should find some suitable place either for aking a stand, or where, if overmatched, they might, y abandoning their horses and dispersing among he rocks, evade the attack of the Norman cavalry. Their plan had been defeated by the precipitation of Damian, who, beholding as he thought the plumes nd mantle of the Lady Eveline in the rear of their arty, charged them without considering either the dds of numbers, or the lightness of his own ar-our, which, consisting only of a headpiece and a uff surcoat, offered but imperfect resistance to the Welsh knives and glaives. He was accordingly ounded severely at the onset, and would have been lain, but for the exertions of his few followers, and e fears of the Welsh, that, while thus continuing ie battle in front, they might be assaulted in the ar by the followers of Eveline, whom they must ow suppose were all in arms and motion. They re-eated, therefore, or rather fled, and the attendants f Damian were despatched after them by their fallen aster, with directions to let no consideration induce iem to leave off the chase, until the captive Lady f the Garde Doloureuse was delivered from her avishers.

The outlaws, secure in their knowledge of the aths, and the activity of their small Welsh horses, ade an orderly retreat, with the exception of two r three of their rearguard, cut down by Damian i his furious onset. They shot arrows, from time o time, at the men-at-arms, and laughed at the in-ffectual efforts which these heavy-armed warriors, ith their barbed horses, made to overtake them. ut the scene was changed by the appearance of Vilkin Flammock, on his puissant war-horse, who as beginning to ascend the pass, leading a party onsisting both of foot and horse. The fear of being ntercepted caused the outlaws to have recourse to eir last stratagem, and, abandoning their Welsh ags, they betook themselves to the cliffs, and, by perior activity and dexterity, baffled, generally eaking, the attempts of their pursuers on either and. All of them, however, were not equally for-nate, for two or three fell into the hands of Flam-ock's party; amongst others, the person upon hom Eveline's clothes had been placed, and who ow, to the great disappointment of those who had tached themselves to his pursuit, proved to be, not e lady whom they were emulous to deliver, but a r-haired young Welshman, whose wild looks, and oherent speech, seemed to argue a disturbed imagi-tion. This would not have saved him from imme-ate death, the usual doom of captives taken in ch skirmishes, had not the faint blast of Damian's rn, sounding from above, recalled his own party, d summoned that of Wilkin Flammock to the st; while, in the confusion and hurry of their obey-; the signal, the pity or the contempt of his guards fered the prisoner to escape. They had, indeed, le to learn from him, even had he been disposed to e intelligence, or capable of communicating it. were well assured that their lady had fallen into ambuscade, formed by Dawfyd the One-eyed, a re-ubted freebooter of the period, who had ventured on this hardy enterprise in the hope of obtaining large ransom from the captive Eveline, and all, e used at his extreme insolence and audacity, sted his head and limbs to the eagles and the vens.

These were the particulars which the followers of ammock and of Damian learned by comparing tes with each other, on the incidents of the day. they returned by the Red Pool they were joined Dame Gillian, who, after many exclamations of y at the unexpected liberation of her lady, and many of sorrow at the unexpected disaster of amian, proceeded to inform the men-at-arms, that e merchant, whose hawks had been the original use of these adventures, had been taken prisoner two or three of the Welsh in their retreat, and at she herself and the wounded Rnoul would have ared the same fate, but that they had no horse left mount *her upon, and did not consider old* Raoul as *orth either ransom, or the trouble of killing.* One had, indeed, flung a stone at him as he lay on the hillside, but happily, as his dame said, it fell something short of him—"It was but a little fellow who threw it," she said—"there was a big man amongst them—if he had tried, it's like, by our Lady's grace, he had cast it a thought farther." So saying, the dame gathered herself up, and adjusted her dress for again mounting on horseback.

The wounded Damian was placed on a litter hastily constructed of boughs, and, with the females, was placed in the centre of the little troop, augmented by the rest of the young knight's followers, who began to rejoin his standard. The united body now marched with military order and precaution, and winded through the passes with the attention of men prepared to meet and to repel injury.

CHAPTER XXVI.

What! fair, and young, and faithful too?
A miracle, if this be true.—WALLER.

Rose, by nature one of the most disinterested and affectionate maidens that ever breathed, was the first who, hastily considering the peculiar condition in which her lady was placed, and the marked degree of restraint which had hitherto characterized her intercourse with her youthful guardian, became anxious to know how the wounded knight was to be disposed of; and when she came to Eveline's side for the purpose of asking this important question, her resolution well nigh failed her.

The appearance of Eveline was indeed such as might have made it almost cruelty to intrude upon her any other subject of anxious consideration than those with which her mind had been so lately assailed, and was still occupied. Her countenance was as pale as death could have made it, unless where it was specked with drops of blood; her veil, torn and disordered, was soiled with dust and with gore; her hair, wildly dishevelled, fell in elf-locks on her brow and shoulders, and a single broken and ragged feather, which was all that remained of her head-gear, had been twisted among her tresses and still flowed there, as if in mockery, rather than ornament. Her eyes were fixed on the litter where Damian was deposited, and she rode close beside it, without apparently wasting a thought on any thing, save the danger of him who was extended there.

Rose plainly saw that her lady was under feelings of excitation, which might render it difficult for her to take a wise and prudent view of her own situation. She endeavoured gradually to awaken her to a sense of it. "Dearest lady," said Rose, "will it please you to take my mantle?"

"Torment me not," answered Eveline, with some sharpness in her accent.

"Indeed, my lady," said Dame Gillian, bustling up as one who feared her functions as a mistress of the robes might be interfered with—"indeed, my lady, Rose Flammock speaks truth; and neither your kirtle nor your gown are sitting as they should do; and, to speak truth, they are but barely decent. And so, if Rose will turn herself, and put her horse out of my way," continued the tire-woman, "I will put your dress in better order in the sticking in of a bodkin, than any Fleming of them all could do in twelve hours."

"I care not for my dress," replied Eveline, in the same manner as before.

"Care then for your honour—for your fame," said Rose, riding close to her mistress, and whispering in her ear; "think, and that hastily, how you are to dispose of this wounded young man."

"To the castle," answered Eveline aloud, as if scorning the affectation of secrecy; "lead to the castle, and that straight as you can."

"Why not rather to his own camp, or to Malpas?" said Rose—"dearest lady, believe, it will be for the best."

"Wherefore not—wherefore not?—wherefore, but leave him on the wayside at once to the knife of the Welshman, and the teeth of the wolf?—Once—twice—three times has he been my preserver. Where I go

he shall go; nor will I be in safety myself a moment sooner than I know that he is so."

Rose saw that she could make no impression on her mistress, and her own reflection told her that the wounded man's life might be endangered by a longer transportation than was absolutely necessary. An expedient occurred to her, by which she imagined this objection might be obviated; but it was necessary she should consult her father. She struck her palfrey with her riding-rod, and in a moment her diminutive, though beautiful figure, and her spirited little jennet, were by the side of the gigantic Fleming and his tall black horse, and riding, as it were, in their vast shadow. "My dearest father," said Rose, "the lady intends that Sir Damian be transported to the castle, where it is like he may be a long sojourner;—what think you?—is that wholesome counsel?"

"Wholesome for the youth, surely, Roschen," answered the Fleming, "because he will better escape the risk of a fever."

"True; but is it wise for my lady?" continued Rose.

"Wise enough, if she deal wisely. But wherefore shouldst thou doubt her, Roschen?"

"I know not," said Rose, unwilling to breathe even to her father the fears and doubts which she herself entertained; "but where there are evil tongues, there may be evil rehearsing. Sir Damian and my lady are both very young—Methinks it were better, dearest father, would you offer the shelter of your roof to the wounded knight, in the stead of his being carried to the castle."

"That I shall not, wench," answered the Fleming, hastily—"that I shall not, if I may help. Norman shall not cross my quiet threshold, nor Englishman neither, to mock my quiet thrift, and consume my substance. Thou dost not know them, because thou art ever with thy lady, and hast her good favour; but I know them well; and the best I can get from them is Lazy Flanderkin, and Greedy Flanderkin, and Flemish sot—I thank the saints they cannot say Coward Flanderkin, since Gwenwyn's Welsh uproar."

"I had ever thought, my father," answered Rose, "that your spirit was too calm to regard these base calumnies. Bethink you we are under this lady's banner, and that she has been my loving mistress, and her father was your good lord; to the Constable, too, are you beholden, for enlarged privileges. Money may pay debt, but kindness only can requite kindness; and I forebode that you will never have such an opportunity to do kindness to the houses of Berenger and De Lacy, as by opening the doors of your house to this wounded knight."

"The doors of my house!" answered the Fleming—"do I know how long I may call that, or any house upon earth, my own? Alas, my daughter, we came hither to fly from the rage of the elements, but who knows how soon we may perish by the wrath of men!"

"You speak strangely, my father," said Rose; "It holds not with your solid wisdom to augur such general evil from the rash enterprise of a Welsh outlaw."

"I think not of the One-eyed robber," said Wilkin; "although the increase and audacity of such robbers as Dawfyd is no good sign of a quiet country. But thou, who livest within yonder walls, hearest but little of what passes without, and your estate is less anxious;—you had known nothing of the news from me, unless in case I had found it necessary to remove to another country."

"To remove, my dearest father, from the land where your thrift and industry have gained you an honourable competency?"

"Ay, and where the hunger of wicked men, who envy me the produce of my thrift, may likely bring me to a dishonourable death. There have been tumults among the English rabble in more than one county, and their wrath is directed against those of our nation, as if, we were Jews or heathens, and not better Christians and better men than themselves. They have, at York, Bristol, and elsewhere, sacked the houses of these Flemings, spoiled their goods, misused their families, and murdered themselves.—And why?—except that we have brought among them the skill and the industry which they possessed not; and because wealth, which they would never else have seen in Britain, was the reward of our art and our toil. Roschen, this evil spirit is spreading wider daily. Here we are more safe than elsewhere, because we form a colony of some numbers and strength. But I confide not in our neighbours; and hadst not thou, Rose, been in security, I would long ere this have given up all, and left Britain."

"Given up all, and left Britain!"—The words sounded prodigious in the ears of his daughter, who knew better than any one how successful her father had been in his industry, and how unlikely one of his firm and sedate temper was to abandon known and present advantages for the dread of distant or contingent peril. At length she replied, "If such be your peril, my father, methinks your house and goods cannot have a better protection than the presence of this noble knight. Where lives the man who dare aught of violence against the house which harbours Damian de Lacy?"

"I know not that," said the Fleming, in the same composed and steady, but ominous tone—"May Heaven forgive it me, if it be sin! but I see little save folly in these Crusades, which the priesthood have preached up so successfully. Here has the Constable been absent for nearly three years, and no certain tidings of his life or death, victory or defeat. He marched from hence, as if he meant not to draw bridle or sheathe sword until the Holy Sepulchre was won from the Saracens, yet we can hear with no certainty whether even a hamlet has been taken from the Saracens. In the mean while, the people that are at home grow discontented; their lords, with the better part of their followers, are in Palestine—dead or alive we scarcely know; the people themselves are oppressed and flayed by stewards and deputies, whose yoke is neither so light nor so lightly endured as that of the actual lord. The commons, who naturally hate the knights and gentry, think it no bad time to make some head against them—ay, and there be some of noble blood who would not care to be their leaders, that they may have their share in the spoil; for foreign expeditions and profligate habits have made many poor; and he that is poor will murder his father for money. I hate poor people; and I would the devil had every man who cannot keep himself by the work of his own hand!"

The Fleming concluded, with this characteristic imprecation, a speech which gave Rose a more frightful view of the state of England, than, shut up as she was within the Garde Doloureuse, she had before had an opportunity of learning. "Surely," she said—"surely these violences of which you speak are not to be dreaded by those who live under the banner of De Lacy and of Berenger?"

"Berenger subsists but in name," answered Wilkin Flammock, "and Damian, though a brave youth, hath not his uncle's ascendency of character and authority. His men also complain that they are harassed with the duty of watching for protection of a castle, in itself impregnable, and sufficiently garrisoned, and that they lose all opportunity of honourable enterprise, as they call it—that is, of fight and spoil—in this inactive and inglorious manner of life. They say that Damian the Beardless was a man, but that Damian with the moustache is no better than a woman; and that age, which has darkened his upper lip, hath at the same time blenched his courage.—And they say more, which were but wearisome to tell."

"Nay, but, let me know what they say; let me know it, for Heaven's sake!" answered Rose, "if it concern, as it must concern, my dear lady."

"Even so, Roschen," answered Wilkin. "There are many among the Norman men-at-arms who talk, over their wine cups, how that Damian de Lacy is in love with his uncle's betrothed bride; ay, and that they correspond together by art magic."

"By art magic, indeed, it must be," said Rose, smiling scornfully, "for by no earthly means do they correspond, as I, for one, can bear witness."

"To art magic, accordingly, they impute it," quoth Wilkin Flammock, "that so soon as ever my lady stirs beyond the portal of her castle, De Lacy is in the saddle with a party of his cavalry, though they are positively certain that he has received no messenger, letter, or other ordinary notice of her purpose; nor have they ever, on such occasions, scoured the passes long, ere they have seen or heard of my Lady Eveline's being abroad."

"This has not escaped me," said Rose; "and my lady has expressed herself even displeased at the accuracy which Damian displayed in procuring a knowledge of her motions, as well as at the officious punctuality with which he has attended and guarded them. To-day has, however, shown," she continued, "that his vigilance may serve a good purpose; and as they never met upon these occasions, but continued at such distance as excluded even the possibility of intercourse, methinks they might have escaped the censure of the most suspicious."

"Ay, my daughter Roschen," replied Wilkin, "but it is possible even to drive caution so far as to excite suspicion. Why, say the men-at-arms, should these two observe such constant, yet such guarded intelligence with one another? Why should their approach be so near, and why, yet, should they never meet? If they had been merely the nephew and the uncle's bride, they must have had interviews avowedly and frankly; and, on the other hand, if they be two secret lovers, there is reason to believe that they do find their own private places of meeting, though they have art sufficient to conceal them."

"Every word that you speak, my father," replied the generous Rose, "increases the absolute necessity that you receive this wounded youth into your house. Be the evils you dread ever so great, yet, may you rely upon it, that they cannot be augmented by admitting him, with a few of his faithful followers."

"Not one follower," said the Fleming hastily, "not one beef-fed knave of them, save the page that is to tend him, and the doctor that is to attempt his cure."

"But I may offer the shelter of your roof to these three, at least?" answered Rose.

"Do as thou wilt, do as thou wilt," said the doating father; "By my faith, Roschen, it is well for thee thou hast sense and moderation in asking, since I am so foolishly prompt in granting. This is one of your freaks, now, of honour or generosity—but commend me to prudence and honesty.—Ah! Rose, Rose, those who would do what is better than good, sometimes bring about what is worse than bad!—But I think I shall be quit of the trouble for the fear; and that thy mistress, who is, with reverence, something of a damsel-errant, will stand stoutly for the chivalrous privilege of lodging her knight in her own bower, and tending him in person."

The Fleming prophesied true. Rose had no sooner made the proposal to Eveline, that the wounded Damian should be left at her father's house for his recovery, than her mistress briefly and positively rejected the proposal. "He has been my preserver," she said, "and if there be one being left for whom the gates of the Garde Dolourcuse should of themselves fly open, it is to Damian de Lacy. Nay, damsel, look not upon me with that suspicious and yet sorrowful countenance—they that are beyond disguise, my girl, contemn suspicion—It is to God and Our Lady that I must answer, and to them my bosom lies open!"

They proceeded in silence to the castle gate, when the Lady Eveline issued her orders that her Guardian, as she emphatically termed Damian, should be lodged in her father's apartment; and, with the prudence of more advanced age she gave the necessary directions for the reception and accommodation of his followers, and the arrangements which such an accession of guests required in the fortress. All this she did with the utmost composure and presence of mind, even before she altered or arranged her own disordered dress.

Another step still remained to be taken. She hastened to the Chapel of the Virgin, and prostrating herself before her divine protectress, returned thanks for her second deliverance, and implored her guidance and direction, and, through her intercession, that of Almighty God, for the disposal and regulation of her conduct. "Thou knowest," she said, "that from no confidence in my own strength, have I thrust myself into danger. O make me strong where I am most weak—Let not my gratitude and my compassion be a snare to me; and while I strive to discharge the duties which thankfulness imposes on me, save me from the evil tongues of men—and save—O save me from the insidious devices of my own heart!"

She then told her rosary with devout fervour, and, retiring from the chapel to her own apartment, summoned her women to adjust her dress, and remove the external appearance of the violence to which she had been so lately subjected.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Julia. ——Gentle sir,
You are our captive—but we'll use you so,
That you shall think your prison-joys may match
Whate'er your liberty hath known of pleasure.
Roderick. No, fairest, we have trifled here too long;
And, lingering to see your roses blossom,
I've let my laurels wither.—*Old Play.*

ARRAYED in garments of a mourning colour, and of a fashion more matronly than perhaps altogether befitted her youth—plain to an extremity, and devoid of all ornament, save her rosary—Eveline now performed the duty of waiting upon her wounded deliverer; a duty which the etiquette of the time not only permitted but peremptorily enjoined. She was attended by Rose and Dame Gillian. Margery, whose element was a sick-chamber, had been already despatched to that of the young knight, to attend to whatever his condition might require.

Eveline entered the room with a light step, as if unwilling to disturb the patient. She paused at the door, and cast her eyes around her. It had been her father's chamber; nor had she entered it since his violent death. Around the walls hung a part of his armour and weapons, with hawking-gloves, hunting-poles, and other instruments of silvan sport. These relics brought as it were in living form before her, the stately presence of old Sir Raymond. "Frown not, my father,"—her lips formed the words, though her voice did not utter them—"frown not—Eveline will never be unworthy of thee."

Father Aldrovand, and Amelot, the page of Damian, were seated by the bedside. They rose as Lady Eveline entered; and the first, who meddled a little with the healing art, said to Eveline, "that the knight had slumbered for some time, and was now about to awake."

Amelot at the same time came forward, and in a hasty and low voice, begged that the chamber might be kept quiet, and the spectators requested to retire. "My lord," he said, "ever since his illness at Gloucester, is apt to speak something wildly as he awakes from sleep, and will be displeased with me should I permit any one to be near him."

Eveline accordingly caused her women and the monk to retire into the anteroom, while she herself remained standing by the door-communication which connected the apartments, and heard Damian mention her name as he turned himself painfully on his couch. "Is she safe and unharmed?" was his first question, and it was asked with an eagerness which intimated how far it preceded all other considerations.—When Amelot replied in the affirmative, he sighed, as one whose bosom is relieved from some weighty load, and, in a less animated voice, asked of the page where they were. "This apartment," he said, "with its furniture, are all strange to me."

"My dear master," said Amelot, "you are at present too weak to ask questions and receive explanations."

"Be I where I will," said Damian, as if recovering his recollection, "I am not in the place where my duty calls me. Tell my trumpets to sound to horse—to horse, and let Ralph Gemil carry my banner. To horse—to horse!—we have not a moment to lose."

The wounded knight made some effort, [illegible]

which, in his state of weakness, Amelot was easily able to frustrate. "Thou art right," he said, as he sunk back into his reclining posture—"thou art right—I am weak—but why should strength remain when honour is lost?"

The unhappy young man covered his face with his hands, and groaned in agony, which seemed more that of the mind than of the body. Lady Eveline approached his bedside with unassured steps, fearing she knew not what, yet earnest to testify the interest which she felt in the distresses of the sufferer. Damian looked up and beheld her, and again hid his face with his hands.

"What means this strange passion, Sir Knight?" said Eveline, with a voice which, at first weak and trembling, gradually obtained steadiness and composure. "Ought it to grieve you so much, sworn as you are to the duties of chivalry, that Heaven hath twice made you its instrument to save the unfortunate Eveline Berenger?"

"O no, no!" he exclaimed with rapidity; "since you are saved, all is well—but time presses—it is necessary I should presently depart—nowhere ought I now to tarry—least of all, within this castle—Once more, Amelot, let them get to horse!"

"Nay, my good lord," said the damsel, "this must not be. As your ward, I cannot let my guardian part thus suddenly—as a physician, I cannot allow my patient to destroy himself.—It is impossible that you can brook the saddle."

"A litter—a bier—a cart, to drag forth the dishonoured knight and traitor—all were too good for me—a coffin were best of all!—But see, Amelot, that it be framed like that of the meanest churl—no spurs displayed on the pall—no shield with the ancient coat of the De Lacys—no helmet with their knightly crest must deck the hearse of him whose name is dishonoured!"

"Is his brain unsettled?" said Eveline, looking with terror from the wounded man to his attendant; "or is there some dreadful mystery in these broken words?—If so, speak it forth; and if it may be amended by life or goods, my deliverer will sustain no wrong."

Amelot regarded her with a dejected and melancholy air, shook his head, and looked down on his master with a countenance which seemed to express, that the questions which she asked could not be prudently answered in Sir Damian's presence. The Lady Eveline, observing this gesture, stepped back into the outer apartment, and made Amelot a sign to follow her. He obeyed, after a glance at his master, who remained in the same disconsolate posture as formerly, with his hands crossed over his eyes, like one who wished to exclude the light, and all which the light made visible.

When Amelot was in the wardrobe, Eveline, making signs to her attendants to keep at such distance as the room permitted, questioned him closely on the cause of his master's desperate expression of sorrow and remorse. "Thou knowest," she said, "that I am bound to succour thy lord, if I may, both from gratitude, as one whom he hath served to the peril of his life—and also from kinsmanship. Tell me, therefore, in what case he stands, that I may help him if I can—that is," she added, her pale cheeks deeply colouring, "if the cause of his distress be fitting for me to hear."

The page bowed low, yet showed such embarrassment when he began to speak, as produced a corresponding degree of confusion in the Lady Eveline, who, nevertheless, urged him as before "to speak without scruple or delay—so that the tenor of his discourse was fitting for her ears."

"Believe me, noble lady," said Amelot, "your commands had been instantly obeyed, but that I fear my master's displeasure if I talk of his affairs without his warrant; nevertheless, on your command, whom I know he honours above all earthly beings, I will speak thus far, that, if his life be safe from the wounds he has received, his honour and worship may be in great danger, if it please not Heaven to send a remedy."

"Speak on," said Eveline; "and be assured you *will do Sir Damian de Lacy no* prejudice by the con*fidence you may rest in me."*

"I well believe it, lady," said the page. "Know, then, if it be not already known to you, that the clowns and rabble, who have taken arms against the nobles in the west, pretend to be favoured in their insurrection, not only by Randal Lacy, but by my master, Sir Damian."

"They lie that dare charge him with such foul treason to his own blood, as well as to his sovereign!" replied Eveline.

"Well do I believe they lie," said Amelot; "but this hinders not their falsehoods from being believed by those who know him less inwardly. More than one runaway from our troop have joined this rabblement, and that gives some credit to the scandal. And then they say—they say—that—in short, that my master longs to possess the lands in his proper right which he occupies as his uncle's administrator; and that if the old Constable—I crave your pardon, madam—should return from Palestine, he should find it difficult to obtain possession of his own again."

"The sordid wretches judge of others by their own base minds, and conceive those temptations too powerful for men of worth, which they are themselves conscious they would be unable to resist. But are the insurgents then so insolent and so powerful? We have heard of their violences, but only as if it had been some popular tumult."

"We had notice last night that they have drawn together in great force, and besieged or blockaded Wild Wenlock, with his men-at-arms, in a village about ten miles hence. He hath sent to my master, as his kinsman and companion-at-arms, to come to his assistance. We were on horseback this morning to march to the rescue—when"——

He paused, and seemed unwilling to proceed. Eveline caught at the word. "When ye heard of my danger?" she said. "I would ye had rather heard of my death!"

"Surely, noble lady," said the page, with his eyes fixed on the ground, "nothing but so strong a cause could have made my master halt his troop, and carry the better part of them to the Welsh mountains, when his countryman's distress, and the commands of the King's Lieutenant, so peremptorily demanded his presence elsewhere."

"I knew it," she said—"I knew I was born to be his destruction! yet methinks this is worse than I dreamed of, when the worst was in my thoughts. I feared to occasion his death, not his loss of fame. For God's sake, young Amelot, do what thou canst and that without loss of time! Get thee straightway to horse, and join to thy own men as many as thou canst gather of mine—Go—ride, my brave youth—show thy master's banner, and let them see that his forces and his heart are with them, though his person be absent. Haste, haste, for the time is precious!"

"But the safety of this castle—But your own safety?" said the page. "God knows how willingly I would do aught to save his fame! But I know my master's mood; and were you to suffer by my leaving the Garde Doloureuse, even although I were to save him lands, life, and honour, by my doing so, I should be more like to taste of his dagger, than of his thanks or bounty."

"Go, nevertheless, dear Amelot," said she; "gather what force thou canst make, and begone."

"You spur a willing horse, madam," said the page, springing to his feet; "and in the condition of my master, I see nothing better than that his banner should be displayed against these churls."

"To arms, then," said Eveline, hastily; "to arms, and win thy spurs. Bring me assurance that thy master's honour is safe, and I will myself buckle them on thy heels. Here—take this blessed rosary—bind it on thy crest, and be the thought of the Virgin of the Garde Doloureuse, that never failed a votary, strong with thee in the hour of conflict."

She had scarcely ended, ere Amelot flew from her presence, and summoning together such horse as he could assemble, both of his master's, and of those belonging to the castle, there were soon forty cavaliers mounted in the court-yard.

But although the page was thus far readily obeyed,

yet when the soldiers heard they were to go forth on a dangerous expedition, with no more experienced general than a youth of fifteen, they showed a decided reluctance to move from the castle. The old soldiers of De Lacy said, Damian himself was almost too youthful to command them, and had no right to delegate his authority to a mere boy; while the followers of Berenger said, their mistress might be satisfied with her deliverance of the morning, without trying farther dangerous conclusions by diminishing the garrison of her castle—"The times," they said, "were stormy, and it was wisest to keep a stone roof over their heads."

The more the soldiers communicated their ideas and apprehensions to each other, the stronger their disinclination to the undertaking become; and when Amelot, who, page-like, had gone to see that his own horse was accoutred and brought forth, returned to the castle-yard, he found them standing confusedly together, some mounted, some on foot, all men speaking loud, and all in a state of disorder. Ralph Genvil a veteran whose face was seamed with many a scar, and who had long followed the trade of a soldier of fortune, stood apart from the rest, holding his horse's bridle in one hand, and in the other the banner-spear, around which the banner of De Lacy was still folded.

"What means this, Genvil?" said the page, angrily. "Why do you not mount your horse and display the banner? and what occasions all this confusion?"

"Truly, Sir Page," said Genvil, composedly, "I am not in my saddle, because I have some regard for this old silken rag, which I have borne to honour in my time, and I will not willingly carry it where men are unwilling to follow and defend it."

"No march—no sally—no lifting of banner to-day!" cried the soldiers, by way of burden to the banner-man's discourse.

"How now, cowards? do you mutiny?" said Amelot, laying his hand on his sword.

"Menace not me, Sir Boy," said Genvil; "nor shake your sword my way. I tell thee, Amelot, were my weapon to cross with yours, never flail sent abroad more chaff than I would make splinters of your hatched and gilded toasting-iron. Look you, there are gray-bearded men here that care not to be led about on any boy's humour. For me, I stand little upon that; and I care not whether one boy or another commands me. But I am the Lacy's man for the time; and I am not sure that, in marching to the aid of this Wild Wenlock, we shall do an errand the Lacy will thank us for. Why led he us not thither in the morning, when we were commanded off into the mountains?"

"You well know the cause," said the page.

"Yes, we do know the cause; or, if we do not, we can guess it," answered the banner-man, with a horse-laugh, which was echoed by several of his companions.

"I will cram the calumny down thy false throat, Genvil!" said the page; and, drawing his sword, threw himself headlong on the banner-man, without considering their great difference of strength.

Genvil was contended to foil his attack by one, and, as it seemed, a slight movement of his gigantic arm, with which he forced the page aside, parrying, at the same time, his blow with the standard-spear.

There was another loud laugh, and Amelot, feeling all his efforts baffled, threw his sword from him, and, weeping in pride and indignation, hastened back to tell the Lady Eveline of his bad success. "All," he said, "is lost—the cowardly villains have mutinied, and will not move; and the blame of their sloth and faintheartedness will be laid on my dear master!"

"That shall never be," said Eveline, "should I die to prevent it.—Follow me, Amelot."

She hastily threw a scarlet scarf over her dark garments, and hastened down to the court-yard, followed by Gillian, assuming, as she went, various attitudes and actions, expressing astonishment and pity, and by Rose, carefully suppressing all appearance of the feelings which she really entertained.

Eveline entered *the castle-court, with* the kindling *eye and glowing brow which her ancestors* were wont to bear in danger and extremity, when their soul was arming to meet the storm, and displayed in their mien and looks high command and contempt of danger. She seemed at the moment taller than her usual size; and it was with a voice distinct and clearly heard, though not exceeding the delicacy of feminine tone, that the mutineers heard her address them "How is this, my masters?" she said; and as she spoke, the bulky forms of the armed soldiers seemed to draw closer together, as if to escape her individual censure. It was like a group of heavy water-fowl when they close to avoid the stoop of the slight and beautiful merlin, dreading the superiority of its nature and breeding over their own inert physical strength—"How now?" again she demanded of them; "is it a time, think ye, to mutiny, when your lord is absent, and his nephew and lieutenant lies stretched on a bed of sickness?—Is it thus you keep your oaths?—Thus ye merit your leader's bounty?—Shame on ye, craven hounds, that quail and give back the instant you lose sight of the huntsman!"

There was a pause—the soldiers looked on each other, and then again on Eveline, as if ashamed alike to hold out in their mutiny, or to return to their usual discipline.

"I see how it is, my brave friends—ye lack a leader here; but stay not for that—I will guide you myself, and, woman as I am, there need not a man of you fear disgrace where a Berenger commands.—Trap my palfrey with a steel saddle, she said, "and that instantly." She snatched from the ground the page's light headpiece, and threw it over her hair, caught up his drawn sword, and went on. "Here I promise you my countenance and guidance—this gentleman," she pointed to Genvil, "shall supply my lack of military skill. He looks like a man that hath seen many a day of battle, and can well teach a young leader her devoir."

"Certes," said the old soldier, smiling in spite o himself, and shaking his head at the same time, "many a battle have I seen, but never under such a commander."

"Nevertheless," said Eveline, seeing how the eyes of the rest turned on Genvil, "you do not—cannot—will not—refuse to follow me? You do not as a soldier, for my weak voice supplies your captain's orders—you cannot as a gentleman, for a lady, a forlorn and distressed female, asks you a boon—you will not as an Englishman, for your country, your sword, and your comrades are in danger. Unfurl your banner, then, and march."

"I would do so, upon my soul, fair lady," answered Genvil, as if preparing to unfold the banner—"And Amelot might lead us well enough, with advantage of some lessons from me. But I wot not whether you are sending us on the right road."

"Surely, surely," said Eveline, earnestly, "it must be the right road which conducts you to the relief of Wenlock and his followers, besieged by the insurgent boors."

"I know not," said Genvil, still hesitating. "Our leader here, said Damian de Lacy, protects the commons—men say he befriends them—and I know he quarrelled with Wild Wenlock once for some petty wrong he did to the miller's wife at Twyford. We should be finely off, when our fiery young leader is on foot again, if he should find we had been fighting against the side he favoured."

"Assure yourself," said the maiden, anxiously, "the more he would protect the commons against oppression, the more he would put them down when oppressing others. Mount and ride—save Wenlock and his men—there is life and death in every moment. I will warrant, with my life and lands, that whatsoever you do will be held good service to De Lacy. Come, then, follow me."

"None surely can know sir Damian's purpose better than you, fair damsel," answered Genvil; "nay, for that matter, you can make him change as ye list—And so I will march with the men, and we will aid Wenlock, if it is yet time, as I trust it may; for he is a rugged wolf, and when he turns to bay, will cost the boors blood enough ere they sound a mort. But do you remain within the castle, fair lady, and trust to

Amelot and me.—Come, Sir Page, assume the command, since so it must be; though, by my faith, it is pity to take the head-piece from that pretty head, and the sword from that pretty hand—By Saint George! to see them there is a credit to the soldier's profession."

The lady accordingly surrendered the weapons to Amelot, exhorting him in few words to forget the offence he had received, and do his devoir manfully. Mean while Genvil slowly unrolled the pennon—then shook it abroad, and without putting his foot in the stirrup, aided himself a little with resting on the spear, and threw himself into the saddle, heavily armed as he was. "We are ready now, an it like your juvenility," said he to Amelot; and then while the page was putting the band into order, he whispered to his nearest comrade, "Methinks, instead of this old swallows's tail,* we should muster rarely under a broidered petticoat—a furbelowed petticoat has no fellow in my mind.—Look you, Stephen Pontoys—I can forgive Damian now for forgetting his uncle and his own credit, about this wench; for, by my faith, she is one I could have doated to death upon *par amours*. Ah! evil luck be the women's portion!—they govern us at every turn, Stephen, and at every age. When they are young, they bribe us with fair looks and sugared words, sweet kisses and love tokens; and when they are of middle age, they work us to their will by presents and courtesies, red wine and red gold; and when they are old, we are fain to run their errands to get out of sight of their old leathern visages. Well, old De Lacy should have staid at home and watched his falcon. But it is all one to us, Stephen, and we may make some vantage to-day, for these boors have plundered more than one castle."

"Ay, ay," answered Pontoys, "the boor to the booty, and the banner-man to the boor, a right pithy proverb. But, prithee, canst thou say why his pageship leads us not forward yet?"

"Pshaw!" answered Genvil, "the shake I gave him has addled his brains—or perchance he has not swallowed all his tears yet; sloth it is not, for 'tis a forward cockeril for his years, wherever honour is to be won.—See, they now begin to move.—Well, it is a singular thing this gentle blood. Stephen; for here is a child whom I but now baffled like a schoolboy, must lead us gray-beards where we may get our heads broken, and that at the command of a light lady."

"I warrant Sir Damian is secretary to my pretty lady," answered Stephen Pontoys, "as this springald Amelot is to Sir Damian; and so we poor men must obey and keep our mouths shut."

"But our eyes open, Stephen Pontoys—forget not that."

They were by this time out of the gates of the castle, and upon the road leading to the village, in watch, as they understood by the intelligence of the morning, Wenlock was besieged or blockaded by a greatly superior number of the insurgent commons. Amelot rode at the head of the troop, still embarrassed by the affront which he had received in presence of the soldiers, and lost in meditating how he was to eke out that deficiency of experience, which on former occasions had been supplied by the counsels of the banner-man, with whom he was ashamed to seek a reconciliation. But Genvil was not of a nature absolutely sullen, though a habitual grumbler. He rode up to the page, and having made his obeisance, respectfully asked him whether it were not well that some one or two of their number pricked forward upon good horses to learn how it stood with Wenlock, and whether they should be able to come up in time to his assistance.

"Methinks, banner-man," answered Amelot, "you should take the ruling of the troop, since you know so fittingly what should be done. You may be the fitter to command, because—But I will not upbraid you."

"Because I know so ill how to obey," replied Genvil; "that is what you would say; and, by my faith, I cannot deny but there may be some truth in it. But is it not peevish in thee to let a fair expedition be unwisely conducted, because of a foolish word or a sudden action?—Come, let it be peace with us."

"With all my heart," answered Amelot; "and I will send out an advanced party upon the adventure, as thou hast advised me."

"Let it be old Stephen Pontoys and two of the Chester spears—he is as wily as an old fox, and neither hope nor fear will draw him a hairbreadth farther than judgment warrants."

Amelot eagerly embraced the hint, and, at his command, Pontoys and two lances darted forward to reconnoitre the road before them, and inquire into the condition of those whom they were advancing to succour. "And now that we are on the old terms, Sir Page," said the banner-man, "tell me, if thou canst, doth not yonder fair lady love our handsome knight *par amours*?"

"It is a false calumny," said Amelot, indignantly; "betrothed as she is to his uncle, I am convinced she would rather die than have such a thought, and so would our master. I have noted this heretical belief in thee before now, Genvil, and I have prayed thee to check it. You know the thing cannot be, for you know they have scarce ever met."

"How should I know that," said Genvil, "or thou either? Watch them ever so close—much water slides past the mill that Hob Miller never wots of. They do correspond; that, at least, thou canst not deny?"

"I do deny it," said Amelot, "as I deny all that can touch their honour."

"Then how, in Heaven's name, comes he by such perfect knowledge of her motions, as he has displayed no longer since than the morning?"

"How should I tell?" answered the page; "there be such things, surely, as saints and good angels, and if there be one on earth deserves their protection, it is Dame Eveline Berenger."

"Well said, Master Counsel-keeper," replied Genvil, laughing; "but that will hardly pass on an old trooper.—Saints and angels, quotha! most saintlike doings, I warrant you."

The page was about to continue his angry vindication, when Stephen Pontoys and his followers returned upon the spur. "Wenlock holds out bravely," he exclaimed, "though he is fully girded in with these boors. The large crossbows are doing good service; and I little doubt his making his place good till we come up, if it please you to ride something sharply. They have assailed the barriers, and were close up to them even now, but were driven back with small success."

The party were now put in as rapid motion as might consist with order, and soon reached the top of a small eminence, beneath which lay the village where Wenlock was making his defence. The air rung with the cries and shouts of the insurgents, who, numerous as bees, and possessed of that dogged spirit of courage so peculiar to the English, thronged like ants to the barriers, and endeavoured to break down the palisades, or to climb over them, in despite of the showers of stones and arrows from within, by which they suffered great loss, as well as by the swords and battle-axes of the men-at-arms, whenever they came to hand-blows.

"We are in time, we ere in time," said Amelot, dropping the reins of his bridle, and joyfully clapping his hands; "shake thy banner abroad, Genvil—give Wenlock and his fellows a fair view of it.—Comrades, halt—breathe your horses for a moment.—Hark hither, Genvil—If we descend by yonder broad pathway into the meadow where the cattle are"——

"Bravo, my young falcon!" replied Genvil, whose love of battle, like that of the war-horse of Job, kindled at the sight of the spears, and at the sound of the trumpet; "we shall have then an easy field for a charge on yonder knaves."

"What a thick black cloud the villains make!" said Amelot; "but we will let daylight through it with our lances—See, Genvil, the defenders hoist a signal to show they have seen us."

* The pennon of a knight was, in shape, a long streamer, and forked like a swallow's tail; the banner of a Banneret was square, and was formed into the other by cutting the ends from *the pennon. It was thus* the *ceremony was performed on the pennon of John Chandos, by the Black Prince, before the battle of Najara.*

o us?" exclaimed Genvil. "By Hea-
iite flag—a signal of surrender!"
! they cannot dream of it, when we are
their succour," replied Amelot; when
melancholy notes from the trumpets
d, with a thundering and tumultuous
from the besiegers, rendered the fact

es Wenlock's pennon," said Genvil,
rls enter the barricades on all points.—
a cowardice or treachery—What is to be

on them," said Amelot, "retake the
ver the prisoners."
indeed!" answered the banner-man—
e's length by my counsel—we should
ail in our corslets counted with arrow-
re got down the hill in the face of such
and the place to storm afterwards—it
sanity.
a little forward along with me," said
erhaps we may find some path in which
end unperceived."
y they rode forward a little way to recon-
e of the hill, the page still urging the
descending it unperceived amid the con-
Genvil answered impatiently, "Un-
ou are already perceived—here comes a
ng towards us as fast as his beast may

e, the rider came up to them. He was
-set peasant, in an ordinary frieze jacket
h a blue cap on his head, which he had
able to pull over a shock head of red
med in arms to repel the covering. The
were bloody, and he carried at his sad-
en bag, which was also stained with
be of Damian de Lacy's company, be
this rude messenger: and, when they
the affirmative, he proceeded with the
courtesy, "Hob Miller of Twyford com-
to Damian de Lacy, and, knowing his
mend disorders in the commonwealth,
ends him toll of the grist which he hath
d with that he took from the bag a hu-
ad tendered it to Amelot.
ilock's head," said Genvil—"how his

stare after no more wenches now," said
have cured him of caterwauling."
aid Amelot, stepping back in disgust and

nyself," replied the peasant; "I am
ciary of the Commons, for lack of a

iangman, thou wouldst say," replied

iat thou list," replied the peasant. "Tru-
s men in state to give good example. I'll
do that I am not ready to do myself.
to hang a man, as to say hang him; we
splitting of offices in this new world,
pily set up in old England."
" said Amelot, "take back thy bloody
n that sent thee! Hadst thou not come
ice, I had pinned thee to the earth with
ut, be assured, your cruelty shall be fear-
d.—Come, Genvil, let us to our men;
arther use in abiding here."
who had expected a very different recep-
laring after them for a few moments, then
bloody trophy in the wallet, and rode
who sent him.
ces of meddling with men's *amourettes*,"
; "Sir Damian would needs brawl with
out his dealings with this miller's daugh-
see they account him a favourer of their
t will be well if others do not take up the
n.—I wish we were rid of the trouble
suspicions may bring upon us—ay, were
e of my best horse—I am like to lose him
with the day's hard service, and I would
vorst it is *to cost us.*"
returned, wearied and discomforted, to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and not without losing several of their number by the way, some straggling owing to the weariness of their horses, and others taking the opportunity of desertion, in order to join with the bands of insurgents and plunderers, who had now gathered together in different quarters, and were augmented by recruits from the dissolute soldiery.

Amelot, on his return to the castle, found that the state of his master was still very precarious, and that the Lady Eveline, though much exhausted, had not yet retired to rest, but was awaiting his return with impatience. He was introduced to her accordingly, and, with a heavy heart, mentioned the ineffectual event of his expedition.

"Now the saints have pity upon us!" said the Lady Eveline; "for it seems as if a plague or pest attached to me, and extended itself to all who interest themselves in my welfare. From the moment they do so, their very virtues become snares to them; and what would, in every other case, recommend them to honour, is turned to destruction to the friends of Eveline Berenger."

"Fear not, fair lady," said Amelot; "there are still men enough in my master's camp to put down these disturbers of the public peace. I will but abide to receive his instructions, and will hence to-morrow, and draw out a force to restore quiet in this part of the country."

"Alas! you know not yet the worst of it," replied Eveline. "Since you went hence, we have received certain notice, that when the soldiers at Sir Damian's camp heard of the accident which he this morning met with, already discontented with the inactive life which they had of late led, and dispirited by the hurts and reported death of their leader, they have altogether broken up and dispersed their forces.—Yet be of good courage, Amelot," she said; "this house is strong enough to bear out a worse tempest than any that is likely to be poured on it; and if all men desert your master in wounds and affliction, it becomes yet more the part of Eveline Berenger to shelter and protect her deliverer."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Let our proud trumpet shake their castle wall,
Menacing death and ruin.—OTWAY.

THE evil news with which the last chapter concluded were necessarily told to Damian de Lacy, as the person whom they chiefly concerned; and Lady Eveline herself undertook the task of communicating them, mingling what she said with tears, and again interrupting those tears to suggest topics of hope and comfort, which carried no consolation to her own bosom.

The wounded knight continued with his face turned towards her, listening to the disastrous tidings, as one who was no otherwise affected by them, than as they regarded her who told the story. When she had done speaking, he continued as in a reverie, with his eyes so intently fixed upon her, that she rose up, with the purpose of withdrawing from looks by which she felt herself embarrassed. He hastened to speak, that he might prevent her departure. "All that you have said, fair lady," he replied, "had been enough, if told by another, to have broken my heart; for it tells me that the power and honour of my house, so solemnly committed to my charge, have been blasted in my misfortunes. But when I look upon you, and hear your voice, I forget every thing, saving that you have been rescued, and are here in honour and safety. Let me therefore pray of your goodness that I may be removed from the castle which holds you, and sent elsewhere. I am in no shape worthy of your farther care, since I have no longer the swords of others at my disposal, and am totally unable for the present to draw my own."

"And if you are generous enough to think of me in your own misfortunes, noble knight," answered Eveline, "can you suppose that I forget wherefore, and in whose rescue, these wounds were incurred? No, Damian, speak not of removal—while there is a turret

of the Garde Doloureuse standing, within that turret shall you find shelter and protection. Such, I am well assured, would be the pleasure of your uncle, were he here in person."

It seemed as if a sudden pang of his wound had seized upon Damian; for, repeating the words "My uncle!" he writhed himself round, and averted his face from Eveline; then again composing himself, replied, "Alas! knew my uncle how ill I have obeyed his precepts, instead of sheltering me within this house, he would command me to be flung from the battlements!"

"Fear not his displeasure," said Eveline, again preparing to withdraw; "but endeavour, by the composure of your spirit, to aid the healing of your wounds; when, I doubt not, you will be able again to establish good order in the Constable's jurisdiction, long before his return."

She coloured as she pronounced the last words, and hastily left the apartment. When she was in her own chamber, she dismissed her other attendants, and retained Rose. "What dost thou think of these things, my wise maiden and monitress?" said she.

"I would," replied Rose, "either that this young knight had never entered this castle—or, that being here, he could presently leave it—or, that he could honourably remain here for ever."

"What dost thou mean by remaining here for ever?" said Eveline, sharply and hastily.

"Let me answer that question with another—How long has the Constable of Chester been absent from England?"

"Three years come Saint Clement's day," said Eveline; "and what of that?"

"Nay, nothing; but"——

"But what?—I command you to speak out."

"A few weeks will place your hand at your own disposal."

"And think you, Rose," said Eveline, rising with dignity, "that there are no bonds save those which are drawn by the scribe's pen?—We know little of the Constable's adventures; but we know enough to show that his towering hopes have fallen, and his sword and courage proved too weak to change the fortunes of the Sultan Saladin. Suppose him returning some brief time hence, as we have seen so many crusaders regain their homes, poor and broken in health—suppose that he finds his lands laid waste, and his followers dispersed, by the consequence of their late misfortunes, how would it sound should he also find that his betrothed bride had wedded and endowed with her substance the nephew whom he most trusted!—Dost thou think such an engagement is like a Lombard's mortgage, which must be redeemed on the very day, else forfeiture is sure to be awarded?"

"I cannot tell, madam," replied Rose; "but they that keep their convenant to the letter, are, in my country, held bound to no more?"

"That is a Flemish fashion, Rose," said her mistress; "but the honour of a Norman is not satisfied with an observance so limited. What! wouldst thou have my honour, my affections, my duty, all that is most valuable to a woman, depend on the same progress of the kalendar which a usurer watches for the purpose of seizing on a forfeited pledge?—Am I such a mere commodity, that I must belong to one man if he claims me before Michaelmas, to another if he comes afterwards?—No, Rose; I did not thus interpret my engagement, sanctioned as it was by the special providence of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse."

"It is a feeling worthy of you, my dearest lady," answered the attendant; "yet you are so young—so beset with perils—so much exposed to calumny—that I, at least, looking forward to the time when you may have a legal companion and protector, see it as an extrication from much doubt and danger."

"Do not think of it, Rose," answered Eveline; "do not liken your mistress to those provident dames, who, while one husband yet lives, though in old age *or weak health*, are prudently engaged in plotting for *another*."

"*Enough, my dearest lady*," said Rose;—"yet not so. Permit me one word more. Since you are determined not to avail yourself of your freedom, even when the fatal period of your engagement is expired, why suffer this young man to share our solitude?—He is surely well enough to be removed to some other place of security. Let us resume our former sequestered mode of life, until Providence send us some better or more certain prospects."

Eveline sighed—looked down—then looking upwards, once more had opened her lips to express her willingness to enforce so reasonable an arrangement, but for Damian's recent wounds, and the distracted state of the country, when she was interrupted by the shrill sound of trumpets blown before the gate of the castle; and Raoul, with anxiety on his brow, came limping to inform his lady, that a knight, attended by a pursuivant-at-arms, in the royal livery, with a strong guard, was in front of the castle, and demanded admittance in the name of the King.

Eveline paused a moment ere she replied, "Not even to the King's order shall the castle of my ancestors be opened, until we are well assured of the person by whom, and the purpose for which, it is demanded. We will ourself to the gate, and learn the meaning of this summons.—My veil, Rose; and call my women.—Again that trumpet sounds! Alas! it rings like a signal to death and ruin."

The prophetic apprehensions of Eveline were not false; for scarce had she reached the door of the apartment, when she was met by the page Amelot, in a state of such disordered apprehension as an elève of chivalry was scarce on any occasion permitted to display. "Lady, noble lady," he said, hastily bending his knee to Eveline, "save my dearest master!—You, and you alone, can save him at this extremity."

"I!" said Eveline, in astonishment—"I save him? And from what danger?—God knows how willingly!"

There she stopped short, as if afraid to trust herself with expressing what rose to her lips.

"Guy Monthermer, lady, is at the gate, with a pursuivant and the royal banner. The hereditary enemy of the House of Lucy, thus accompanied, comes hither for no good—the extent of the evil I know not, but for evil he comes. My master slew his nephew at the field of Malpas, and therefore"—— He was here interrupted by another flourish of trumpets, which rung, as if in shrill impatience, through the vaults of the ancient fortress.

The Lady Eveline hasted to the gate, and found that the wardens, and others who attended there, were looking on each other with doubtful and alarmed countenances, which they turned upon her at her arrival, as if to seek from their mistress the comfort and the courage which they could not communicate to each other. Without the gate mounted, and in complete armour, was an elderly and stately knight, whose raised visor and beaver depressed, showed a beard already grizzled. Beside him appeared the pursuivant on horseback, the royal arms embroidered on his heraldic dress of office, and all the importance of offended consequence on his countenance, which was shaded by his barret-cap and triple plume. They were attended by a body of about fifty soldiers, arranged under the guidon of England.

When the Lady Eveline appeared at the barrier, the knight, after a slight reverence, which seemed more in formal courtesy than in kindness, demanded if he saw the daughter of Ramond Berenger. "And is it," he continued, when he had received an answer in the affirmative, "before the castle of that approved and favoured servant of the House of Anjou, that King Henry's trumpets have thrice sounded, without obtaining an entrance for those who are honoured with their Sovereign's command?"

"My condition," answered Eveline, "must excuse my caution. I am a lone maiden, residing in a frontier fortress. I may admit no one without inquiring his purpose and being assured that his entrance consists with the safety of the place, and mine own honour."

"Since your are so punctilious, lady," replied Monthermer, "know, that in the present distracted state of the country, it is his Grace the King's

pleasure to place within your walls a body of men-at-arms, sufficient to guard this important castle, both from the insurgent peasants who burn and slay, and from the Welsh, who, it must be expected, will, according to their wont in time of disturbance, make incursions on the frontiers. Undo your gates, then Lady of Berenger, and suffer his Grace's forces to enter the castle."

"Sir Knight," answered the lady "this castle, like every other fortress in England, is the King's by law; but by law also I am the keeper and defender of it; and it is the tenure by which my ancestors held these lands. I have men enough to maintain the Garde Doloureuse in my time, as my father, and my grandfather before him, defended it in theirs. The King is gracious to send me succours, but I need not the aid of hirelings; neither do I think it safe to admit such into my castle, who may, in this lawless time, make themselves masters of it for other than its lawful mistress."

"Lady," replied the old warrior, "his grace is not ignorant of the motives which produce a contumacy like this. It is not any apprehension for the royal forces which influences you, a royal vassal, in this refractory conduct. I might proceed upon your refusal to proclaim you a traitor to the Crown, but the King remembers the services of your father. Know, then, we are not ignorant that Damian de Lacy, accused of instigating and heading this insurrection, of deserting his duty in the field, and abandoning a noble comrade to the sword of the brutal peasants, has found shelter under this roof with little credit to your loyalty as a vassal, or your conduct as a high-born maiden. Deliver him up to us, and I will draw off these men-at-arms, and dispense, though I may scarce answer doing so, with the occupation of the castle."

"Guy de Monthermer," answered Eveline, "he that throws a stain on my name, speaks falsely and unworthily; as for Damian de Lacy, he knows how to defend his own fame. This only let me say, that, while he takes his abode in the castle of the betrothed of his kinsman, she delivers him to no one, least of all to his well-known feudal enemy—Drop the portcullis, wardens and let it not be raised without my special order."

The portcullis, as she spoke, fell rattling and clanging to the ground, and Monthermer, in baffled spite, remained excluded from the castle. "Unworthy lady"—he began in passion, then checking himself, said calmly to the pursuivant, "Ye are witness that she hath admitted that the traitor is within that castle—ye are witness that, lawfully summoned, this Eveline Berenger refuses to deliver him up. Do your duty, Sir Pursuivant, as is usual in such cases."

The pursuivant then advanced and proclaimed, in the formal and fatal phrase befitting the occasion, that Eveline Berenger, lawfully summoned, refusing to admit the King's forces into her castle, and to deliver up the body of a false traitor, called Damian de Lacy, had herself incurred the penalty of high treason, and had involved within the same doom all who aided, abetted, or maintained her in holding out the said castle against their allegiance to Henry of Anjou. The trumpets, so soon as the voice of the herald had ceased, confirmed the doom he had pronounced, by a long and ominous peal, startling from their nests the owl and the raven, who replied to it by their ill-boding screams.

The defenders of the castle looked on each other with blank and dejected countenances, while Monthermer, raising aloft his lance, exclaimed, as he turned his horse from the castle gate, "When I next approach the Garde Doloureuse, it will be not merely to intimate, but to execute, the mandate of my Sovereign."

As Eveline stood pensively to behold the retreat of Monthermer and his associates, and to consider what was to be done in this emergency, she heard one of the Flemings, in a low tone, ask an Englishman, who stood beside him, what was the meaning of a traitor.

"One who betrayeth a trust reposed—a betrayer," said the interpreter.

The phrase which he used recalled to Eveline's memory her boding vision or dream. "Alas!" she said, "the vengeance of the fiend is about to be accomplished. Widow'd wife and wedded maid—these epithets have long been mine. Betrothed!—wo's me! it is the key-stone of my destiny. Betrayer I am now denounced, though, thank God, I am clear from the guilt! It only follows that I should be betrayed, and the evil prophecy will be fulfilled to the very letter."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Out on ye, owls;—Nothing but songs of death?
Richard III.

More than three months had elapsed since the event narrated in the last chapter, and it had been the precursor of others of still greater importance, which will evolve themselves in the course of our narrative. But, as we profess to present to the reader not a precise detail of circumstances, according to their order and date, but a series of pictures, endeavouring to exhibit the most striking incidents before the eye or imagination of those whom it may concern, we therefore open a new scene, and bring other actors upon the stage.

Along a wasted tract of country, more than twelve miles distant from the Garde Doloureuse, in the heat of a summer noon, which shed a burning lustre on the silent valley and the blackened ruins of the cottages with which it had been once graced, two travellers walked slowly, whose palmer cloaks, pilgrims' staves, large slouched hats, with a scallop shell bound on the front of each, above all, the cross, cut in red cloth upon their shoulders, marked them as pilgrims who had accomplished their vow, and had returned from that fatal bourne, from which in those days, returned so few of the thousands who visited it, whether in the love of enterprise, or in the ardour of devotion.

The pilgrims had passed, that morning, through a scene of devastation similar to, and scarce surpassed in misery by, those which they had often trod during the wars of the Cross. They had seen hamlets which appeared to have suffered all the fury of military execution, the houses being burned to the ground; and in many cases the carcasses of the miserable inhabitants, or rather relics of such objects, were suspended on temporary gibbets, or on the trees, which had been allowed to remain standing, only, it would seem, to serve the convenience of the executioners. Living creatures they saw none, excepting those wild denizens of nature who seemed silently resuming the now wasted district, from which they might have been formerly expelled by the course of civilization. Their ears were no less disagreeably occupied than their eyes. The pensive travellers might indeed hear the screams of the raven, as if lamenting the decay of the carnage on which he had been gorged; and now and then the plaintive howl of some dog, deprived of his home and master; but no sounds which argued either labour or domestication of any kind.

The sable figures, who with wearied steps, as it appeared, travelled through these scenes of desolation and ravage, seemed assimilated to them in appearance. They spoke not with each other—they looked not to each other—but one, the shorter of the pair, keeping about half a pace in front of his companion, they moved slowly, as priests returning from a sinner's death-bed, or rather as spectres flitting along the precincts of a churchyard.

At length they reached a grassy mound, on the top of which was placed one of those receptacles for the dead of the ancient British chiefs of distinction, called Kist-Vaen, which are composed of upright fragments of granite, so placed as to form a stone coffin, or something bearing that resemblance. The sepulchre had been long violated by the victorious Saxons either in scorn or in idle curiosity, or because treasures were supposed to be sometimes concealed in such spots. The huge flat stone which had once been the cover of the coffin, if so it might be termed, lay broken in two pieces at some distance from the sepulchre; and, overgrown as the fragments were with grass and lichens, showed plainly that the lid had been removed to its present situation many years before.

A stunted and doddered oak still spread its branches over the open and rude mausoleum, as if the Druid's badge and emblem, shattered and storm-broken, was still bending to offer its protection to the last remnants of their worship.

"This, then, is the *Kist-vaen*," said the shorter pilgrim; "and here we must abide tidings of our scout. But what, Philip Guarine, have we to expect as an explanation of the devastation which we have traversed?"

"Some incursion of the Welsh wolves, my lord," replied Guarine; "and, by Our Lady, here lies a poor Saxon sheep whom they have snapped up."

The Constable (for he was the pilgrim who had walked foremost) turned as he heard his squire speak, and saw the corpse of a man amongst the long grass; by which, indeed, it was so hidden, that he himself had passed without notice, what the esquire, in less abstracted mood, had not failed to observe. The leathern doublet of the slain bespoke him an English peasant—the body lay on its face, and the arrow which had caused his death still stuck in his back.

Philip Guarine, with the cool indifference of one accustomed to such scenes, drew the shaft from the man's back, as composedly as he would have removed it from the body of a deer. With similar indifference the Constable signed to his esquire to give him the arrow—looked at it with indolent curiosity, and then said, "Thou hast forgotten thy old craft, Guarine, when thou callest that a Welsh shaft. Trust me, it flew from a Norman bow; but why it should be found in the body of that English churl, I can ill guess."

"Some runaway serf, I would warrant—some mongrel cur, who had joined the Welsh pack of hounds," answered the esquire.

"It may be so," said the Constable; "but I rather augur some civil war among the Lords Marchers themselves. The Welsh, indeed, sweep the villages, and leave nothing behind them but blood and ashes, but here even castles seem to have been stormed and taken. May God send us good news of the Garde Dolourcuse!"

"Amen!" replied his squire, "but if Renault Vidal brings it, 'twill be the first time he has proved a bird of good omen."

"Philip," said the Constable, "I have already told thee thou art a jealous-pated fool. How many times has Vidal shown his faith in doubt—his address in difficulty—his courage in battle—his patience under suffering?"

"It may be all very true, my lord," replied Guarine; "yet—but what avails to speak?—I own he has done you sometimes good service; but loath were I that your life or honour were at the mercy of Renault Vidal."

"In the name of all the saints, thou peevish and suspicious fool, what is it thou canst found upon to his prejudice?"

"Nothing, my lord," replied Guarine, "but instinctive suspicion and aversion. The child that, for the first time, sees a snake, knows nothing of its evil properties, yet he will not chase it and take it up as he would a butterfly. Such is my dislike of Vidal—I cannot help it. I could pardon the man his malicious and gloomy sidelong looks, when he thinks no one observes him; but his sneering laugh I cannot forgive—it is like the beast we heard of in Juden, who laughs, they say, before he tears and destroys."

"Philip," said De Lacy, "I am sorry for thee—sorry, from my soul, to see such a predominating and causeless jealousy occupy the brain of a gallant old soldier. Here, in this last misfortune, to recall no more ancient proofs of his fidelity, could he mean otherwise than well with us, when, thrown by shipwreck upon the coast of Wales, we would have been doomed to instant death, had the Cymri recognised in me the Constable of Chester, and in thee his trusty esquire, the executioner of his commands against the Welsh in so many instances?"

"I acknowledge," said Philip Guarine, "death had *surely been our fortune, had not* that man's ingenuity *represented us as pilgrims*, and, under that character, *acted as our interpreter*—and in that character he entirely precluded us from getting information from any one respecting the state of things here, which it behoved your lordship much to know, and which I must needs say looks gloomy and suspicious enough."

"Still art thou a fool, Guarine," said the Constable; "for, look you, had Vidal meant ill by us, why should he not have betrayed us to the Welsh, or suffered us, by showing such knowledge as thou and I may have of their gibberish, to betray ourselves?"

"Well, my lord," said Guarine, "I may be silenced, but not satisfied. All the fair words he can speak—all the fine tunes he can play—Renault Vidal will be to my eyes ever a dark and suspicious man, with features always ready to mould themselves into the fittest form to attract confidence; with a tongue framed to utter the most flattering and agreeable words at one time, and at another to play shrewd plainness or blunt honesty; and an eye which, when he thinks himself unobserved, contradicts every assumed expression of features, every protestation of honesty, and every word of courtesy or cordiality to which his tongue has given utterance. But I speak not more on the subject; only I am an old mastiff, of the true breed—I love my master, but cannot endure some of those whom he favours; and yonder, as I judge, comes Vidal, to give us such an account of our situation, as it shall please him."

A horseman was indeed seen advancing in the path towards the Kist-vaen, with a hasty pace; and his dress, in which something of the Eastern fashion was manifest, with the fantastic attire usually worn by men of his profession, made the Constable aware that the minstrel, of whom they were speaking, was rapidly approaching them.

Although Hugo de Lacy rendered this attendant no more than what in justice he supposed his services demanded, when he vindicated him from the suspicions thrown out by Guarine, yet at the bottom of his heart he had sometimes shared those suspicions, and was often angry at himself, as a just and honest man, for censuring, on the slight testimony of looks, and sometimes casual expressions, a fidelity which seemed to be proved by many acts of zeal and integrity.

When Vidal approached and dismounted to make his obeisance, his master hasted to speak to him in words of favour, as if conscious he had been partly sharing Guarine's unjust judgment upon him, by even listening to it. "Welcome, my trusty Vidal," he said; "thou hast been the raven that fed us on the mountains of Wales, be now the dove that brings us good tidings from the Marches.—Thou art silent. What mean these downcast looks—that embarrassed carriage—that cap plucked down o'er thine eyes?—In God's name, man, speak!—Fear not for me—I can bear worse than tongue of man may tell. Thou hast seen me in the wars of Palestine, when my brave followers fell, man by man, around me, and when I was left well nigh alone—and did I blench then?—Thou hast seen me when the ship's keel lay grating on the rock, and the billows flew in foam over her deck—did I blench then?—No—nor will I now."

"Boast not," said the minstrel, looking fixedly upon the Constable, as the former assumed the port and countenance of one who sets Fortune and her utmost malice at defiance—"boast not, lest thy bands be made strong."

There was a pause of a minute, during which the group formed at this instant a singular picture.

Afraid to ask, yet ashamed to *seem* to fear the ill tidings which impended, the Constable confronted his messenger with person erect, arms folded, and brow expanded with resolution; while the minstrel, carried beyond his usual and guarded apathy by the interest of the moment, bent on his master a keen fixed glance, as if to observe whether his courage was real or assumed.

Philip Guarine, on the other hand, to whom Heaven, in assigning him a rough exterior, had denied neither sense nor observation, kept his eye in turn firmly fixed on Vidal, as if endeavouring to determine what was the character of that deep interest which gleamed in the minstrel's looks apparently, and was unable to ascertain whether it was that of a faithful domestic sympathetically agitated by the bad news with which

he was about to afflict his master, or that of an executioner standing with his knife suspended over his victim, deferring his blow until he should discover where it would be most sensibly felt. In Guarine's mind, prejudiced, perhaps, by the previous opinion he had entertained, the latter sentiment so decidedly predominated, that he longed to raise his staff, and strike down to the earth the servant, who seemed thus to enjoy the protracted sufferings of their common master.

At length a convulsive movement crossed the brow of the Constable, and Guarine, when he beheld a sardonic smile begin to curl Vidal's lip, could keep silence no longer. "Vidal," he said, "thou art a"——

"A bearer of bad tidings," said Vidal, interrupting him, "therefore subject to the misconstruction of every fool who cannot distinguish between the author of harm, and him who unwillingly reports it."

"To what purpose this delay?" said the Constable. "Come, Sir Minstrel, I will spare you a pang—Eveline has forsaken and forgotten me?"

The minstrel assented by a low inclination.

Hugo de Lacy paced a short turn before the stone monument, endeavouring to conquer the deep emotion which he felt. "I forgive her," he said. "Forgive, did I say?—Alas! I have nothing to forgive.—She used but the right I left in her hand—yes—our date of engagement was out—she had heard of my losses—my defeats—the destruction of my hopes—the expenditure of my wealth; and has taken the first opportunity which strict law afforded, to break off her engagement with one bankrupt in fortune and fame. Many a maiden would have done—perhaps in prudence should have done—this;—but that woman's name should not have been Eveline Berenger."

He leaned on his esquire's arm, and for an instant laid his head on his shoulder with a depth of emotion which Guarine had never before seen him betray, and which, in awkward kindness, he could only attempt to console by bidding his master "be of good courage—he had lost but a woman."

"This is no selfish emotion, Philip," said the Constable, resuming self-command. "I grieve less that she has left me than that she has misjudged me—that she has treated me as the pawnbroker does his wretched creditor, who arrests the pledge as the very moment elapses within which it might have been relieved. Did she then think that I in my turn would have been a creditor so rigid?—that I, who, since I knew her, scarce deemed myself worthy of her when I had wealth and fame, should insist on her sharing my diminished and degraded fortunes? How little she ever knew me, or how selfish must she have supposed my misfortunes to have made me! But be it so—she is gone, and may she be happy. The thought that she disturbed me shall pass from my mind; and I will think she has done that which I myself, as her best friend, must in honour have advised."

So saying, his countenance, to the surprise of his attendants, resumed its usual firm composure.

"I give you joy," said the esquire, in a whisper to the minstrel; "your evil news have wounded less deeply than, doubtless, you believed was possible."

"Alas!" replied the minstrel, "I have others and worse behind."

This answer was made in an equivocal tone of voice, corresponding to the peculiarity of his manner, and like that seeming emotion of a deep but very doubtful character.

"Eveline Berenger is then married," said the Constable; "and, let me make a wild guess,—she has not abandoned the family, though she has forsaken the individual—she is still a Lacy? ha?—Dolt that thou art, wilt thou not understand me? She is married to Damian de Lacy—to my nephew?"

The effort with which the Constable gave breath to this supposition formed a strange contrast to the constrained smile to which he compelled his features while he uttered it. With such a smile a man about to drink poison might name a health, as he put the fatal beverage to his lips.

"No, my lord—not *married*," answered the minstrel. with an *emphasis on the word, which the Constable knew how to interpret.*

"No, no," he replied quickly, "not married, perhaps, but engaged—troth-plighted. Wherefore not? The date of her old affiance was out, why not enter into a new engagement?"

"The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian de Lacy are not affianced that I know of," answered his attendant.

This reply drove De Lacy's patience to extremity.

"Dog! dost thou trifle with me!" he exclaimed: "Vile wire-pincher, thou torturest me! Speak the worst at once, or I will presently make thee minstrel to the household of Satan."

Calm and collected did the minstrel reply,—"The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian are neither married nor affianced, my lord. They have loved and lived together—*par amours.*"

"Dog, and son of a dog," said De Lacy, "thou liest!" And, seizing the minstrel by the breast, the exasperated baron shook him with his whole strength. But great as that strength was, it was unable to stagger Vidal, a practised wrestler, in the firm posture which he had assumed, any more than his master's wrath could disturb the composure of the minstrel's bearing.

"Confess thou hast lied," said the Constable, releasing him, after having effected by his violence no greater degree of agitation than the exertion of human force produces upon the Rocking Stones of the Druids, which may be shaken, indeed, but not displaced.

"Were a lie to buy my own life, yea, the lives of all my tribe," said the minstrel, "I would not tell one. But truth itself is ever termed falsehood when it counteracts the train of our passions."

"Hear him, Philip Guarine, hear him!" exclaimed the Constable, turning hastily to his squire: "He tells me of my disgrace—of the dishonour of my house—of the depravity of those whom I have loved the best in the world—he tells me of it with a calm look, an eye composed, an unfaltering tongue.—Is this—can it be natural? Is De Lacy sunk so low, that his dishonour shall be told by a common strolling minstrel, as calmly as if it were a theme for a vain ballad? Perhaps thou wilt make it one, ha!" as he concluded, darting a furious glance at the minstrel.

"Perhaps I might, my lord," replied the minstrel, "were it not that I must record therein the disgrace of Renault Vidal, who served a lord without either patience to bear insults and wrongs, or spirit to revenge them on the authors of his shame."

"Thou art right, thou art right, good fellow," said the Constable, hastily; "it is vengeance now alone which is left us—And yet upon whom!"

As he spoke, he walked shortly and hastily to and fro; and, becoming suddenly silent, stood still and wrung his hands with deep emotion.

"I told thee," said the minstrel to Guarine, "that my muse would find a tender part at last. Dost thou remember the bull fight we saw in Spain?—A thousand little darts perplexed and annoyed the noble animal, ere he received the last deadly thrust from the lance of the Moorish cavalier."

"Man, or fiend, be which thou wilt," replied Guarine, "that can thus drink in with pleasure, and contemplate at your ease, the misery of another, I bid thee beware of me! Utter thy cold-blooded taunts in some other ear; for if my tongue be blunt, I wear a sword that is sharp enough."

"Thou hast seen me among swords," answered the minstrel, "and knowest how little terror they have for such as I am." Yet as he spoke he drew off from the esquire. He had, in fact, only addressed him in that sort of fulness of heart, which would have vented itself in soliloquy if alone, and now poured itself out on the nearest auditor, without the speaker being entirely conscious of the sentiments which his speech excited.

Few minutes had elapsed before the Constable of Chester had regained the calm external semblance with which, until this last dreadful wound, he had borne all the inflictions of fortune. He turned towards his followers, and addressed the minstrel with his usual calmness, "Thou art right, good fellow," he said, "in what thou saidst to me but now, and I

forgive thee the taunt which accompanied thy good counsel. Speak out, in God's name, and speak to one prepared to endure the evil which God hath sent him. Certes, a good knight is best known in battle, and a Christian in the time of trouble and adversity."

The tone in which the Constable spoke seemed to produce a corresponding effect upon the deportment of his followers. The minstrel dropped at once the cynical and audacious tone in which he had hitherto seemed to tamper with the passions of his master; and in language simple and respectful, and which even approached to sympathy, informed him of the evil news which he had collected during his absence. It was indeed disastrous.

The refusal of the Lady Eveline Berenger to admit Monthermer and his forces into her castle, had of course given circulation and credence to all the calumnies which had been circulated to her prejudice, and that of Damian de Lacy; and there were many who, for various causes, were interested in spreading and supporting these slanders. A large force had been sent into the country to subdue the insurgent peasants; and the knights and nobles despatched for that purpose, failed not to avenge to the uttermost, upon the wretched plebeians, the noble blood which they had spilled during their temporary triumph.

The followers of the unfortunate Wenlock were infected with the same persuasion. Blamed by many for a hasty and cowardly surrender of a post which might have been defended, they endeavoured to vindicate themselves by alleging the hostile demonstrations of De Lacy's cavalry as the sole cause of their premature submission.

These rumours, supported by such interested testimony, spread wide and far through the land; and, joined to the undeniable fact that Damian had sought refuge in the strong castle of Garde Doloureuse, which was now defending itself against the royal arms, animated the numerous enemies of the house of De Lacy, and drove its vassals and friends almost to despair, as men reduced either to disown their feudal allegiance, or renounce that still more sacred fealty which they owed to their sovereign.

At this crisis they received intelligence that the wise and active monarch by whom the sceptre of England was then swayed, was moving towards that part of England, at the head of a large body of soldiers, for the purpose, at once of pressing the siege of the Garde Doloureuse, and, completing the suppression of the insurrection of the peasantry, which Guy Monthermer had nearly accomplished.

In this emergency, and when the friends and dependants of the House of Lacy scarcely knew which hand to turn to, Randal, the Constable's kinsman, and, after Damian, his heir, suddenly appeared amongst them, with a royal commission to raise and command such followers of the family as might not desire to be involved in the supposed treason of the Constable's delegate. In troublesome times, men's vices are forgotten, provided they display activity, courage, and prudence, the virtues then most required; and the appearance of Randal, who was by no means deficient in any of these attributes, was received as a good omen by the followers of his cousin. They quickly gathered around him, surrendered to the royal mandate such strong holds as they possessed, and, to vindicate themselves from any participation in the alleged crimes of Damian, they distinguished themselves, under Randal's command, against such scattered bodies of peasantry as still kept the field, or lurked in the mountains and passes; and conducted themselves with such severity after success, as made the troops even of Monthermer appear gentle and clement in comparison of those of De Lacy. Finally, with the banner of his ancient house displayed, and five hundred good men assembled under it, Randal appeared before the Garde Doloureuse, and joined Henry's camp there.

The castle was already hardly pressed, and the few defenders, disabled by wounds, watching, and privation, had now the additional discouragement to see *displayed against their* walls the only banner in Eng- *and, under which they* had hoped forces might be *assembled for their aid.*

The high-spirited entreaties of Eveline, unbent by adversity and want, gradually lost effect on the defenders of the castle; and proposals for surrender were urged and discussed by a tumultuary council, into which not only the inferior officers, but many of the common men, had thrust themselves, as in a period of such general distress as unlooses all the bonds of discipline, and leaves each man at liberty to speak and act for himself. To their surprise, in the midst of their discussions, Damian de Lacy, arisen from the sick-bed to which he had been so long confined, appeared among them, pale and feeble, his cheek tinged with the ghastly look which is left by long illness—he leaned on his page Amelot. "Gentlemen," he said, "and soldiers—yet why should I call you either?—Gentlemen are ever ready to die in behalf of a lady—soldiers hold life in scorn compared to their honour."

"Out upon him! out upon him!" exclaimed one of the soldiers, interrupting him; "he would have us, who are innocent, die the death of traitors, and be hanged in our armour over the walls, rather than part with his leman."

"Peace, irreverent slave!" said Damian, in a voice like thunder, "or my last blow shall be a mean one, aimed against such a caitiff as thou art.—And you," he continued, addressing the rest,—"you, who are shrinking from the toils of your profession, because if you persist in a course of honour, death may close them a few years sooner than it needs must—you, who are scared like children at the sight of a death's head, do not suppose that Damian de Lacy would desire to shelter himself at the expense of those lives which you hold so dear. Make your bargain with King Henry. Deliver me up to his justice, or his severity; or, if you like it better, strike my head from my body, and hurl it, as a peace-offering, from the walls of the castle. To God, in his good time, will I trust, for the clearance of mine honour. In a word, surrender me, dead or alive, or open the gates and permit me to surrender myself. Only, as ye are men, since I may not say better of ye, care at least for the safety of your mistress, and make such terms as may secure HER safety, and save yourselves from the dishonour of being held cowardly and perjured caitiffs in your graves."

"Methinks the youth speaks well and reasonably," said Wilkin Flammock. "Let us e'en make a grace of surrendering his body up to the King, and assure thereby such terms as we can for ourselves and the lady, ere the last morsel of our provision is consumed."

"I would hardly have proposed this measure," said, or rather mumbled, Father Aldrovand, who had recently lost four of his front teeth by a stone from a sling—"yet, being so generously offered by the party principally concerned, I hold with the learned scholiast, *Volenti non fit injuria.*"

"Priest and Fleming," said the old banner-man, Ralph Genvil, "I see how the wind stirreth you; but you deceive yourselves if you think to make our young master, Sir Damian, a scape-goat for your light lady. Nay, never frown nor fume, Sir Damian; if you know not your safest course, we know it for you.—Followers of De Lacy, throw yourselves on your horses, and two men on one, if it be necessary—we will take this stubborn boy in the midst of us, and the dainty squire Amelot shall be prisoner too, if he trouble us with his peevish opposition. Then let us make a fair sally upon the siegers. Those who can cut their way through will shift well enough; those who fall, will be provided for."

A shout from the troopers of Lacy's band, approved this proposal. Whilst the followers of Berenger expostulated in loud and angry tone, Eveline, summoned by the tumult, in vain endeavoured to appease it; and the anger and entreaties of Damian were equally lost on his followers. To each and either the answer was the same.

"Have you no care of it—Because you love *par amours*, is it reasonable you should throw away your life and ours?" So exclaimed Genvil to De Lacy; and in softer language, but with equal obstinacy, the followers of Raymond Berenger refused on the ground

occasion to listen to the commands or prayers of his daughter.

Wilkin Flammock had retreated from the tumult, when he saw the turn which matters had taken. He left the castle by a sally-port, of which he had been entrusted with the key, and proceeded without observation or opposition to the royal camp, where he requested access to the Sovereign. This was easily obtained, and Wilkin speedily found himself in the presence of King Henry. The monarch was in his royal pavilion, attended by two of his sons, Richard and John, who afterwards swayed the sceptre of England with very different auspices.

"How now?—What art thou?" was the royal question.

"An honest man, from the castle of the Garde Doloureuse."

"Thou mayest be honest," replied the Sovereign, 'but thou comest from a nest of traitors."

"Such as they are, my lord, it is my purpose to put them at your royal disposal; for they have no longer the wisdom to guide themselves, and lack alike prudence to hold out, and grace to submit. But I would first know of your grace to what terms you will admit the defenders of yonder garrison?"

"To such as kings give to traitors," said Henry, sternly—"sharp knives and tough cords."

"Nay, my gracious lord, you must be kinder than that amounts to, if the castle is to be rendered by my means; else will your cords and knives have only my poor body to work upon, and you will be as far as ever from the inside of the Garde Doloureuse."

The King looked at him fixedly. "Thou knowest," he said, "the law of arms. Here, provost-marshal, stands a traitor, and yonder stands a tree."

"And here is a throat," said the stout-hearted Fleming, unbuttoning the collar of his doublet.

"By mine honour," said Prince Richard, "a sturdy and faithful yeoman! It were better send such fellows their dinner, and then buffet it out with them for the castle, than to starve them as the beggarly Frenchmen famish their hounds."

"Peace, Richard," said his father; "thy wit is over keen, and thy blood over hot, to make thee my counsellor here.—And you, knave, speak you some reasonable terms, and we will not be over strict with thee."

"First, then," said the Fleming, "I stipulate full and free pardon for life, limb, body and goods, to me, Wilkin Flammock, and my daughter Rose."

"A true Fleming," said Prince John; "he takes care of himself in the first instance."

"His request," said the King, "is reasonable.—What next?"

"Safety, in life, honour, and land, for the demoiselle Eveline Berenger."

"How, Sir Knave!" said the King, angrily, "is for such as thou to dictate to our judgment or clemency in the case of a noble Norman lady? Confine thy mediation to such as thyself; or rather render us the castle without farther delay; and be assured thy king so will be of more service to the traitors within, than weeks more of resistance, which must and shall be bootless."

The Fleming stood silent, unwilling to surrender without some specific terms, yet half convinced, from the situation in which he had left the garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, that his admitting the King's forces would be perhaps, the best he could do for Lady Eveline.

"I like thy fidelity, fellow," said the King, whose acute eye perceived the struggle in the Fleming's bosom; "but carry not thy stubbornness too far. Have we not said we will be gracious to yonder offenders, as far as our royal duty will permit?"

"And, royal father," said Prince John, interposing, "I pray you let me have the grace to take first possession of the Garde Doloureuse, and the wardship or forfeiture of the offending lady."

"*I* pray you also, my royal father, to grant John's boon," said his brother Richard, in a tone of mockery. "Consider, royal father, *it is the first desire he hath shown to approach the barriers of the castle*, though *we have attacked them forty times at least.* Marry, crossbow and mangonel were busy on the former occasions, and it is like they will be silent now."

"Peace, Richard," said the King; "your words, aimed at thy brother's honour, pierce my heart!—John, thou hast thy boon as concerns the castle; for this unhappy young lady, we will take her in our own charge.—Fleming, how many men wilt thou undertake to admit?"

Ere Flammock could answer, a squire approached Prince Richard, and whispered in his ear, yet so as to be heard by all present, "We have discovered that some internal disturbance, or other cause unknown, has withdrawn many of the warders from the castle walls, and that a sudden attack might"——

"Dost thou hear that, John?" exclaimed Richard. "Ladders, man—get ladders, and to the wall. How I should delight to see thee on the highest round—thy knees shaking—thy hands grasping convulsively, like those of one in an ague fit—all air around thee, save a baton or two of wood—the moat below—half-a-dozen pikes at thy throat"——

"Peace, Richard, for shame, if not for charity!" said his father, in a tone of anger, mingled with grief. "And thou, John, get ready for the assault."

"As soon as I have put on my armour, father," answered the Prince; and withdrew slowly with a visage so blank as to promise no speed in his preparations.

His brother laughed as he retired, and said to his squire, "It were no bad jest, Alberick, to carry the place ere John can change his silk doublet for a steel one."

So saying, he hastily withdrew, and his father exclaimed in paternal distress, "Out, alas! as much too hot as his brother is too cold; but it is the manlier fault.—Gloucester," said he to that celebrated earl, "take sufficient strength, and follow Prince Richard to guard and sustain him. If any one can rule him, it must be a knight of thy established fame. Alas! alas! for what sin have I deserved the affliction of these cruel family feuds!"

"Be comforted, my lord," said the chancellor, who was also in attendance.

"Speak not of comfort to a father, whose sons are at discord with each other, and agree only in their disobedience to him!"

Thus spoke Henry the Second, than whom no wiser, or, generally speaking, more fortunate monarch, ever sat upon the throne of England; yet whose life is a striking illustration, how family dissensions can tarnish the most brilliant lot to which Heaven permits humanity to aspire; and how little gratified ambition, extended power, and the highest reputation in war and in peace, can do towards curing the wounds of domestic affliction.

The sudden and fiery attack of Richard, who hastened to the escalade at the head of a score of followers, collected at random, had the complete effect of surprise; and having surmounted the walls with their ladders, before the contending parties within were almost aware of the assault, the assailants burst open the gates, and admitted Gloucester, who had hastily followed with a strong body of men-at-arms. The garrison, in their state of surprise, confusion, and disunion, offered but little resistance, and would have been put to the sword, and the place plundered, had not Henry himself entered it, and by his personal exertions and authority, restrained the excesses of the dissolute soldiery.

The King conducted himself, considering the times and the provocation, with laudable moderation. He contented himself with disarming and dismissing the common soldiers, giving them some trifle to carry them out of the country, lest want should lead them to form themselves into bands of robbers. The officers were more severely treated, being for the greater part thrown into dungeons, to abide the course of the law. In particular, imprisonment was the lot of Damian de Lacy, against whom, believing the various charges with which he was loaded, Henry was so highly incensed, that he purposed to make him an example to all false knights and disloyal subjects. To the Lady Eveline Berenger he assigned her own apartment as a prison, in which she was honour-

attended by Rose and Alice but guarded with the utmost strictness. It was generally reported that her demesnes would be declared a forfeiture to the crown, and bestowed, at least in part, upon Randal de Lacy, who had done good service during the siege. Her person, it was thought, was destined to the seclusion of some distant French nunnery, where she might at leisure repent her of her follies and her rashness.

Father Aldrovand was delivered up to the discipline of his convent, long experience having very effectually taught Henry the imprudence of infringing on the privileges of the church; although, when the King first beheld him with a rusty corslet clasped over his frock, he with difficulty repressed the desire to cause him to be hanged over the battlements, to preach to the ravens.

With Wilkin Flammock, Henry held much conference, particularly on the subject of manufactures and commerce; on which the sound-headed, though blunt-spoken Fleming, was well qualified to instruct an intelligent monarch. "Thy intentions," he said, "shall not be forgotten, good fellow, though they have been anticipated by the headlong valour of my son Richard, which has cost some poor caitiffs their lives—Richard loves not to sheathe a bloodless weapon. But thou and thy countrymen shall return to thy mills yonder, with a full pardon for past offences, so that you meddle no more with such treasonable matters."

"And our privileges and duties, my liege?" said Flammock. "Your Majesty knows well we are vassals to the lord of this castle, and must follow him in battle."

"It shall no longer be so," said Henry; "I will form a community of Flemings here, and thou, Flammock, shalt be Mayor, that thou mayst not plead feudal obedience for a relapse into treason."

"Treason, my liege!" said Flammock, longing, yet scarce venturing, to interpose a word in behalf of Lady Eveline, for whom, despite the constitutional coolness of his temperament, he really felt much interest—"I would that your Grace but justly knew how many threads went to that woof."

"Peace, sirrah!—meddle with your loom," said Henry; "and if we deign to speak to thee concerning the mechanical arts which thou dost profess, take it for no warrant to intrude farther on our privacy."

The Fleming retired, rebuked, and in silence; and the fate of the unhappy prisoners remained in the King's bosom. He himself took up his lodging in the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, as a convenient station for sending abroad parties to suppress and extinguish all the embers of rebellion; and so active was Randal de Lacy on these occasions, that he appeared daily to rise in the King's grace, and was gratified with considerable grants out of the domains of Berenger and Lacy, which the King seemed already to treat as forfeited property. Most men considered this growing favour of Randal as a perilous omen, both for the life of young De Lacy, and for the fate of the unfortunate Eveline.

CHAPTER XXX.

A vow, a vow—I have a vow in Heaven.
Shall I bring perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.—*Merchant of Venice.*

THE conclusion of the last chapter contains the tidings with which the minstrel greeted his unhappy master, Hugo de Lacy; not indeed with the same detail of circumstances with which we have been able to invest the narrative, but so as to infer the general and appalling facts, that his betrothed bride, and beloved and trusted kinsman, had leagued together for his dishonour—had raised the banner of rebellion against their lawful sovereign, and, failing in their audacious attempt, had brought the life of one of them, at least, into the most imminent danger, and the fortunes of the House of Lacy, unless some instant remedy could be found, to the very verge of ruin.

Vidal marked the countenance of his master as he *spoke, with the same keen observation* which the *chirurgeon gives to the progress* of his dissecting knife. There was grief on the Constable's features—deep grief—but without the expression of abasement or prostration, which usually accompanies it; anger and shame were there—but they were both of a noble character, seemingly excited by his bride and nephew's transgressing the laws of allegiance, honour, and virtue, rather than by the disgrace and damage which he himself sustained thro' their crime.

The minstrel was so much astonished at this change of deportment, from the sensitive acuteness of agony which attended the beginning of his narrative, that he stepped back two paces, and gazing on the Constable with wonder mixed with admiration, exclaimed, "We have heard of martyrs in Palestine, but this exceeds them!"

"Wonder not so much, good friend," said the Constable, patiently; "it is the first blow of the lance or mace which pierces or stuns—those which follow are little felt."*

"Think, my lord," said Vidal, "all is lost—love, dominion, high office, and bright fame—so late a chief among nobles—now a poor palmer!"

"Wouldst thou make sport with my misery?" said Hugo, sternly; "but even that comes of course behind my back, and why should it not be endured when said to my face?—Know, then, minstrel, and put it in song if you list, that Hugo De Lacy, having lost all he carried to Palestine, and all which he left at home, is still lord of his own mind; and adversity can no more shake him, than the breeze which strips the oak of its leaves can tear up the trunk by the roots."

"Now, by the tomb of my father," said the minstrel, rapturously, "this man's nobleness is too much for my resolve!" and stepping hastily to the Constable, he kneeled on one knee, and caught his hand more freely than the state maintained by men of De Lacy's rank usually permitted.

"Here," said Vidal, "on this hand—this noble hand—I renounce"——

But ere he could utter another word, Hugo de Lacy, who, perhaps, felt the freedom of the action as an intrusion on his fallen condition, pulled back his hand, and bid the minstrel, with a stern frown, arise, and remember that misfortune made not De Lacy a fit personage for a mummery.

Renault Vidal rose rebuked. "I had forgot," he said, "the distance between an Armorican violer and a high Norman baron. I thought that the same depth of sorrow, the same burst of joy, levelled, for a moment at least, those artificial barriers by which men are divided. But it is well as it is. Live within the limits of your rank, as heretofore within your donjon tower and your fosses, my lord, undisturbed by the sympathy of any mean man like me. I, too, have my duties to discharge."

"And now to the Garde Doloureuse," said the baron, turning to Philip Guarine—"God knoweth how well it deserveth the name!—there to learn, with our own eyes and ears, the truth of these woful tidings.—Dismount, minstrel, and give me thy palfrey—I would, Guarine, that I had one for thee—as for Vidal, his attendance is less necessary. I will face my foes, or my misfortunes, like a man—that be assured of, violer; and look not so sullen, knave—I will not forget old adherents."

"One of them, at least, will not forget you, my lord," replied the minstrel, with his usual dubious tone of look and emphasis.

But just as the Constable was about to prick forwards, two persons appeared on the path, mounted on one horse, who, hidden by some dwarf-wood, had

* Such an expression is said to have been used by Mandrin the celebrated smuggler, while in the act of being broken upon the wheel. This dreadful punishment consists in the executioner, with a bar of iron, breaking the shoulder-bones, arms, thigh-bones, and legs of the criminal, taking his alternate sides. The punishment is concluded by a blow across the breast, called the *coup de grace*, because it removes the sufferer from his agony. When Mandrin received the second blow over the left shoulder bone, he laughed. His confessor inquired the reason of demeanour so unbecoming his situation. "I only laugh at my own folly, my father," answered Mandrin, "who could suppose that sensibility of pain should continue after the nervous system had been completely deranged by the first blow."

some very near them without being perceived. They were male and female; and the man, who rode foremost, was such a picture of famine, as the eyes of the pilgrims had scarce witnessed in all the wasted lands through which they had travelled. His features, naturally sharp and thin, had disappeared almost entirely among the uncombed gray beard and hairs with which they were overshadowed; and it was but the glimpse of a long nose, that seemed as sharp as the edge of a knife, and the twinkling sparkle of his gray eyes, which gave any intimation of his lineaments. His leg, in the wide old boot which enclosed it, looked like the handle of a mop left by chance in a pail—his arms were about the thickness of riding-rods—and such parts of his person as were not concealed by the tatters of a huntsman's cassock, seemed rather the appendages of a mummy than a live man.

The female who sat behind this spectre exhibited also some symptoms of extenuation; but being a brave jolly dame naturally, famine had not been able to render her a spectacle so rueful as the anatomy behind which she rode. Dame Gillian's cheek (for it was the reader's old acquaintance) had indeed lost the rosy hue of good cheer, and the smoothness of complexion which art and easy living had formerly substituted for the more delicate bloom of youth; her eyes were sunken, and had lost much of their bold and roguish lustre; but she was still in some measure herself, and the remnants of former finery, together with the tight-drawn scarlet hose, though sorely faded, showed still a remnant of coquettish pretension.

So soon as she came within sight of the pilgrims, she began to punch Raoul with the end of her riding-rod. "Try thy new trade, man, since thou art unfit for any other—to the good men—to them—crave their charity."

"Beg from beggars?"—muttered Raoul; "that were hawking at sparrows, dame."

"It will bring our hand in use, though," said Gillian; and commenced, in a whining tone, "God love you, holy men, who have had the grace to go to the Holy Land, and, what is more, have had the grace to come back again; I pray, bestow some of your alms upon my poor old husband, who is a miserable object, as you see, and upon one who has the bad luck to be his wife—Heaven help me!"

"Peace, woman, and hear what I have to say," said the Constable, laying his hand upon the bridle of the horse—"I have present occasion for that horse, and"———

"By the hunting-horn of St. Hubert, but thou gettest him not without blows!" answered the old huntsman. "A fine world it is, when palmers turn horse-stealers."

"Peace, fellow!" said the Constable, sternly,—"I say I have occasion presently for the service of thy horse. Here be two gold bezants for a day's use of the brute; it is well worth the fee-simple of him, were he never returned."

"But the palfrey is an old acquaintance, master," said Raoul; "and if perchance"———

"Out upon your *if* and *perchance* both," said the dame, giving her husband so determined a thrust as well nigh pushed him out of the saddle. "Off the horse! and thank God and this worthy man for the help he has sent us in extremity. What signifies the palfrey, when we have not enough to get food either for the brute or ourselves? not though we would eat grass and corn with him, like King Somebody, whom the good father used to read us to sleep about."

"A truce with your prating, dame," said Raoul, offering his assistance to help her from the croupe; but she preferred that of Guarine, who, though advanced in years, retained the advantage of his stout soldierly figure.

"I humbly thank your goodness," said she, as, (having first kissed her,) the squire set her on the ground. "And, pray, sir, are ye come from the Holy Land?—Heard ye any tidings there of him that was Constable of Chester?"

De Lacy, *who was engaged in removing the pilgrim from behind the saddle, stopped* short in his task, and said, "Ha, dame! what would you with him?"

"A great deal, good palmer, an I could light on him; for his lands and offices are all to be given, it's like, to that false thief, his kinsman."

"What!—to Damian, his nephew?" exclaimed the Constable, in a harsh and hasty tone.

"Lord, how you startle me, sir!" said Gillian; then continued, turning to Philip Guarine, "Your friend is a hasty man, belike."

"It is the fault of the sun he has lived under so long," said the squire; "but look you answer his questions truly, and he will make it the better for you."

Gillian instantly took the hint. "Was it Damian de Lacy you asked after?—Alas! poor young gentleman! no offices or lands for him—more likely to have a gallows-cast, poor lad—and all for naught, as I am a true dame. Damian!—no, no, it is not Damian nor damson neither—but Randal Lacy, that must rule the roast, and have all the old man's lands, and livings, and lordships."

"What?" said the Constable—"before they know whether the old man is dead or no?—Methinks that were against law and reason both."

"Ay, but Randal Lacy has brought about less likely matters. Look you, he hath sworn to the King that they have true tidings of the Constable's death—ay, and let him alone to make them soothfast enough, if the Constable were once within his danger."

"Indeed!" said the Constable. "But you are forging tales on a noble gentleman. Come, come, dame, you say this because you like not Randal Lacy."

"Like him not!—And what reason have I to like him, I trow?" answered Gillian. "Is it because he seduced my simplicity to let him into the castle of the Garde Dolourcuse—ay, oftener than once or twice either—when he was disguised as a pedlar, and told him all the secrets of the family, and how the boy Damian, and the girl Eveline, were dying of love with each other, but had not courage to say a word of it, for fear of the Constable, though he were a thousand miles off?—You seem concerned, worthy sir—may I offer your reverend worship a trifling sup from my bottle, which is sovereign for *tremor cordis* and fits of the spleen?"

"No, no," ejaculated De Lacy—"I was but grieved with the shooting of an old wound. But dame, I warrant me this Damian and Eveline, as you call them, became better, closer friends, in time?"

"They!—not they indeed, poor simpletons!" answered the dame; "they wanted some wise counsellor to go between and advise them. For, look you, sir, if old Hugo be dead, as is most like, it were more natural that his bride and his nephew should inherit his lands, than this same Randal, who is but a distant kinsman, and forsworn caitiff to boot.—Would you think it, reverend pilgrim, after the mountains of gold he promised me?—When the castle was taken, and he saw I could serve him no more, he called me old beldame, and spoke of the beadle and the cucking-stool.—Yes, reverend sir, old beldame and cucking-stool were his best words, when he knew I had no one to take my part, save old Raoul, who cannot take his own. But if grim old Hugh bring back his weather-beaten carcass from Palestine, and have but half the devil in him which he had when he was fool enough to go away, Saint Mary, but I will do his kinsman's office to him!"

There was a pause when she had done speaking.

"Thou say'st at length exclaimed the Constable, "that Damian de Lacy and Eveline love each other, yet are unconscious of guilt, or falsehood, or ingratitude to me—I would say, to their relative in Palestine?"

"Love, sir!—in troth and so it is—they do love each other," said Gillian; "but it is like angels—or like lambs—or like fools, if you will; for they would never so much as have spoken together, but for a prank of that same Randal Lacy's."

"How!" demanded the Constable—"a prank of Randal's?—What motive had he that these two should meet?"

"Nay, their meeting was none of his seeking, but

he had formed a plan to carry off the Lady Eveline himself, for he was a wild rover, this same Randal; and so he came disguised as a merchant of falcons, and trained out my old stupid Raoul, and the Lady Eveline, and all of us, as if to have an hour's mirth in hawking at the heron. But he had a band of Welsh kites in readiness to pounce upon us; and but for the sudden making in of Damian to our rescue, it is undescribable to think what might have come of us; and Damian being hurt in the onslaught, was carried to the Garde Doloureuse in mere necessity; and but to save his life, it is my belief my lady would never have asked him to cross the drawbridge, even if he had offered."

"Woman," said the Constable, "think what thou say'st! If thou hast done evil in these matters heretofore, as I suspect from thine own story, think not to put it right by a train of new falsehoods, merely from spite at missing thy reward."

"Palmer," said old Raoul, with his broken-toned voice, cracked by many a halloo, "I am wont to leave the business of tale-bearing to my wife Gillian, who will tongue-pad it with any shrew in Christendom. But thou speak'st like one having some interest in these matters, and therefore I will tell thee plainly, that although this woman has published her own shame in avowing her correspondence with that same Randal Lacy, yet what she has said is true as the gospel; and, were it my last word, I would say that Damian and the lady Eveline are innocent of all treason and all dishonesty, as is the babe unborn.—But what avails what the like of us say, who are even driven to the very begging for mere support, after having lived at a good house, and in a good lord's service—blessing be with him!"

"But hark you," continued the Constable, "are there left no ancient servants of the house, that could speak out as well as you?"

"Humph!" answered the huntsman—"men are not willing to babble when Randal Lacy is cracking his thong above their heads. Many are slain, or starved to death—some disposed of—some spirited away. But there are the weaver Flammock and his daughter Rose, who know as much of the matter as we do."

"What!—Wilkin Flammock, the stout Netherlander?" said the Constable; "he and his blunt but true daughter Rose?—I will venture my life on their faith. Where dwell they?—What has been their lot amidst these changes?"

"And in God's name who are *you* that ask these questions?" said Dame Gillian. "Husband, husband—we have been too free; there is something in that look and that tone which I should remember."

"Yea, look at me more fixedly," said the Constable, throwing back the hood which had hitherto in a great degree obscured his features.

"On your knees—on your knees, Raoul!" exclaimed Gillian, dropping on her own at the same time; "it is the Constable himself, and he has heard me call him old Hugh!"

"It is all that is left of him who was the Constable, at least," replied De Lacy; "and old Hugh willingly forgives your freedom, in consideration of your good news. Where are Flammock and his daughter?"

"Rose is with the Lady Eveline, said Dame Gillian; "her ladyship, belike, chose her for bower-woman in place of me, although Rose was never fit to attire so much as a Dutch doll."

"The faithful girl!" said the Constable. "And where is Flammock?"

"Oh, for him, he has pardon and favour from the King," said Raoul; "and is at his own house, with his rabble of weavers, close beside the Battle-bridge, as they now call the place where your lordship quelled the Welsh."

"Thither will I then," said the Constable; "and will then see what welcome King Henry of Anjou has for an old servant. You two must accompany me."

"*My lord*," said Gillian, with hesitation, "you *know poor folk are little thanked* for interference with *great men's affairs. I trust your* lordship will be able to protect us if we speak the truth; and that you will not look back with displeasure on what I did, acting for the best."

"Peace, dame, with a wanion to ye!" said Raoul. "Will you think of your own old sinful carcass, when you should be saving your sweet young mistress from shame and oppression?—And for thy ill tongue, and worse practices, his lordship knows they are bred in the bone of thee."

"Peace, good fellow!" said the Constable; "we will not look back on thy wife's errors, and your fidelity shall be rewarded.—For you, my faithful followers," he said, turning towards Guarine and Vidal, "when De Lacy shall receive his rights, of which he doubts nothing, his first wish shall be to reward your fidelity."

"Mine, such as it is, has been and shall be, its own reward," said Vidal. "I will not accept favours from him in prosperity, who, in adversity, refused me his hand—our account stands yet open."

"Go to, thou art a fool; but thy profession hath a privilege to be humorous," said the Constable, whose weatherbeaten and homely features looked even handsome, when animated by gratitude to Heaven and benevolence towards mankind. "We will meet," he said, "at Battle-bridge, an hour before vespers—I shall have much achieved before that time."

"The space is short," said his esquire.

"I have won a battle in yet shorter," replied the Constable.

"In which," said the minstrel, "many a man has died that thought himself well assured of life and victory."

"Even so shall my dangerous cousin Randal find his schemes of ambition blighted," answered the Constable; and rode forwards, accompanied by Raoul and his wife, who had remounted their palfrey, while the minstrel and squire followed a-foot, and, of course, much more slowly.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Oh, fear not, fear not, good Lord John,
That I would you betray,
Or sue requital for a debt,
Which nature cannot pay.

"Bear witness, all ye sacred powers—
Ye lights that 'gin to shine—
This night shall prove the sacred tie
That binds your faith and mine."

Ancient Scottish Ballad.

LEFT behind by their master, the two dependants of Hugh de Lacy marched on in sullen silence, like men who dislike and distrust each other, though bound to one common service, and partners, therefore, in the same hopes and fears. The dislike, indeed, was chiefly upon Guarine's side; for nothing could be more indifferent to Renault Vidal than was his companion, farther than as he was conscious that Philip loved him not, and was not unlikely, so far as lay in his power, to thwart some plans which he had nearly at heart. He took little notice of his companion, but hummed over to himself, as for the exercise of his memory, romances and songs, many of which were composed in languages which Guarine, who had only an ear for his native Norman, did not understand.

They had proceeded together in this sullen manner for nearly two hours, when they were met by a groom on horseback, leading a saddled palfrey. "Pilgrima," said the man, after looking at them with some attention, "which of you is called Philip Guarine?"

"I, for fault of a better," said the esquire, "reply to that name."

"Thy lord, in that case, commends him to you," said the groom; "and sends you this token, by which you shall know that I am his true messenger."

He showed the esquire a rosary, which Philip instantly recognised as that used by the Constable.

"I acknowledge the token," he said, "speak my master's pleasure."

"He bids me say," replied the rider, "that his visit thrives as well as is possible, and that this very evening, by time that the sun sets, he will be possessed of his own. He desires, therefore, you will mount this pal-

vy, and come with me to the Garde Doloureuse, as our presence will be wanted there."

"It is well, and I obey him," said the esquire, much eased with the import of the message, and not unsatisfied at being separated from his travelling ompanion.

"And what charge for me?" said the minstrel, addressing the messenger.

"If you, as I guess, are the minstrel, Renault Vidal, ou are to abide your master at the Battle-bridge, according to the charge formerly given."

"I will meet him, as in duty bound," was Vidal's nswer; and scarce was it uttered, ere the two horsemen, turning their backs on him, rode briskly forward, nd were speedily out of sight.

It was now four hours past noon, and the sun was eclining, yet there was more than three hours' space o the time of rendezvous, and the distance from the lace did not now exceed four miles. Vidal, therefore, either for the sake of rest or reflection, withdrew om the path into a thicket on the left hand, from hich gushed the waters of a streamlet, fed by a mall fountain that bubbled up amongst the trees. Here the traveller sat himself down, and with an air hich seemed unconscious of what he was doing, ent his eye on the little sparkling font for more than alf an hour, without change of posture; so that he ight, in Pagan times, have represented the statue of water-god bending over his urn, and attentive only o the supplies which it was pouring forth. At length, owever, he seemed to recall himself from this state f deep abstraction, drew himself up, and took some oarse food from his pilgrim's scrip, as if suddenly minded that life is not supported without means. ut he had probably something at his heart which ffected his throat or appetite. After a vain attempt swallow a morsel, he threw it from him in disgust, nd applied him to a small flask, in which he had me wine or other liquor. But seemingly this also rned distasteful, for he threw from him both scrip nd bottle, and, bending down to the spring, drank eply of the pure element, bathed in it his hands and e, and arising from the fountain apparently reshed, moved slowly on his way, singing as he went, t in a low and saddened tone, wild fragments of cient poetry, in a tongue equally ancient.

Journeying on in this melancholy manner, he at gth came in sight of the Battle-bridge; near to hich arose, in proud and gloomy strength, the celeated castle of the Garde Doloureuse. "Here, then," said—"here, then, I am to await the proud De cy. Be it so, in God's name!—he shall know me ter ere we part."

So saying, he strode, with long and resolved steps, oss the bridge, and ascending a mound which arose the opposite side at some distance, he gazed for a e upon the scene beneath—the beautiful river, rich h the reflected tints of the western sky—the trees, hich were already brightened to the eye, and sadned to the fancy, with the hue of autumn—and the ksome walls and towers of the feudal castle, from ich, at times, flashed a glimpse of splendour, as ne sentinel's arms caught and gave back a-transt ray of the setting sun.

The countenance of the minstrel which had hitherto n dark and troubled, seemed softened by the quiet he scene. He threw loose his pilgrim's dress, yet fering part of its dark folds to hang around him ntle-wise; under which appeared his minstrel's ard. He took from his side a *rote*, and striking, n time to time, a Welsh descant, sung at others a , of which we can offer only a few fragments, litey translated from the ancient language in which y were chanted, premising that they are in that ursive symbolical style of poetry, which Taliessin, warch Hen, and other bards, had derived perhaps n the time of the Druids.

I asked of my harp, 'Who hath injured thy chords?'
she replied, 'The crooked finger, which I mocked in my tune.'
ade of silver may be bended—a blade of steel abideth—
dness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

e sweet taste of mead passeth from the lips,
they are long corroded by the juice of wormwood
The lamb is brought to the shambles, but the wolf rangeth the mountain;
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

"I asked the red-hot iron, when it glimmered on the anvil,
'Wherefore glowest thou longer than the firebrand?'—
'I was born in the dark mine, and the brand in the pleasant greenwood.'
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

"I asked the green oak of the assembly, wherefore its boughs were dry and seared like the horns of the stag?
And it showed me that a small worm had gnawed its roots.
The boy who remembered the scourge, undid the wicket of the castle at midnight.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

"Lightning destroyeth temples, though their spires pierce the clouds;
Storms destroy armadas, though their sails intercept the gale.
He that is in his glory falleth, and that by a contemptible enemy.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

More of the same wild images were thrown out, each bearing some analogy, however fanciful and remote, to the theme, which occurred like a chorus at the close of each stanza; so that the poetry resembled a piece of music, which, after repeated excursions through fanciful variations, returns ever and anon to the simple melody which is the subject of ornament.

As the minstrel sung, his eyes were fixed on the bridge and its vicinity; but when, near the close of his chant, he raised up his eyes towards the distant towers of the Garde Doloureuse, he saw that the gates were opened, and that there was a mustering of guards and attendants without the barriers, as if some expedition were about to set forth, or some person of importance to appear on the scene. At the same time, glancing his eyes around, he discovered that the landscape, so solitary when he first took his seat on the gray stone from which he overlooked it, was now becoming filled with figures.

During his reverie, several persons, solitary and in groups, men, women, and children, had begun to assemble themselves on both sides of the river, and were loitering there, as if expecting some spectacle. There was also much bustling at the Fleming's mills, which, though at some distance, were also completely under his eye. A procession seemed to be arranging itself there, which soon began to move forward, with pipe and tabor, and various other instruments of music, and soon approached, in regular order, the place where Vidal was seated.

It appeared the business in hand was of a pacific character; for the gray-bearded old men of the little settlement, in their decent russet gowns, came first after the rustic band of music, walking in ranks of three and three, supported by their staves, and regulating the motion of the whole procession by their sober and staid pace. After these fathers of the settlement came Wilkin Flammock, mounted on his mighty war-horse, and in complete armour, save his head, like a vassal prepared to do military service for his lord. After him followed, and in battle rank, the flower of the little colony, consisting of thirty men, well armed and appointed, whose steady march, as well as their clean and glittering armour, showed steadiness and discipline, although they lacked alike the fiery glance of the French soldiery, or the look of dogged defiance which characterized the English, or the wild ecstatic impetuosity of eye which then distinguished the Welsh. The mothers and the maidens of the colony came next; then followed the children, with faces as chubby, and features as serious, and steps as grave, as their parents; and last, as a rearguard, came the youths from fourteen to twenty, armed with light lances, bows, and similar weapons becoming their age.

This procession wheeled around the base of the mound or embankment on which the minstrel was seated; crossed the bridge with the same slow and regular pace, and formed themselves into a double line, facing inwards, as if to receive some person of consequence, or witness some ceremonial. Flammock remained at the extremity of the avenue thus formed by his countrymen, and quietly, yet earnestly engaged in making arrangements and preparations.

In the mean while, stragglers of different countries

began to draw together, apparently brought there by mere curiosity, and formed a motley assemblage at the farther end of the bridge, which was that nearest to the castle. Two English peasants passed very near the stone on which Vidal sat.—"Wilt thou sing us a song, minstrel," said one of them, "and here is a tester for thee?" throwing into his hat a small silver coin.

"I am under a vow," answered the minstrel, "and may not practise the gay science at present."

"Or you are too proud to play to English churls," said the elder peasant, "for thy tongue smacks of the Norman."

"Keep the coin, nevertheless," said the younger man. "Let the palmer have what the minstrel refuses to earn."

"I pray you reserve your bounty, kind friend," said Vidal, "I need it not;—and tell me of your kindness, instead, what matters are going forward here."

"Why, know you not that we have got our Constable De Lacy again, and that he is to grant solemn investure to the Flemish weavers of all these fine things Harry of Anjou has given?—Had Edward the Confessor been alive, to give the Netherland knaves their guerdon, it would have been a cast of the gallows-tree. But come, neighbour, we shall lose the show."

So saying, they pressed down the hill.

Vidal fixed his eyes on the gates of the distant castle; and the remote waving of banners, and mustering of men on horseback, though imperfectly seen at such a distance, apprised him that one of note was about to set forth at the head of a considerable train of military attendants. Distant flourishes of trumpets, which came faintly yet distinctly on his ear, seemed to attest the same. Presently he perceived, by the dust which began to arise in columns betwixt the castle and the bridge, as well as by the nearer sound of the clarions, that the troop was advancing towards him in procession.

Vidal, on his own part, seemed as if irresolute whether to retain his present position, where he commanded a full but remote view of the whole scene, or to obtain a nearer but more partial one, by involving himself in the crowd which now closed around on either hand of the bridge, unless where the avenue was kept open by the armed and arrayed Flemings.

A monk next hurried past Vidal, and on his inquiring as formerly the cause of the assembly, answered in a muttering tone, from beneath his hood, that it was the Constable De Lacy, who, as the first act of his authority, was then and there to deliver to the Flemings a royal charter of their immunities.

"He is in haste to exercise his authority, methinks," said the minstrel.

"He that has just gotten a sword is impatient to draw it," replied the monk, who added more which the minstrel understood imperfectly; for Father Aldrovand had not recovered the injury which he had received during the siege.

Vidal, however, understood him to say, that he was to meet the Constable there, to beg his favourable intercession.

"I also will meet him," said Renault Vidal, rising suddenly from the stone which he occupied.

"Follow me then," mumbled the priest; "the Flemings know me, and will let me forward."

But Father Aldrovand being in disgrace, his influence was not so potent as he had flattered himself; and both he and the minstrel were jostled to and fro in the crowd, and separated from each other.

Vidal, however, was recognised by the English peasants who had before spoke to him. "Canst thou do any jugglers' feats, minstrel?" said one. "Thou mayst earn a fair largess, for our Norman masters love *jongleric*."

"I know but one," said Vidal, "and I will show it, if you will yield me some room."

They crowded a little off from him, and gave him time to throw aside his bonnet, bare his legs and knees, by stripping off the leathern buskins which *swathed them, and retaining* only his sandals. He *then tied a parti-coloured* handerchief around his *swarthy and sunburnt hair*, and casting off his upper doublet, showed his brawny and nervous arms, naked to the shoulder.

But while he amused those immediately about him with these preparations, a commotion and rush among the crowd, together with the close sound of trumpets, answered by all the Flemish instruments of music, as well as the shouts in Norman and English, of "Long live the gallant Constable!—Our Lady for the bold De Lacy!" announced that the Constable was close at hand.

Vidal made incredible exertions to approach the leader of the procession, whose morion, distinguished by its lofty plumes, and right hand holding his truncheon or leading-staff, was all he could see, on account of the crowd of officers and armed men around him. At length his exertions prevailed, and he came within three yards of the Constable, who was then in a small circle which had been with difficulty kept clear for the purpose of the ceremonial of the day. His back was towards the minstrel, and he was in the act of bending from his horse to deliver the royal charter to Wilkin Flammock, who had knelt on one knee to receive it the more reverentially. His discharge of this duty occasioned the Constable to stoop so low, that his plume seemed in the act of mixing with the flowing mane of his noble charger.

At this moment, Vidal threw himself with singular agility, over the heads of the Flemings who guarded the circle; and, ere an eye could twinkle, his right knee was on the croupe of the Constable's horse—the grasp of his left hand on the collar of De Lacy's buff-coat; then, clinging to his prey like a tiger after its leap, he drew, in the same instant of time, a short, sharp dagger—and buried it in the back of the neck, just where the spine, which was severed by the stroke, serves to convey to the trunk of the human body the mysterious influences of the brain. The blow was struck with the utmost accuracy of aim and strength of arm. The unhappy horseman dropped from his saddle, without groan or struggle, like a bull in the amphitheatre, under the steel of the taurador; and in the same saddle sat his murderer, brandishing the bloody poniard, and urging the horse to speed.

There was indeed a possibility of his having achieved his escape, so much were those around paralyzed for the moment by the suddenness and audacity of the enterprise; but Flammock's presence of mind did not forsake him—he seized the horse by the bridle, and, aided by those who wanted but an example, made the rider prisoner, bound his arms, and called aloud that he must be carried before King Henry. This proposal, uttered in Flammock's strong and decided tone of voice, silenced a thousand wild cries of murder and treason which had arisen while the different and hostile natives, of which the crowd was composed, threw upon each other reciprocally the charge of treachery.

All the streams, however, now assembled in one channel, and poured with unanimous assent towards the Garde Doloureuse, excepting a few of the murdered nobleman's train, who remained to transport their master's body, in decent solemnity of mourning, from the spot which he had sought with so much pomp and triumph.

When Flammock reached the Garde Doloureuse, he was readily admitted with his prisoner, and with such witnesses as he had selected to prove the execution of the crime. To his request of an audience he was answered, that the King had commanded that none should be admitted to him for some time; yet so singular were the tidings of the Constable's slaughter, that the captain of the guard ventured to interrupt Henry's privacy, in order to communicate that event; and returned with orders that Flammock and his prisoner should be instantly admitted to the royal apartment. Here they found Henry attended by several persons, who stood respectfully behind the royal seat, in a darkened part of the room. When Flammock entered, his large bulk and massive limbs were strangely contrasted with cheeks pale with horror at what he had just witnessed, and with awe at finding himself in the royal presence-chamber. Beside him stood his prisoner, unbound, by the

ation in which he was placed. The blood of his im, which had spirted from the wound, was ble on his bare limbs and his scanty garments; particularly upon his brow, and the handkerchief a which it was bound.

Henry gazed on him with a stern look, which the er not only endured without dismay, but seemed eturn with a frown of defiance.

Does no one know this caitiff?" said Henry, ging around him.

There was no immediate answer until Philip arine, stepping from the group which stood behind royal chair, said, though with hesitation, "So se you, my liege, but for the strange guise in ich he is now arrayed, I should say there was a sehold minstrel of my master, by name Renault al."

Thou art deceived, Norman," replied the minstrel; ly menial place and base lineage were but assumed am Cadwallon the Briton—Cadwallon of the e Laye—Cadwallan the chief bard of Gwenwyn Powys-land—and his avenger!"

As he uttered the last word, his looks encountered se of a palmer, who had gradually advanced from recess in which the attendants were stationed, d now confronted him.

The Welshman's eyes looked so eagerly ghastly as lying from their sockets, while he exclaimed, in a se of surprise, mingled with horror, "Do the dead me before monarchs?—Or, if thou art alive, *whom* ve I slain?—I dreamed not, surely, of that bound, d of that home blow?—yet my victim stands fore me! Have I not slain the Constable of Ches-?"

"Thou hast indeed slain the Constable," answered e King; "but know, Welshmen, it was Randal de ucy, on whom that charge was this morning con-red, by our belief of our loyal and faithful Hugh Lacy's having been lost upon his return from the oly Land, as the vessel in which he had taken assage was reported to have suffered shipwreck. hou hast cut short Randal's brief elevation but by few hours; for to-morrow's sun would have again en him without land or lordship."

The prisoner dropped his head on his bosom in vident despair. "I thought," he murmured "that he ad changed his slough, and come forth so glorious all o soon. May the eyes drop out that were cheated with hose baubles, a plumed cap and a lacquered batoon!"

"I will take care, Welshman, thine eyes cheat see not again," said the King, sternly; "before the ight is an hour older, they shall be closed on all hat is earthly."

"May I request of your nobleness," said the Consta-le, "that you will permit me to ask the unhappy nan a few questions?"

"When I have demanded of him myself," said the King, "why he has dipt his hand in the blood of a noble Norman."

"Because he at whom I aimed my blow," said the Briton, his eye glancing fiercely from the King to De Lacy, and back, "had spilled the blood of the descendant of a thousand kings; to which his own bore, or thine, proud Count of Anjou, is but as the puddle of the highway to the silver fountain."

Henry's eye menaced the audacious speaker; but he King reined in his wrath when he beheld the im-loring look of his servant.—"What wouldst thou ask of him?" he said; "be brief, for his time is short."

"So please you my liege, I would but demand wherefore he has for years forborne to take the life he aimed at, when it was in his power—nay, when it must have been lost but for his seemingly faithful ervice?"

"Norman," said Cadwallon, "I will answer thee. When I first took upon me thy service, it was well my purpose to have slain thee that night. There stands he man," pointing to Philip Guarine, "to whose vigilance thou owed'st thy safety."

"Indeed," said De Lacy, "I do remember some ndications of such a purpose; but why didst thou forego it, *when following opportunities put it in thy power?*"

"When the slayer of my Sovereign became God's soldier," answered Cadwallon, "and served his cause in Palestine, he was safe from my earthly vengeance."

"A wonderful forbearance on the part of a Welsh assassin!" said the King, scornfully.

"Ay," answered Cadwallon; "and which certain Christian princes have scarce attained to, who have never neglected the chance of pillage or conquest afforded by the absence of a rival in the Holy Crusade."

"Now, by the Holy Rood"—said Henry, on the point of bursting out, for the insult affected him peculiarly, but, suddenly stopping, he said, with an air of contempt, "To the gallows with the knave!"

"But one other question," said De Lacy, "Renault, or by whatever name thou art called. Ever since my return thou hast rendered me service inconsistent with thy stern resolution upon my life—thou didst aid me in my shipwreck—and didst guide me safely through Wales, where my name would have insured my death; and all this after the crusade was accomplished?"

"I could explain thy doubt," said the bard, "but that it might be thought I was pleading for my life."

"Hesitate not for that," said the King; "for were our Holy Father to intercede for thee, his prayer were in vain."

"Well then," said the bard, "know the truth—I was too proud to permit either wave or Welshman to share in my revenge. Know also, what is perhaps Cadwallon's weakness—use and habit had divided my feelings towards De Lacy, between aversion and admiration. I still contemplated my revenge, but as something which I might never complete, and which seemed rather an image in the clouds, than an object to which I must one day draw near.—And when I beheld thee," he said, turning to De Lacy, "this very day so determined, so sternly resolved, to bear thy impending fate like a man—that you seemed to me to resemble the last tower of a ruined palace, still holding its head to heaven, when its walls of splendour, and its bowers of delight, lay in desolation around—may I perish, I said to myself in secret, ere I perfect its ruin! Yes, De Lacy, then, even then—but some hours since—hadst thou accepted my proffered hand, I had served thee as never follower served master. You rejected it with scorn—and yet notwithstanding that insult, it required that I should have seen you, as I thought, trampling over the field in which you slew my master, in the full pride of Norman insolence, to animate my resolution to strike the blow, which, meant for you, has slain at least one of your usurping race.—I will answer no more questions—lead on to axe or gallows—it is indifferent to Cadwallon—my soul will soon be with my free and noble ancestry, and with my beloved and royal patron!"

"My liege and prince," said De Lacy, bending his knee to Henry, "can you hear this, and refuse your ancient servant one request?—Spare this man!—Extinguish not such a light, because it is devious and wild."

"Rise, rise, De Lacy, and shame thee of thy petition!" said the King. "Thy kinsman's blood—the blood of a noble Norman, is on the Welshman's hands and brow. As I am a crowned King, he shall die ere it is wiped off.—Here! have him to present execution!"

Cadwallon was instantly withdrawn under a guard. The Constable seemed, by action rather than words, to continue his intercessio...

"Thou art mad, De Lacy—thou art mad, mine old and true friend, to urge me thus," said the King, compelling De Lacy to rise. "Seest thou not that my care in this matter is for thee?—This Randal, by largesses and promises, hath made many friends, who will not, perhaps, easily again be brought to your allegiance, returning, as thou dost, diminished in power and wealth. Had he lived, we might have had hard work to deprive him entirely of the power which he had acquired. We thank the Welsh assassin who hath rid us of him; but his adherents would ev foul play were the murderer spared. When blood paid for blood, all will be forgotten, and their lov

wilt once more flow in its proper channel to thee, their lawful lord."

Hugo de Lacy arose from his knees, and endeavoured respectfully to combat the politic reasons of his wily sovereign, which he plainly saw were resorted to less for his sake than with the prudent purpose of effecting the change of feudal authority, with the least possible trouble to the country or Sovereign.

Henry listened to De Lacy's arguments patiently, and combated them with temper, until the death-drum began to beat, and the castle bell to toll. He then led De Lacy to the window; on which, for it was now dark, a strong ruddy light began to gleam from without. A body of men-at-arms, each holding in his hand a blazing torch, were returning along the terrace from the execution of the wild but high-soul'd Briton, with cries of "Long live King Henry! and so perish all enemies of the gentle Norman men!"

CONCLUSION.

A sun hath set—a star hath risen,
O, Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.

COLERIDGE.

POPULAR fame had erred in assigning to Eveline Berenger, after the capture of her castle, any confinement more severe than that of her aunt the Lady Abbess of the Cistertians' convent afforded. Yet that was severe enough; for maiden aunts, whether abbesses or no, are not tolerant of the species of errors of which Eveline was accused; and the innocent damosel was brought in many ways to eat her bread in shame of countenance and bitterness of heart.—Every day of her confinement was rendered less and less endurable by taunts, in the various forms of sympathy, consolation, and exhortation; but which, stript of their assumed forms, were undisguised anger and insult. The company of Rose was all which Eveline had to sustain her under these inflictions, and that was at length withdrawn on the very morning when so many important events took place at the Garde Doloureuse.

The unfortunate young lady inquired in vain of a grim-faced nun, who appeared in Rose's place to assist her to dress, why her companion and friend was debarred attendance. The nun observed on that score an obstinate silence, but threw out many hints on the importance attached to the vain ornaments of a frail child of clay, and on the hardship that even a spouse of Heaven was compelled to divert her thoughts from her higher duties, and condescend to fasten clasps and adjust veils.

The Lady Abbess, however, told her niece after matins, that her attendant had not been withdrawn from her for a space only, but was likely to be shut up in a house of the severest profession, for having afforded her mistress assistance in receiving Damian de Lacy into her sleeping apartment at the castle of Baldringham.

A soldier of De Lacy's band, who had hitherto kept what he had observed a secret, being off his post that night, had now in Damian's disgrace found he might benefit himself by telling the story. This new blow, so unexpected, so afflictive—this new charge, which it was so difficult to explain, and so impossible utterly to deny, seemed to Eveline to seal Damian's fate and her own; while the thought that she had involved in ruin her single-hearted and high-soul'd attendant, was all that had been wanting to produce a state which approached to the apathy of despair. "Think of me what you will," she said to her aunt, "I will no longer defend myself—say what you will, I will no longer reply—carry me where you will, I will no longer resist—God will, in his good time, clear my fame—may he forgive my persecutors!"

After this, and during several hours of that unhappy day, the Lady Eveline, pale, cold, silent, glided from chapel to refectory, from refectory to chapel again, at the slightest beck of the Abbess or her official sisters, and seemed to regard the various privations, penances, admonitions, and reproaches, of which she, in the course of that day, was subjected to an extraordinary share, no more than a marble statue minds the inclemency of the external air, or the rain-drops which fall upon it, though they must in time waste and consume it.

The Abbess, who loved her niece, although her affection showed itself often in a vexatious manner, became at length alarmed—countermanded her orders for removing Eveline to an inferior cell—attended herself to see her laid in bed. (in which, as in every thing else, the young lady seemed entirely passive,) and, with something like reviving tenderness, kissed and blessed her on leaving the apartment. Slight as the mark of kindness was, it was unexpected, and, like the rod of Moses, opened the hidden fountains of waters. Eveline wept, a resource which had been that day denied to her—she prayed—and, finally, sobbed herself to sleep, like an infant, with a mind somewhat tranquillized by having given way to this tide of natural emotion.

She awoke more than once in the night to recall mingled and gloomy dreams of cells and of castles, of funerals and of bridals, of coronets and of racks and gibbets; but towards morning she fell into sleep more sound than she had hitherto enjoyed, and her visions partook of its soothing character. The Lady of the Garde Doloureuse seemed to smile on her amid her dreams, and to promise her votaress protection. The shade of her father was there also; and with the boldness of a dreamer, she saw the paternal resemblance with awe, but without fear; his lips moved, and she heard words—their import she did not fully comprehend, save that they spoke of hope, consolation, and approaching happiness. There also glided in, with bright blue eyes fixed upon hers, dressed in a tunic of saffron-coloured silk, with a mantle of cerulean blue of antique fashion, the form of a female, resplendent in that delicate species of beauty which attends the fairest complexion. It was, she thought, the Britoness Vanda; but her countenance was no longer resentful—her long yellow hair flew not loose on her shoulders, but was mysteriously braided with oak and mistletoe; above all, her right hand was gracefully disposed of under her mantle; and it was an unmutilated, unspotted, and beautifully formed hand which crossed the brow of Eveline. Yet, under these assurances of favour, a thrill of fear passed over her as the vision seemed to repeat, or chant,

"Widow'd wife and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd,
All is done that has been said!
Vanda's wrong has been y-wroken—
Take her pardon by this token."

She bent down, as if to kiss Eveline, who started at that instant, and then awoke. Her hand was indeed gently pressed, by one as pure and white as her own. The blue eyes and fair hair of a lovely female face, with half-veiled bosom and dishevelled locks, flitted through her vision, and indeed its lips approached to those of the lovely sleeper at the moment of her awakening; but it was Rose in whose arms her mistress found herself pressed, and who moistened her face with tears, as in a passion of affection she covered it with kisses.

"What means this, Rose?" said Eveline; "thank God, you are restored to me!—But what mean these bursts of weeping?"

"Let me weep—let me weep," said Rose; "it is long since I have wept for joy, and long, I trust, it will be ere I again weep for sorrow. News are come on the spur from the Garde Doloureuse—Amelot has brought them—he is at liberty—so is his master, and in high favour with Henry. Hear yet more, but let me not tell it too hastily—You grow pale."

"No, no," said Eveline; "go on—go on—I think I understand you—I think I do."

"The villain Randal de Lacy, the master-mover of all our sorrows, will plague you no more; he was slain by an honest Welshman, and grieved am I that they have hanged the poor man for his good service. Above all, the stout old Constable is himself returned from Palestine, as worthy, and somewhat wiser, than he was; for it is thought he will renounce his contract with your ladyship."

"Silly girl," said Eveline, crimsoning as high as

she had been before pale, "jest not amidst such a tale. —But can this be reality?—Is Randal indeed slain?—and the Constable returned?"

These were hasty and hurried questions, answered as hastily and confusedly, and broken with ejaculations of surprise and thanks to Heaven, and to Our Lady, until the ecstasy of delight sobered down into a sort of tranquil wonder.

Mean while Damian Lacy also had his explanations to receive, and the mode in which they were conveyed had something remarkable. Damian had for some time been an inhabitant of what our age would have termed a dungeon, but which, in the ancient days, they called a prison. We are perhaps censurable in making the dwelling and the food of acknowledged and convicted guilt more comfortable and palatable than what the parties could have gained by any exertions when at large, and supporting themselves by honest labour; but this is a venial error compared to that of our ancestors, who, considering a charge and a conviction as synonymous, treated the accused before sentence in a manner which would have been of itself a severe punishment after he was found guilty. Damian, therefore, notwithstanding his high birth and distinguished rank, was confined after the manner of the most atrocious criminal, was heavily fettered, fed on the coarsest food, and experienced only this alleviation, that he was permitted to indulge his misery in a solitary and separate cell, the wretched furniture of which was a mean bedstead, and a broken table and chair. A coffin—and his own arms and initials were painted upon it—stood in one corner, to remind him of his approaching fate; and a crucifix was placed in another, to intimate to him that there was a world beyond that which must soon close upon him. No noise could penetrate into the iron silence of his prison—no rumour, either touching his own fate or that of his friends. Charged with being taken in open arms against the King, he was subject to military law, and to be put to death even without the formality of a hearing; and he foresaw no milder conclusion to his imprisonment.

This melancholy dwelling had been the abode of Damian for nearly a month, when strange as it may seem, his health, which had suffered much from his wounds, began gradually to improve, either benefited by the abstemious diet to which he was reduced, or that certainty, however melancholy, is an evil better endured by many constitutions than the feverish contrast betwixt passion and duty. But the term of his imprisonment seemed drawing speedily to a close; his jailer, a sullen Saxon of the lowest order, in more words than he had yet used to him, warned him to look to a speedy change of dwelling; and the tone in which he spoke convinced the prisoner there was no time to be lost. He demanded a confessor, and the jailer, though he withdrew without reply, seemed to intimate by his manner that the boon would be granted.

Next morning at an unusually early hour, the chains and bolts of the cell were heard to clash and groan, and Damian was startled from a broken sleep, which he had not enjoyed for above two hours. His eyes were bent on the slowly opening door, as if he had expected the headsman and his assistants; but the jailer ushered in a stout man in a pilgrim's habit.

"Is it a priest whom you bring me, warden?" said the unhappy prisoner.

"He can best answer the question himself," said the surly official, and presently withdrew.

The pilgrim remained standing on the floor, with his back to the small window, or rather loophole, by which the cell was imperfectly lighted, and gazed intently upon Damian, who was seated on the side of his bed; his pale cheek and dishevelled hair bearing a melancholy correspondence to his heavy irons. He returned the pilgrim's gaze, but the imperfect light only showed him that his visiter was a stout old man, who wore the scallop-shell on his bonnet, as a token that he had passed the sea, and carried a palm branch in his hand, to show he had visited the Holy Land.

"*Benedicite, reverend father,*" said the unhappy young man; "are you a priest come to unburden my conscience?"

"I am not a priest," replied the Palmer, "but one who brings you news of discomfort."

"You bring them to one to whom comfort has been long a stranger, and to a place which perchance never knew it," replied Damian.

"I may be the bolder in my communication," said the Palmer; "those in sorrow will better hear ill news than those whom they surprise in the possession of content and happiness."

"Yet even the situation of the wretched," said Damian, "can be rendered more wretched by suspense. I pray you, reverend sir, to speak the worst at once—If you come to announce the doom of this poor frame, may God be gracious to the spirit which must be violently dismissed from it!"

"I have no such charge," said the Palmer.—"I come from the Holy Land, and have the more grief in finding you thus, because my message to you was one addressed to a free man, and a wealthy one."

"For my freedom," said Damian, "let these fetters speak, and this apartment for my wealth.—But speak out thy news—should my uncle, for I fear thy tale regards him, want either my arm or my fortune, this dungeon and my degradation have further pangs than I had yet supposed, as they render me unable to aid him."

"Your uncle, young man," said the Palmer, "is prisoner, I should rather say slave, to the great Soldan, taken in a battle in which he did his duty, though unable to avert the defeat of the Christians, with which it was concluded. He was made prisoner while covering the retreat, but not until he had slain with his own hand, for his misfortune as it has proved, Hassan Ali, a favourite of the Soldan. The cruel pagan has caused the worthy knight to be loaded with irons heavier than those you wear, and the dungeon to which he is confined would make this seem a palace. The infidel's first resolution was to put the valiant Constable to the most dreadful death which his tormentors could devise. But fame told him that Hugo de Lacy was a man of great power and wealth; and he has demanded a ransom of ten thousand bezants of gold. Your uncle replied that the payment would totally impoverish him, and oblige him to dispose of his whole estates; even then he pleaded, time must be allowed him to convert them into money. The Soldan replied, that it imported little to him whether a hound like the Constable were fat or lean, and that he therefore insisted upon the full amount of the ransom. But he so far relaxed as to make it payable in three portions, on condition that, along with the first portion of the price, the nearest of kin and heir of De Lacy must be placed in his hands as a hostage for what remained due. On these conditions he consented your uncle should be put at liberty so soon as you arrive in Palestine with the gold."

"Now may I indeed call myself unhappy," said Damian "that I cannot show my love and duty to my noble uncle, who hath ever been a father to me in my orphan state."

"It will be a heavy disappointment, doubtless, to the Constable," said the Palmer, "because he was eager to return to this happy country, to fulfil a contract of marriage which he had formed with a lady of great beauty and fortune."

Damian shrunk together in such sort that his fetters clashed, but he made no answer.

"Were he not your uncle," continued the Pilgrim, "and well known as a wise man, I should think he is not quite prudent in this matter. Whatever he was before he left England, two summers spent in the wars of Palestine, and another amid the tortures and restraints of a heathen prison, have made him a sorry bridegroom."

"Peace, pilgrim," said De Lacy, with a commanding tone. "It is not thy part to censure such a noble knight as my uncle, nor is it meet that I should listen to your strictures."

"I crave your pardon, young man," said the Palmer "I spoke not without some view to your interest

which, methinks, does not so well consort with thine uncle having an heir of his body."

"Peace, base man!" said Damian. "By Heaven, I think worse of my cell than I did before, since its doors opened to such a counsellor, and of my chains, since they restrain me from chastising him.—Depart, I pray thee."

"Not till I have your answer for your uncle," answered the Palmer. "My age scorns the anger of thy youth, as the rock despises the foam of the rivulet dashed against it."

"Then, say to my uncle," answered Damian, "I am a prisoner, or I would have come to him—I am a confiscated beggar, or I would have sent him my all."

"Such virtuous purposes are easily and boldly announced," said the Palmer, "when he who speaks them knows that he cannot be called upon to make good the boast of his tongue. But could I tell thee of thy restoration to freedom and wealth, I trow thou wouldst consider twice ere thy act confirmed the sacrifice thou hast in thy present state promised so glibly."

"Leave me, I prithee, old man," said Damian; "thy thought cannot comprehend the tenor of mine—go, and add not to my distress insults which I have not the means to avenge."

"But what if I had it in my power to place thee in the situation of a free and wealthy man, would it please thee *then* to be reminded of thy present boast? for if not, thou mayst rely on my discretion never to mention the difference of sentiment between Damian bound and Damian at liberty."

"How meanest thou?—or hast thou any meaning, save to torment me?" said the youth.

"Not so," replied the old Palmer, plucking from his bosom a parchment scroll to which a heavy seal was attached.—"Know that thy cousin Randal hath been strangely slain, and his treacheries towards the Constable and thee as strangely discovered. The King, in requital of thy sufferings, hath sent thee this full pardon, and endowed thee with a third part of those ample estates, which, by his death, revert to the crown."

"And hath the King also restored my freedom and my right of blood?" exclaimed Damian.

"From this moment, forthwith," said the Palmer—"look upon the parchment—behold the royal hand and seal."

"I must have better proof.—Here," he exclaimed, loudly clashing his irons at the same time, "Here, thou Dogget—warder, son of a Saxon wolf-hound!"

The Palmer, striking on the door, seconded the previous exertions for summoning the jailer, who entered accordingly.

"Warder," said Damian de Lacy, in a stern tone, "am I yet thy prisoner, or no?"

The sullen jailer consulted the Palmer by a look, and then answered to Damian that he was a free man.

"Then, death of thy heart, slave," said Damian, impatiently, "why hang these fetters on the free limbs of a Norman noble? each moment they confine him are worth a lifetime of bondage to such a serf as thou!"

"They are soon rid of, Sir Damian," said the man; "and I pray you to take some patience, when you remember that ten minutes since you had little right to think these bracelets would have been removed for any other purpose than your progress to the scaffold."

"Peace, ban-dog," said Damian, "and be speedy!—And thou, who hast brought me these good tidings, I forgive thy former bearing—thou thoughtest, doubtless, that it was prudent to extort from me professions during my bondage which might in honour decide my conduct when at large. The suspicion inferred in it somewhat offensive, but thy motive was to ensure my uncle's liberty."

"And is it really your purpose," said the Palmer, "to employ your newly-gained freedom in a voyage to Syria, and to exchange your English prison for the dungeon of the Soldan?"

"*If thou thyself* wilt act as my guide," answered *the undaunted youth*, "you shall not say I dally by *the way*."

"And the ransom," said the Palmer, "how is that to be provided?"

"How, but from the estates, which, nominally restored to me, remain in truth and justice my uncle's, and must be applied to his use in the first instance? If I mistake not greatly, there is not a Jew or Lombard who would not advance the necessary sums on such security.—Therefore, dog," he continued, addressing the jailer, "hasten thy unclenching and undoing of rivets, and be not dainty of giving me a little pain, so thou break no limb, for I cannot afford to be stayed on my journey."

The Palmer looked on a little while, as if surprised at Damian's determination, then exclaimed, "I can keep the old man's secret no longer—such high-souled generosity must not be sacrificed.—Hark thee, brave Sir Damian, I have a mighty secret still to impart, and as this Saxon churl understands no French, this is no unfit opportunity to communicate it. Know that thine uncle is a changed man in mind, as he is debilitated and broken down in body. Peevishness and jealousy have possessed themselves of a heart which was once strong and generous; his life is now on the dregs, and, I grieve to speak it, these dregs are foul and bitter."

"Is this thy mighty secret?" said Damian. "That men grow old, I know; and if with infirmity of body comes infirmity of temper and mind, their case the more strongly claims the dutiful observance of those who are bound to them in blood or affection."

"Ay," replied the Pilgrim, "but the Constable's mind has been poisoned against thee by rumours which have reached his ear from England, that there have been thoughts of affection betwixt thee and his betrothed bride, Eveline Berenger.—Ha! have I touched you now?"

"Not a whit," said Damian, putting on the strongest resolution with which his virtue could supply him—"it was but this fellow who struck my shin-bone somewhat sharply with his hammer. Proceed. My uncle heard such a report, and believed it?"

"He did," said the Palmer—"I can well aver it, since he concealed no thought from me. But he prayed me carefully to hide his suspicions from you, 'otherwise,' said he, 'the young wolf-cub will never thrust himself into the trap for the deliverance of the old he-wolf. Were he once in my prison-house,' your uncle continued to speak of you, 'he should rot and die ere I sent one penny of ransom to set at liberty the lover of my betrothed bride.'"

"Could this be my uncle's sincere purpose?" said Damian, all aghast. "Could he plan so much treachery towards me as to leave me in the captivity into which I threw myself for his redemption?—Tush! it cannot be."

"Flatter not yourself with such a vain opinion," said the Palmer—"if you go to Syria, you go to eternal captivity, while your uncle returns to possession of wealth little diminished—and of Eveline Berenger."

"Ha!" ejaculated Damian; and, looking down for an instant, demanded of the Palmer, in a subdued voice, what he would have him to do in such an extremity.

"The case is plain, according to my poor judgment," replied the Palmer. "No one is bound to faith with those who mean to observe none with him. Anticipate this treachery of your uncle, and let his now short and infirm existence moulder out in the pestiferous cell to which he would condemn your youthful strength. The royal grant has assigned you lands enough for your honourable support; and wherefore not unite with them those of the Garde Doloureuse?—Eveline Berenger, if I do not greatly mistake, will scarcely say nay. Ay, more—I vouch it on my soul that she will say yes, for I have sure information of her mind; and for her pre-contract, a word from Henry to his holiness, now that they are in the heyday of their reconciliation, will obliterate the name Hugh from the parchment, and insert Damian in its stead."

"Now, by my faith," said Damian, arising and placing his foot upon the stool, that the warder might more easily strike off the last ring by which he was encumbered,—"I have heard of such things as

his—I have heard of beings who, with seeming gra-
rity of word and aspect—with subtle counsels, art-
ully applied to the frailties of human nature—have
aunted the cells of despairing men, and made them
any a fair promise, if they would but exchange for
heir by-ways the paths of salvation. Such are the
iend's dearest agents, and in such a guise hath the
iend himself been known to appear. In the name of
od, old man, if human thou art, begone!—I like not
hy words or thy presence—I spit at thy counsels.
nd mark me," he added, with a menacing gesture,
'Look to thine own safety—I shall presently be at
iberty!"

"Boy," replied the Palmer, folding his arms con-
emptuously in his cloak, "I scorn thy menaces—I
eave thee not till we know each other better."

"I too," said Damian, "would fain know whether
hou be'st man or fiend; and now for the trial." As
e spoke, the last shackle fell from his leg, and clash-
d on the pavement, and at the same moment he
prang on the Palmer, caught him by the waist, and
xclaimed, as he made three distinct and desperate
ttempts to lift him up and dash him headlong to the
arth, "This for maligning a nobleman—this for
loubting the honour of a knight—and this (with a yet
nore violent exertion) for belying a lady!"

Each effort of Damian seemed equal to have rooted
p a tree; yet though they staggered the old man,
hey overthrew him not; and while Damian panted
with his last exertion, he replied, "And take thou
his, for so roughly entreating thy father's bro-
her."

As he spoke, Damian de Lacy, the best youthful
wrestler in Cheshire, received no soft fall on the
loor of the dungeon. He arose slowly and astounded;
ut the Palmer had now thrown back both hood and
almatique, and the features, though bearing marks
f age and climate, were those of his uncle the Con-
able, who calmly observed, "I think, Damian, thou
rt become stronger, or I weaker, since my breast was
st pressed against yours in our country's celebrated
ort. Thou hadst nigh had me down in that last
rn, but that I knew the old De Lacy's back-trip as
ell as thou.—But wherefore kneel, man?" He raised
m with much kindness, kissed his cheek, and pro-
eded; "Think not, my dearest nephew, that I
eant in my late disguise to try your faith, which I
yself never doubted. But evil tongues had been
sy, and it was this which made me resolve on an
periment, the result of which has been, as I expect-
, most honourable for you. And know, (for these
alls have sometimes ears, even according to the
tter,) there are ears and eyes not far distant which
ve heard and seen the whole. Marry, I wish,
ough, thy last hug had not been so severe a one.
y ribs still feel the impression of thy knuckles."

"Dearest and honoured uncle," said Damian, "ex-
se"——

"There is nothing to excuse," replied his uncle,
terrupting him. "Have we not wrestled a turn
efore now?—But there remains yet one trial for
ee to go through—Get thee out of this hole speedily
don thy best array to accompany me to the church
noon; for, Damian, thou must be present at the
arriage of the Lady Eveline Berenger."

This proposal at once struck to the earth the un-
appy young man. "For mercy's sake," he exclaim-
, "hold me excused in this, my gracious uncle!—
have been of late severely wounded, and am very
eak."

"As my bones can testify,"—said his uncle. "Why,
an, thou hast the strength of a Norway bear."

"Passion," answered Damian, "might give me
rength for a moment; but, dearest uncle, ask any
ing of me rather than this. Methinks, if I have
en faulty, some other punishment might suffice."

"I tell thee," said the Constable, "thy presence is necessary—indispensably necessary. Strange reports have been abroad, which thy absence on this occasion would go far to confirm. Eveline's character and mine own are concerned in this."

"If so," said Damian, "if it be indeed so, no task will be too hard for me. But I trust, when the ceremony is over, you will not refuse me your consent to take the cross, unless you should prefer my joining the troops destined, as I heard, for the conquest of Ireland."

"Ay, ay," said the Constable; "if Eveline grant you permission, I will not withhold mine."

"Uncle," said Damian, somewhat sternly, "you do not know the feelings which you jest with."

"Nay," said the Constable, "I compel nothing; for if thou goest to the church, and likest not the match, thou may'st put a stop to it if thou wilt—the sacrament cannot proceed without the bridegroom's consent."

"I understand you not, uncle," said Damian; "you have already consented."

"Yes, Damian," he said, "I have—to withdraw my claim, and to relinquish it in thy favour; for if Eveline Berenger is wedded to-day, thou art her bride-groom! The Church has given her sanction—the King his approbation—the lady says not nay—and the question only now remains, whether the bride-groom will say yes."

The nature of the answer may be easily conceived; nor is it necessary to dwell upon the splendour of the ceremonial, which, to atone for his late unmerited severity, Henry honoured with his own presence. Amelot and Rose were shortly afterwards united, old Flammock having been previously created a gentle-man of coat armour, that the gentle Norman blood might, without utter derogation, mingle with the meaner stream which coloured the cheek in crimson, and meandered in azure over the lovely neck and bo-som of the fair Fleming. There was nothing in the manner of the Constable towards his nephew and his bride, which could infer a regret of the generous self-denial which he had exercised in favour of their youthful passion. But he soon after accepted a high command in the troops destined to invade Ireland; and his name is found among the highest in the roll of the chivalrous Normans who first united that fair island to the English crown.

Eveline, restored to her own fair castle and domains, failed not to provide for her confessor, as well as for her old soldiers, servants, and retainers, forgetting their errors, and remembering their fidelity. The Confessor was restored to the flesh-pots of Egypt, more congenial to his habits than the meager fare of his convent. Even Gillian had the means of sub-sistence, since to punish her would have been to dis-tress the faithful Raoul. They quarrelled for the future part of their lives in plenty, just as they had formerly quarrelled in poverty; for wrangling curs will fight over a banquet as fiercely as over a bare bone. Raoul died first, and Gillian having lost her whet-stone, found that as her youthful looks decayed her wit turned somewhat blunt. She therefore prudently commenced devotee, and spent hours in long pane-gyrics on her departed husband.

The only serious cause of vexation which I can trace the Lady Eveline having been tried with, arose from a visit of her Saxon relative, made with much form, but, unfortunately, at the very time which the Lady Abbess had selected for that same purpose. The discord which arose between these honoured person-ages was of a double character, for they were Nor-man and Saxon, and, moreover, differed in opinion concerning the time of holding Easter. This, how-ever, was but a slight gale to disturb the general serenity of Eveline; for with her unhoped-for union with Damian, ended the trials and sorrows of THE BETROTHED.

END OF THE BETROTHED.

TALES OF THE CRUSADERS.

THE TALISMAN.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALISMAN.

The "Betrothed" did not greatly please one or two friends, who thought that it did not well correspond to the general title of "The Crusaders." They urged, therefore, that, without direct allusion to the manners of the Eastern tribes, and to the romantic conflicts of the period, the title of a "Tale of the Crusaders" would resemble the playbill, which is said to have announced the tragedy of Hamlet, the character of the Prince of Denmark being left out. On the other hand, I felt the difficulty of giving a vivid picture of a part of the world with which was almost totally unacquainted, unless by early recollections of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments; and not only did I labour under the incapacity of ignorance, in which, as far as regards Eastern manners, I was as thickly wrapped as an Egyptian in his fog; but my contemporaries were, many of them, as much enlightened upon the subject, as if they had been inhabitants of the favoured land of Goshen. The love of travelling had pervaded all ranks, and carried the subjects of Britain into all quarters of the world. Greece, so attractive by its remains of art, by its struggles for freedom against a Mahomedan tyrant, by its very name, where every fountain had its classical legend; Palestine, endeared to the imagination by yet more sacred remembrances, had been of late surveyed by British eyes, and described by recent travellers. Had I, therefore, attempted the difficult task of substituting manners of my own invention, instead of the genuine costume of the East, almost every traveller I met, who had extended his route beyond what was anciently called "The Grand Tour," had acquired a right, by ocular inspection, to chastise me for my presumption. Every member of the Traveller's Club, who could pretend to have thrown his shoe over Edom, was, by having done so, constituted my lawful critic and corrector. It occurred, therefore, that where the author of Anastasius, as well as he of Hadji Baba, had described the manners and vices of the Eastern nations, not only with fidelity, but with the humour of Le Sage and the ludicrous power of Fielding himself, one who was a perfect stranger to the subject must necessarily produce an unfavourable contrast. The Poet Laureate also, in the charming tale of "Thalaba," had shown how extensive might be the researches of a person of acquirements and talent, by dint of investigation alone, into the ancient doctrines, history, and manners of the Eastern countries, in which we are probably to look for the cradle of mankind; Moore, in his "Lalla Rookh," had successfully trod the same path; in which, too, Byron, joining ocular experience to extensive reading, had written some of his most attractive poems. In a word, the Eastern themes had been already so successfully handled by those who were acknowledged to be masters of their craft, that I was diffident of making the attempt.

These were powerful objections, nor did they lose force when they became the subject of anxious reflection, although they did not finally prevail. The arguments on the other side were, that though I had no hope of rivalling the contemporaries whom I have mentioned, yet it occurred to me as possible to acquit myself of the task I was engaged in, without entering into competition with them.

The period relating more immediately to the Crusades which at last fixed upon, was that at which the warlike character of Richard I., wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry, with all its extravagant virtues, and its no less absurd errors, was opposed to that of Saladin, in which the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty and violence of an Eastern sultan; and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign whilst each contended which should excel the other in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity. This singular contrast affforded, as the author conceived, materials for a work of fiction, possessing peculiar interest. One of the inferior characters introduced was a supposed relation of Richard Coeur de Lion; a violation of the truth of history, which gave offence to Mr. Mills, the Author of the History of Chivalry and the Crusades, who was not, it may be presumed, aware that romantic fiction naturally includes the power of such invention, which is indeed one of the requisites of the art.

Prince David of Scotland, who was casually in the host, and won the love of some very romantic adventure on his way home, was also pressed into my service, and constitutes one of my dramatis personæ.

It is true I had already brought upon the field Him of the Lion heart. But it was in a more private capacity than he was here to be exhibited in the Talisman; then as a disguised knight, now in the avowed character of a conquering monarch; so that I doubted not a name so dear to Englishmen as that of King Richard I., might contribute to their amusement for more than once.

I had access to all which antiquity believed, whether of reality or fable, on the subject of that magnificent warrior, who was the proudest boast of Europe and their chivalry, and with whose dreadful name the Saracens, according to a historian of their own country, were wont to rebuke their startled horses. "Do you think," said they, "that King Richard is on the track, that you stray as wildly from it?" The most curious register of the history of King Richard, is an ancient romance, translated originally from the Norman; and at first certainly having a pretence to be termed a work of chivalry, but latterly becoming stuffed with the most astonishing and monstrous fables. There is perhaps no metrical romance upon record, where, along with curious and genuine history, are mingled more absurd and exaggerated incidents. We have placed in the Appendix to this Introduction, the passage of the romance in which Richard figures as an Ogre, or literal cannibal.—(Appendix. p. 8.)

A principal incident in the story, is that from which the title is derived. Of all people who ever lived, the Persians were perhaps most remarkable for their unshaken credulity in amulets, spells, periapts, and similar charms, framed, it was said, under the influence of particular planets, and bestowing high medical powers, as well as the means of advancing men's fortunes in various manners. A story of this kind, relating to a Crusader of eminence, is often told in the west of Scotland, and the relic alluded to is still in existence, and even yet held in veneration.

Sir Simon Lockhart of Lee and Cartland made a considerable figure in the reigns of Robert the Bruce and of his son David. He was one of the chief of that band of Scottish chivalry, who accompanied James, the Good Lord Douglas, on his expedition to the Holy Land, with the heart of King Robert Bruce. Douglas, impatient to get at the Saracens, entered into war with those of Spain, and was killed there. Lockhart proceeded to the Holy Land with such Scottish knights as had escaped the fate of their leader, and assisted for some time in the wars against the Saracens.

The following adventure is said by tradition to have befallen him:—

He made prisoner in battle an Emir of considerable wealth and consequence. The aged mother of the captive came to the Christian camp, to redeem her son from his state of captivity. Lockhart is said to have fixed the price at which his prisoner should ransom himself; and the lady, pulling out a large embroidered purse, proceeded to tell down the ransom, like a mother who pays little respect to gold in comparison of her son's liberty. In this operation, a pebble inserted in a coin, some say of the Lower Empire, fell out of the purse, and the Saracen matron testified so much haste to recover it, as gave the Scottish knight a high idea of its value, when compared with gold or silver. "I will not consent," he said, "to grant your son's liberty, unless that amulet be added to his ransom." The lady not only consented to this, but explained to Sir Simon Lockhart the mode in which the Talisman was to be used, and the uses to which it might be put. The water in which it was dipt operates as a styptic, as a fabrifuge, and possesses several other properties as a medical talisman.

Sir Simon Lockhart, after much experience of the wonders which it wrought, brought it to his own country, and left it to his heirs, by whom, and by Clydesdale in general, it was, and is still, distinguished by the name of the Lee-penny, from the name of his native seat of Lee.

The most remarkable part of its history, perhaps, was, that it so especially escaped condemnation when the Church of

Scotland chose to impeach many other cures which savoured of the miraculous, as occasioned by sorcery, and censured the appeal to them, "excepting only that to the amulet, called the Lee-penny, to which it had pleased God to annex certain healing virtues which the Church did not presume to condemn." It still, as has been said, exists, and its powers are sometimes resorted to. Of late, they have been chiefly restricted to the cure of persons bitten by mad dogs; and as the illness in such cases frequently arises from imagination, there can be no reason for doubting that water which has been poured on the Lee-penny furnishes a congenial cure.

Such is the tradition concerning the Talisman, which the author has taken the liberty to vary in applying it to his own purposes.

Considerable liberties have also been taken with the truth of history, both with respect to Conrade of Montserrat's life, as well as his death. That Conrade, however, was reckoned the enemy of Richard, is agreed both in history and romance. The general opinion of the terms upon which they stood, may be guessed from the proposal of the Saracens, that the Marquis of Montserrat should be invested with certain parts of Syria, which they were to yield to the Christians. Richard, according to the romance which bears his name, "could no longer repress his fury. The Marquis, he said, was a traitor, who had robbed the Knights Hospitallers of sixty thousand pounds, the present of his father, Henry; that he was a renegade, whose treachery had occasioned the loss of Acre; and he concluded by a solemn oath, that he would cause him to be drawn to pieces by wild horses, if he should ever venture to pollute the Christian camp by his presence. Philip attempted to intercede in favour of the Marquis, and throwing down his glove, offered to become a pledge for his fidelity to the Christians; but his offer was rejected, and he was obliged to give way to Richard's impetuosity."—*History of Chivalry.*

Conrade of Montserrat makes a considerable figure in these wars, and was at length put to death by one of the followers of the Scheik, or Old Man of the Mountain: nor did Richard remain free of the suspicion of having instigated his death.

It may be said, in general, that most of the incidents introduced in the following tale are fictitious; and that reality, where it exists, is only retained in the characters of the piece.

1st July 1832.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

s wearing in the Holy Land, Richard was seized with

est leeches of the camp were unable to effect the cure
king's disease; but the prayers of the army were more
ful. He became convalescent, and the first symptom of
very was a violent longing for pork. But pork was not
to be plentiful in a country whose inhabitants had an
ion for swine's flesh; and

"'though his men should be hanged,
They no might, in that countrey,
For gold, ne silver, ne no money,
No pork find, take, ne get,
That King Richard might aught of eat.
An old knight with Richard biding,
When he heard of that tiding,
That the kingis wants were swyche,
To the steward he spake privyliche—
'Our lord the king sore is sick, I wis,
And after porck he alonged is;
Ye may soon find to selle;
No man be hardy him so to telle!
If he did he might die.
Now behoves to done as I shall say,
Tho' he were nought of that.
Take a Saracen, young and fat;
In haste let the thief be slain,
Opened, and his skin off flayn;
And sodden full hastily,
With pevrier and with spicery,
And with saffron of good colour.
When the king feels thereof savour,
Out of agne if he be wont,
He shall have thereto good talent
When he has a good taste,
And eaten well a good repast,
And supped of the brewis' a sup,
Slept after and swet a drop,
Through Goddis help and my counsell,
Soon he shall be fresh and hail.'
The sooth to say, at wordes few,
Slain and sodden was the heathen shrew.
Before the king it was forth brought;
Quod his men, 'Lord, we have pork sought;
Eates and supe of the brewis soote,†
Thereof grete of God it shall be your bote.'
Before King Richard carf a knight,
He ate faster than he carve might.
The king ate the flesh and gnew‡ the bones
And drank well after for the nones.
And when he had eaten enough,
His folk hem turned away, and laugh.§
He lay still and drew in his arm;
His chamberlain him wrapped warm.
He lay and slept, and swet a stound,
And became whole and sound.
King Richard clad him and arose,
And walked abouten in the close."

ttack of the Saracens was repelled by Richard in per-
n consequence of which is told in the following lines.

"When King Richard had rested a whyle,
A knight his arms 'gan unlace,
Him to comfort and solace.
Him was brought a sop in wine.
'The head of that like swine,
That I of ate?' (the cook he bade,)
'For feeble I am, and faint and mad.
Of mine evil now I am fear;
Serve me therewith at my soupere?'
Quod the cook, 'That head I me have.'
Then said the king, 'So God me save,
Bot I see the head of that swine,
For sooth, thou shalt leese thine?'
The cook saw none other might be;
He fet the head and let him see.
He fell on knees, and made a cry—
Lo, here the head! my Lord, mercy!'"

cook had certainly some reason to fear that his master
be struck with horror at the recollection of the dreadful
st to which he owed his recovery, but his fears were soon
ated.

"The swarte wief when the king seeth,
His black beard and white teeth,
How his lippes grinned wide,
'What devil is this?' the king cried,
And gan to laugh as he were wode.
'What! is Saracen's flesh thus good?
That, never erst I nought wist!
By God's death and his uprist,
Shall we never die for default,
While we may in any assault,
Slee Saracens, the flesh may take,
And seethen and roasten and do him bake,
[And] Gnawen her flesh to the bones!
Now I have it proved ones,
For hunger ere I be wo,
I and my folk shall eat mo!'"

hanged now offered to surrender, upon conditions of
safety to the inhabitants; while all the public treasure, military machines, and arms, were delivered to the victors, together with the further ransom of one hundred thousand besants. After this capitulation, the following extraordinary scene took place. We shall give it in the words of the humorous and amiable George Ellis, the collector and the editor of these Romances.

"Though the garrison had faithfully performed the other articles of their contract, they were unable to restore the cross, which was not in their possession, and were therefore treated by the Christians with great cruelty. Daily reports of their sufferings were carried to Saladin; and as many of them were persons of the highest distinction, that monarch, at the solicitation of their friends, dispatched an embassy to King Richard with magnificent presents, which he offered for the ransom of the captives. The ambassadors were persons the most respectable from their age, their rank, and their eloquence. They delivered their message in terms of the utmost humility, and, without arraigning the justice of the conqueror in his severe treatment of their countrymen, only solicited a period to that severity, laying at his feet the treasures with which they were intrusted, and pledging themselves and their master for the payment of any further sums which he might demand as the price of mercy.

"King Richard spake with wordes mild
'The gold to take, God me shield!
Among you partiers every charge.
I brought in shippes and in barge,
More gold and silver with me,
Than has your lord, and swilke three.
To his treasure have I no need!
But for my love I you bid,
To meet with me that ye dwell;
And afterward I shall you tell
Thorough counsel I shall you answer,
What bode'* ye shall to your lord bear.'"

The invitation was gratefully accepted. Richard, in the meantime, gave secret orders to his marshal that he should repair to the prison, select a certain number of the most distinguished captives, and, after carefully noting their names on a roll of parchment, cause their heads to be instantly struck off; that these heads should be delivered to the cook with instructions to clear away the hair, and, after boiling them in a caldron, to distribute them on several platters, one to each guest observing to fasten on the forehead of each the piece of parchment expressing the name and family of the victim.

"'An hot head bring me before,
As I were well apayed withall,
Eat thereof fast I shall;
As it were a tender chick,
To see how the others will like.'"

"This horrible order was punctually executed. At noon the guests were summoned to wash by the music of the waits; the King took his seat, attended by the principal officers of his court, at the high table, and the rest of the company were marshalled at a long table below him. On the cloth were placed portions of salt at the usual distances, but neither bread, wine, nor water. The ambassadors, rather surprised at this omission, but still free from apprehension, awaited in silence the arrival of the dinner, which was announced by the sound of pipes, trumpets, and tabours; and beheld, with horror and dismay, the unnatural banquet introduced by the steward and his officers. Yet their sentiments of disgust and abhorrence, and even their fears, were for a time suspended by their curiosity. Their eyes were fixed on the King, who, without the slightest change of countenance, swallowed the morsels as fast as they could be supplied by the knight who carved them.

"Every man then poked other;
They said, 'This is the devil's brother,
That slays our men, and thus hem eats!'"

"Their attention was then involuntarily fixed on the smoking heads before them; they traced in the swollen and distorted features the resemblance of a friend or near relation, and received from the fatal scroll which accompanied each dish the sad assurance that this resemblance was not imaginary. They sat in torpid silence, anticipating their own fate in that of their countrymen, while their ferocious entertainer, with fury in his eyes, but with courtesy on his lips, insulted them by frequent invitations to merriment. At length this first course was removed, and its place supplied by venison, cranes, and other dainties, accompanied by the richest wines. The King then apologized to them for what had passed, which he attributed to his ignorance of their taste; and assured them of his religious respect for their character as ambassadors, and of his readiness to grant them a safe conduct for their return. This boon was all that they now wished to claim; and

"King Richard spake to an old man,
'Wendes home to your Soudan!
His melancholy that ye abate:
And seyes that ye came too late.
Too slowly was your time y-guessed,
Ere ye came, the flesh was dressed.

† Sweet. ‡ Gnawed. § Laughed. ‖ Black face. ¶ Divide. ** Message.

That men shoulden serve with me,
Thus at noon, and my meynie.
Slay him, it shall him nought avail,
Though he for-bar us our vitail,
Bread, wine, fish, flesh, salmon and conger;
Of us none shall die with hunger,
While we may wenden to fight,
And slay the Sarasens downright,
Wash the flesh, and roast the head.
With oo* Saracen I may well feed
Well a nine or a ten
Of my good Christian men.
King Richard shall warrant,
There is no flesh so nourisant
Unto an English man,
Partridge, plover, heron, no swan,
Cow no ox, sheep no swine,
As the head of a Sarasyne.
There be is fat, and therto tender
And my men be lean and slender.
While any Sarasens quick be,
Livand now in this Syrie,
For meat will we nothing care.
Abouten fast we shall fare,
And every day we shall eat
All so many as we may get.
To England will we nought gon,
Till they be eaten every one.'"

Ellis's Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances, vol. ii. p. 188.

The reader may be curious to know owing to what circumstances so extraordinary an invention as that which imputed cannibalism to the King of England, should have found its way into his history. Mr. James, to whom we owe so much that is curious, seems to have traced the origin of this extraordinary rumour

"With the army of the cross also was a multitude of poor," the same author declares, "who made it a profession to be without money; they walked barefoot, carried no arms, and even preceded the beasts of burden in their march, living upon roots and herbs, and presenting a spectacle both disgusting and pitiable.

"A Norman, who according to all accounts was of noble birth, but who, having lost his horse, continued to follow as a foot-soldier, took the strange resolution of putting himself at the head of this race of vagabonds, who willingly received him as their king. Amongst the Saracens these men became well known under the name of *Thafurs*, (which Guibert translates *Trudentes*,) and were beheld with great horror from the general persuasion that they fed on the dead bodies of their enemies; a report which was occasionally justified, and which the king of the Thafurs took care to encourage. This respectable monarch was frequently in the habit of stopping his followers, one by one, in a narrow defile, and of causing them to be searched carefully, lest the possession of the least sum of money should render them unworthy of the name of his subjects. If even two sous were found upon any one, he was instantly expelled the society of his tribe, the king bidding him contemptuously buy arms and fight.

"This troop, so far from being cumbersome to the army, was infinitely serviceable, carrying burdens, bringing in forage, provisions, and tribute; working the machines in the sieges, and, above all, spreading consternation among the Turks, who feared death from the lances of the knights less than that farther consummation they heard of under the teeth of the Thafurs."†

It is easy to conceive, that an ignorant minstrel, finding the taste and ferocity of the Thafurs commemorated in the historical accounts of the Holy wars, has ascribed their practices and propensities to the Monarch of England, whose ferocity was considered as an object of exaggeration as legitimate as his valour.

* One.

† James's History of Chivalry, p. 178

TALES OF THE CRUSADERS.

TALE II.

THE TALISMAN.

CHAPTER I.

——— They, too, retired
To the wilderness, but 'twas with arms.
Paradise Regained.

burning sun of Syria had not yet attained its
point in the horizon, when a knight of the
ess, who had left his distant northern home,
ned the host of the Crusaders in Palestine,
cing slowly along the sandy deserts which lie
ricinity of the Dead Sea, or, as it is called, the
Asphaltites, where the waves of the Jordan
emselves into an inland sea, from which there
scharge of waters.

warlike pilgrim had toiled among cliffs and
es during the earlier part of the morning;
itely, issuing from those rocky and dangerous
he had entered upon that great plain, where
cursed cities provoked, in ancient days, the
ind dreadful vengeance of the Omnipotent.
toil, the thirst, the dangers of the way, were
en, as the traveller recalled the fearful catas-
which had converted into an arid and dis-
lderness the fair and fertile valley of Siddim,
ell watered, even as the Garden of the Lord,
parched and blighted waste, condemned to
sterility.

sing himself, as he viewed the dark mass of
waters, in colour as in quality unlike those of
ther lake, the traveller shuddered as he remem-
hat beneath these sluggish waves lay the once
cities of the plain, whose grave was dug by
nder of the heavens, or the eruption of sub-
ous fire, and whose remains were hid, even by
a which holds no living fish in its bosom. beare
f on its surface, and, as if its own dreadful bed
he only fit receptacle for its sullen waters,
not, like other lakes, a tribute to the ocean.
nole land around, as in the days of Moses, was
stone and salt; it is not sown, nor beareth, nor
ass groweth thereon;" the land as well as the
ight be termed dead, as producing nothing hav-
esemblance to vegetation, and even the very air
tirely devoid of its ordinary winged inhabitants,
d probably by the odour of bitumen and sul-
which the burning sun exhaled from the waters
lake, in streaming clouds, frequently assuming
pearance of waterspouts. Masses of the slimy
ulphurous substance called naphtha, which
idly on the sluggish and sullen waves, sup-
nose rolling clouds with new vapours, and af-
awful testimony to the truth of the Mosaic

n this scene of desolation the sun shone with
intolerable splendour, and all living nature
l to have hidden itself from the rays, excepting
itary figure which *moved through* the flitting
t a foot's pace, and appeared the sole breathing
thing on the wide surface of the plain. The dress of their rider, and the accoutrements of his horse were peculiarly unfit for the traveller in such a country. A coat of linked mail, with long sleeves, plated gauntlets, and a steel breastplate, had not been esteemed a sufficient weight of armour; there was also his triangular shield suspended round his neck, and his barred helmet of steel, over which he had a hood and collar of mail, which was drawn around the warrior's shoulders and throat, and filled up the vacancy between the hauberk and the headpiece. His lower limbs were sheathed, like his body, in flexible mail, securing the legs and thighs, while the feet rested in plated shoes, which corresponded with the gauntlets. A long, broad, straight-shaped, double-edged falchion, with a handle formed like a cross, corresponded with a stout poniard on the other side. The Knight also bore, secured to his saddle, with one end resting on his stirrup, the long steel-headed lance, his own proper weapon, which, as he rode, projected backwards, and displayed its little pennoncelle, to dally with the faint breeze, or drop in the dead calm. To this cumbrous equipment must be added a surcoat of embroidered cloth, much frayed and worn, which was thus far useful, that it excluded the burning rays of the sun from the armour, which they would otherwise have rendered intolerable to the wearer. The surcoat bore, in several places, the arms of the owner, although much defaced. These seemed to be a couchant leopard, with the motto, "I sleep—wake me not." An outline of the same device might be traced on his shield, though many a blow had almost effaced the painting. The flat top of his cumbrous cylindrical helmet was unadorned with any crest. In retaining their own unwieldly defensive armour, the northern Crusaders seemed to set at defiance the nature of the climate and country to which they had come to war.

The accoutrements of the horse were scarcely less massive and unwieldly than those of the rider. The animal had a heavy saddle plated with steel, uniting in front with a species of breastplate, and behind with defensive armour made to cover the loins. Then there was a steel axe, or hammer, called a mace-of-arms, and which hung to the saddle-bow; the reins were secured by chain-work, and the front-stall of the bridle was a steel plate, with apertures for the eyes and nostrils, having in the midst a short sharp pike projecting from the forehead of the horse like the horn of the fabulous unicorn.

But habit had made the endurance of this load of panoply a second nature, both to the knight and his gallant charger. Numbers, indeed, of the western warriors who hurried to Palestine, died ere they became inured to the burning climate; but there were others to whom that climate became innocent and even friendly, and among this fortunate number was the solitary horseman who now traversed the border of the Dead Sea.

Nature, which cast his limbs in a mould of uncommon strength, fitted to wear his linked hauberk with as much ease as if the meshes had been formed of cobwebs, had endowed him with a constitution as strong as his limbs, and which bade defiance to almost all changes of climate, as well as to fatigue and privations of every kind. His disposition seemed, in some degree, to partake of the qualities of his bodily frame; and as the one possessed great strength and endurance, united with the power of violent exertion, the other, under a calm and undisturbed semblance, had much of the fiery and enthusiastic love of glory which constituted the principal attribute of the renowned Norman line, and had rendered them sovereigns in every corner of Europe where they had drawn their adventurous swords.

It was not, however, to all the race that fortune proposed such tempting rewards; and those obtained by the solitary knight during two years' campaign in Palestine, had been only temporal fame, and, as he was taught to believe, spiritual privileges. Mean time, his slender stock of money had melted away, the rather that he did not pursue any of the ordinary modes by which the followers of the Crusade condescended to recruit their diminished resources, at the expense of the people of Palestine; he exacted no gifts from the wretched natives for sparing their possessions when engaged in warfare with the Saracens, and he had not availed himself of any opportunity of enriching himself by the ransom of prisoners of consequence. The small train which had followed him from his native country, had been gradually diminished, as the means of maintaining them disappeared, and his only remaining squire was at present on a sick-bed, and unable to attend his master, who travelled, as we have seen, singly and alone. This was of little consequence to the Crusader, who was accustomed to consider his good sword as his safest escort, and devout thoughts as his best companion.

Nature had, however, her demands for refreshment and repose, even on the iron frame and patient disposition of the Knight of the Sleeping Leopard; and at noon, when the Dead Sea lay at some distance on his right, he joyfully hailed the sight of two or three palm-trees, which arose beside the well which was assigned for his mid-day station. His good horse, too, which had plodded forward with the steady endurance of his master, now lifted his head, expanded his nostrils, and quickened his pace, as if he snuffed afar off the living waters, which marked the place of repose and refreshment. But labour and danger were doomed to intervene ere the horse or horsemen reached the desired spot.

As the Knight of the Couchant Leopard continued to fix his eyes attentively on the yet distant cluster of palm-trees, it seemed to him as if some object was moving among them. The distant form separated itself from the trees, which partly hid its motions, and advanced towards the knight with a speed which soon showed a mounted horseman, whom his turban, long spear, and green caftan floating in the wind, on his nearer approach, showed to be a Saracen cavalier. "In the desert," saith an Eastern proverb, "no man meets a friend." The Crusader was totally indifferent whether the infidel, who now approached on his gallant barb, as if borne on the wings of an eagle, came as friend or foe—perhaps, as a vowed champion of the Cross, he might rather have preferred the latter. He disengaged his lance from his saddle, seized it with the right hand, placed it in rest with its point half elevated, gathered up the reins in the left, waked his horse's mettle with the spur, and prepared to encounter the stranger, with the calm self-confidence belonging to the victor in many contests.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the inflection of his body, than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand; so that he was enabled to wield the light round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging it as if he *meant to oppose its slender circle to the formidable thrust of the western lance.* His own long spear *was not couched or levelled* like that of his antagonist, but grasped by the middle with his right ha brandished at arm's length above his head. cavalier approached his enemy at full ca seemed to expect that the knight of the Leopar put his horse to the gallop to encounter him. Christian knight, well acquainted with the of Eastern warriors, did not mean to exhaust horse by any unnecessary exertion; and, on trary, made a dead halt, confident that if th advanced to the actual shock, his own we that of his powerful charger, would give h cient advantage, without the additional m of rapid motion. Equally sensible and appr of such a probable result, the Saracen cavali he had approached towards the Christian, wit the length of his lance, wheeled his steed t with inimitable dexterity, and rode twice ar antagonist, who, turning without quitting his and presenting his front constantly to his ene trated his attempts to attack him on an u point; so that the Saracen, wheeling his ho fain to retreat to the distance of a hundre A second time, like a hawk attacking a h Heathen renewed the charge, and a second fain to retreat without coming to a close A third time he approached in the same manr the Christian knight, desirous to terminate sory warfare, in which he might at length h worn out by the activity of his foeman, sudden the mace which hung at his saddlebow, an strong hand and unerring aim, hurled it ag head of the Emir, for such and not less h appeared. The Saracen was just aware of midable missile in time to interpose his ligh betwixt the mace and his head; but the vi the blow forced the buckler down on his tu though that defence also contributed to deade lence, the Saracen was beaten from his ho the Christian could avail himself of this mi nimble foeman sprung from the ground, an on his steed, which instantly returned to hi leaped into his seat without touching the stir regained all the advantage of which the Knig Leopard hoped to deprive him. But the latt the mean while recovered his mace, and th cavalier, who remembered the strength and with which his antagonist had aimed it, s keep cautiously out of reach of that weapon, he had so lately felt the force, while he st purpose of waging a distant warfare wit weapons of his own. Planting his long spe sand at a distance from the scene of combat, with great address, a short bow, which he s his back, and putting his horse to the gal more described two or three circles of a wid than formerly, in the course of which he d six arrows at the Christian with such unerr that the goodness of his harness alone saved being wounded in as many places. The seve apparently found a less perfect part of the and the Christian dropped heavily from his ho what was the surprise of the Saracen, when, ing to examine the condition of his prostrat he found himself suddenly within the grasp o ropean, who had had recourse to this artifice his enemy within his reach! Even in th grapple, the Saracen was saved by his agility sence of mind. He unloosed the sword-belt, the Knight of the Leopard had fixed his hold, eluding his fatal grasp, mounted his hors seemed to watch his motions with the intell a human being, and again rode off. But in encounter the Saracen had lost his sword quiver of arrows, both of which were attac girdle, which he was obliged to abandon. H lost his turban in the struggle. These disa seemed to incline the Moslem to a truce proached the Christian with his right hand but no longer in a menacing attitude.

"There is truce betwixt our nations," h the lingua franca commonly used for the p communication with the Crusaders; "wherefo there be war betwixt thee and me?—Let peace betwixt us."

n well contented," answered he of the Couch-
pard; "but what security dost thou offer that
lt observe the truce?"
word of a follower of the prophet was never
" answered the Emir. "It is thou, brave Na-
from whom I should demand security, did I not
hat treason seldom dwells with courage."
Crusader felt that the confidence of the Moslem
im ashamed of his own doubts.
the cross of my sword," he said, laying his
1 the weapon as he spoke, "I will be true com-
to thee, Saracen, while our fortune wills that
ain in company together."
Mahommed, Prophet of God, and by Allah,
the Prophet," replied his late foeman, "there
reachery in my heart towards thee. And now
'e to yonder fountain, for the hour of rest is at
nd the stream had hardly touched my lip when
alled to battle by thy approach."
Knight of the Couchant Leopard yielded a
nd courteous assent; and the late foes, without
ry look, or gesture of doubt, rode side by side to
e cluster of palm-trees.

CHAPTER II.

s of danger have always, and in a peculiar de-
eir seasons of good-will and of security; and
s particularly so in the ancient feudal ages, in
as the manners of the period had assigned war
ie chief and most worthy occupation of man-
ie intervals of peace, or rather of truce, were
elished by those warriors to whom they were
granted, and endeared by the very circum-
which rendered them transitory. It is not
hile preserving any permanent enmity against
hom a champion has fought with to-day, and
ain stand in bloody opposition to on the next
g. The time and situation afforded so much
r the ebullition of violent passions, that men,
when peculiarly opposed to each other, or pro-
by the recollection of private and individual
, cheerfully enjoyed in each other's society the
tervals of pacific intercourse which a warlike
nitted.
listinction of religions, nay, the fanatical zeal
nimated the followers of the Cross and of the
it against each other, was much softened by a
so natural to generous combatants, and espe-
herished by the spirit of chivalry. This last
mpulse had extended itself gradually from the
ins to their mortal enemies the Saracens, both
n and of Palestine. The latter were indeed no
he fanatical savages, who had burst from the
f Arabian deserts, with the sabre in one hand,
Koran in the other, to inflict death or the faith
ommed, or at the best, slavery and tribute,
l who dared to oppose the belief of the prophet
:a. These alternatives indeed had been offered
nwarlike Greeks and Syrians; but in contend-
n the western Christians, animated by a zeal
as their own, and possessed of as unconquer-
rage, address and success in arms, the Sara-
adually caught a part of their manners, and
ly of those chivalrous observances, which
well calculated to charm the minds of a proud
quering people. They had their tournaments
nes of chivalry; they had even their knights,
rank analogous; and, above all, the Saracens
d their plighted faith with an accuracy, which
ometimes put to shame those who owned a bet-
ion. Their truces, whether national or betwixt
tals, were faithfully observed; and thus it was,
r, in itself perhaps the greatest of evils, yet gave
n for display of good faith, generosity, cle-
and even kindly affections, which less fre-
occur in more tranquil periods, where the
s of men, experiencing wrongs or entertaining
which cannot be brought to instant decision,
to smoulder for a length of time in the bosoms
who are so unhappy as to be their prey.
s under the influence of these milder feelings,
ften the horrors of warfare, that the Christian
and Saracen, who had so lately done their best for each other's mutual destruction, rode at a slow pace towards the fountain of palm-trees, to which the Knight of the Couchant Leopard had been tending, when interrupted in mid-passage by his fleet and dangerous adversary. Each was wrapt for some time in his own reflections, and took breath after an encounter which had threatened to be fatal to one or both; and their good horses seemed no less to enjoy the interval of repose. That of the Saracen, however, though he had been forced into much the more violent and extended sphere of motion, appeared to have suffered less from fatigue than the charger of the European knight. The sweat hung still clammy on the limbs of the last, when those of the noble Arab were completely dried by the interval of tranquil exercise, all saving the foam-flakes which were still visible on his bridle and housings. The loose soil on which he trode so much augmented the distress of the Christian's horse, heavily loaded by his own armour and the weight of his rider, that the latter jumped from his saddle, and led his charger along the deep dust of the loamy soil, which was burnt in the sun into a substance more impalpable than the finest sand, and thus gave the faithful horse refreshment at the expense of his own additional toil; for, iron-sheathed as he was, he sunk over the mailed shoes at every step which he placed on a surface so light and unresisting.

"You are right," said the Saracen; and it was the first word that either had spoken since their truce was concluded,—"your strong horse deserves your care; but what do you in the desert with an animal, which sinks over the fetlock at every step, as if he would plant each foot deep as the root of a date-tree?"

"Thou speakest rightly, Saracen," said the Christian knight, not delighted at the tone with which the infidel criticised his favourite steed,—"rightly, according to thy knowledge and observation. But my good horse hath ere now borne me, in mine own land, over as wide a lake as thou seest yonder spread out behind us, yet not wet one hair above his hoof."

The Saracen looked at him with as much surprise as his manners permitted him to testify, which was only expressed by a slight approach to a disdainful smile, that hardly curled perceptibly the broad thick mustache which enveloped his upper lip.

"It is justly spoken," he said, instantly composing himself to his usual serene gravity,—"list to a Frank, and hear a fable."

"Thou art not courteous, misbeliever," replied the Crusader, "to doubt the word of a dubbed knight; and were it not that thou speakest in ignorance, and not in malice, our truce had its ending ere it is well begun. Thinkest thou I tell thee an untruth when I say, that I, one of five hundred horsemen, armed in complete mail, have ridden,—ay, and ridden for miles, upon water as solid as the crystal, and ten times less brittle?"

"What wouldst thou tell me?" answered the Moslem; "yonder inland sea thou dost point at is peculiar in this, that, by the especial curse of God, it suffereth nothing to sink in its waves, but wafts them away, and casts them on its margin; but neither the Dead Sea, nor any of the seven oceans which environ the earth, will endure on their surface the pressure of a horse's foot, more than the Red Sea endured to sustain the advance of Pharaoh and his host."

"You speak truth after your knowledge, Saracen," said the Christian knight; "and yet, trust me, I fable not, according to mine. Heat, in this climate, converts the soil into something almost as unstable as water; and in my land cold often converts the water itself into a substance as hard as rock. Let us speak of this no longer; for the thoughts of the calm, clear, blue refulgence of a winter's lake, glimmering to stars and moonbeam, aggravate the horrors of this fiery desert, where, methinks, the very air which we breathe is like the vapour of a fiery furnace seven times heated."

The Saracen looked on him with some attention, as if to discover in what sense he was to understand words, which, to him, must have appeared either to contain something of mystery, or of imposition. At

length he seemed determined in what manner to receive the language of his new companion.

"You are," he said "of a nation that loves to laugh, and you make sport with yourselves, and with others, by telling what is impossible, and reporting what never chanced. Thou art one of the knights of France, who hold it for glee and pastime to *gab*,* as they term it, of exploits that are beyond human power. I were wrong to challenge, for the time, the privilege of thy speech, since boasting is more natural to thee than truth."

"I am not of their land, neither of their fashion," said the Knight, "which is, as thou well sayest, to *gab* of that which they dare not undertake, or undertaking cannot perfect. But in this I have imitated their folly, brave Saracen, that in talking to thee of what thou canst not comprehend, I have, even in speaking most simple truth, fully incurred the character of a braggart in thy eyes; so, I pray you, let my words pass."

They had now arrived at the knot of palm-trees, and the fountain which welled out from beneath their shade in sparkling profusion.

We have spoken of a moment of truce in the midst of war; and this, a spot of beauty in the midst of a sterile desert, was scarce less dear to the imagination. It was a scene which, perhaps, would elsewhere have deserved little notice; but as the single speck, in a boundless horizon, which promised the refreshment of shade and living water, these blessings, held cheap where they are common, rendered the fountain and its neighbourhood a little paradise. Some generous or charitable hand, ere yet the evil days of Palestine began, had walled in and arched over the fountain, to preserve it from being absorbed in the earth, or choked by the flitting clouds of dust with which the least breath of wind covered the desert. The arch was now broken and partly ruinous; but it still so far projected over, and covered in the fountain, that it excluded the sun in a great measure from its waters, which, hardly touched by a straggling beam, while all around was blazing, lay in a steady repose, alike delightful to the eye and the imagination. Stealing from under the arch, they were first received in a marble basin, much defaced indeed, but still cheering the eye, by showing that the place was anciently considered as a station, that the hand of man had been there, and that man's accommodation had been in some measure attended to. The thirsty and weary traveller was reminded by these signs, that others had suffered similar difficulties, reposed in the same spot, and, doubtless, found their way in safety to a more fertile country. Again, the scarce visible current which escaped from the basin, served to nourish the few trees which surrounded the fountain, and where it sunk into the ground and disappeared, its refreshing presence was acknowledged by a carpet of velvet verdure.

In this delightful spot the two warriors halted, and each, after his own fashion, proceeded to relieve his horse from saddle, bit, and rein, and permitted the animals to drink at the basin, ere they refreshed themselves from the fountain head, which arose under the vault. They then suffered the steeds to go loose, confident that their interest, as well as their domesticated habits, would prevent their straying from the pure water and fresh grass.

Christian and Saracen next sat down together on the turf, and produced each the small allowance of store which they carried for their own refreshment. Yet, ere they severally proceeded to their scanty meal, they eyed each other with that curiosity which the close and doubtful conflict in which they had been so lately engaged was calculated to inspire. Each was desirous to measure the strength, and form some estimate of the character, of an adversary so formidable; and each was compelled to acknowledge, that, had he fallen in the conflict, it had been by a noble hand.

The champions formed a striking contrast to each other in person and features, and might have no inaccurate representatives of their differe tions. The Frank seemed a powerful man, bu the ancient Gothic cast of form, with light hair, which, on the removal of his helmet, w to curl thick and profusely over his head. I tures had acquired, from the hot climate, a ha darker than those parts of his neck which w frequently exposed to view, or than was wa by his full and well-opened blue eye, the colou hair, and of the mustaches which thickly sha upper lip, while his chin was carefully dive beard, after the Norman fashion. His nose w cian and well formed; his mouth rather large portion, but filled with well-set, strong, and fully white teeth; his head small, and set u neck with much grace. His age could not thirty, but, if the effects of toil and climate v lowed for, might be three or four years under t riod. His form was tall, powerful, and athle that of a man whose strength might, in later come unwieldy, but which was hitherto unit lightness and activity. His hands, when h drew the mailed gloves, were long, fair, an proportioned; the wrist-bones peculiarly lar strong; and the arms remarkably well-shap brawny. A military hardihood, and careless ness of expression, characterized his langua his motions; and his voice had the tone of on accustomed to command than to obey, and w in the habit of expressing his sentiments alo boldly, whenever he was called upon to an them.

The Saracen Emir formed a marked and r contrast with the western Crusader. His was indeed above the middle size, but he was three inches shorter than the European, wh approached the gigantic. His slender limbs, a spare hands and arms, though well proporti his person, and suited to the style of his count did not at first aspect promise the display of and elasticity which the Emir had lately ex But, on looking more closely, his limbs, wh posed to view, seemed divested of all that wa or cumbersome; so that nothing being left bu brawn, and sinew, it was a frame fitted for e and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky cha whose strength and size are counterbalan weight, and who is exhausted by his own ex The countenance of the Saracen naturally general national resemblance to the Easter from whom he descended, and was as unlike sible to the exaggerated terms in which the m of the day were wont to represent the infidel pions, and the fabulous description which a si still presents as the Saracen's Head upon sig His features were small, well-formed, and d though deeply embrowned by the Eastern s terminated by a flowing and curled black which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen set, black, and glowing, and his teeth equa beauty the ivory of his deserts. The person a portions of the Saracen, in short, stretched turf, near to his powerful antagonist, migh been compared to his sheeny and crescent-sabre, with its narrow and light, but bright ar Damascus blade, contrasted with the long an derous Gothic war-sword which was flung unl on the same sod. The Emir was in the very of his age, and might perhaps have been term nently beautiful, but for the narrowness of hi head, and something of too much thinne sharpness of feature, or at least what migh seemed such in a European estimate of beauty

The manners of the Eastern warrior were graceful, and decorous; indicating, however, i particulars, the habitual restraint which men of and choleric tempers often set as a guard upo native impetuosity of disposition, and at the time a sense of his own dignity, which seem impose a certain formality of behaviour in hi entertained it.

This haughty feeling of superiority was

* *Gabe. This French word signifies* a sort of sport much *used among the French chivalry,* which consisted in vying *with each other in making the* most romantic gasconades. *e verb and the meaning are retained in* Scottish.

tained by his new European acquaint-
effect was different; and the same feel-
ictated to the Christian knight a bold,
omewhat careless bearing, as one too
his own importance to be anxious about
of others, appeared to prescribe to the
tyle of courtesy more studiously and
rvant of ceremony. Both were cour-
e courtesy of the Christian seemed to
om a good-humoured sense of what was
; that of the Moslem, from a high feel-
vas to be expected from himself.
on which each had made for his refresh-
nple, but the meal of the Saracen was
A handful of dates, and a morsel of
-bread, sufficed to relieve the hunger of
ose education had habituated him to
he desert, although, since their Syrian
s Arabian simplicity of life frequently
the most unbounded profusion of lux-
draughts from the lovely fountain by
posed completed his meal. That of the
ugh coarse, was more genial. Dried
he abomination of the Moslemah, was
t of his repast; and his drink, derived
ern bottle, contained something better
ement. He fed with more display of
drank with more appearance of satisfac-
s Saracen judged it becoming to show
nance of a mere bodily function; and,
secret contempt which each entertained
as the follower of a false religion, was
increased by the marked difference of
d manners. But each had found the
opponent's arm, and the mutual respect
d struggle had created, was sufficient to
and inferior considerations. Yet the
d not help remarking the circumstances
sed him in the Christian's conduct and
d, after he had witnessed for some time
e keen appetite which protracted the
uet long after his own was concluded,
ssed him:—
Nazarene, is it fitting that one who can
man should feed like a dog or a wolf?
lieving Jew would shudder at the food
em to eat with as much relish as if it
m the trees of Paradise."
aracen," answered the Christian, look-
ome surprise at the accusation thus un-
ought, "know thou that I exercise my
dom, in using that which is forbidden to
ig, as they esteem themselves, under the
e old law of Moses. We, Saracen, be
hee, have a better warrant for what we
ia!—be we thankful." And, as if in
s companion's scruples, he concluded a
race with a long draught from the lea-

you call a part of your liberty," said the
nd as you feed like the brutes, so you
elf to the bestial condition, by drinking
quor which even they refuse!"
olish Saracen," replied the Christian,
ation, "that thou blasphemest the gifts
with the blasphemy of thy father Ish-
uice of the grape is given to him that
sely, as that which cheers the heart of
l, refreshes him in sickness, and com-
sorrow. He who so enjoyeth it may
r his wine-cup as for his daily bread;
abuseth the gift of Heaven, is not a
n his intoxication than thou in thine

ye of the Saracen kindled at this sar-
s hand sought the hilt of his poniard,
momentary thought, however, and died
recollection of the powerful champion
e had to deal, and the desperate grap-
ession of which still throbbed in his
ns; and he contented himself with pur-
test in colloquy, as more convenient for

" he said, "O Nazarene, might create

anger, did not thy ignorance raise compassion. Seest thou not, O thou more blind than any who asks alms at the door of the Mosque, that the liberty thou dost boast of is restrained even in that which is dearest to man's happiness, and to his household; and that thy law, if thou dost practise it, binds thee in marriage to one single mate, be she sick or healthy, be she fruitful or barren, bring she comfort and joy, or clamour and strife, to thy table and to thy bed? This, Nazarene, I do indeed call slavery; whereas, to the faithful, hath the Prophet assigned upon earth the patriarchal privileges of Abraham our father, and of Solomon, the wisest of mankind, having given us here a succession of beauty at our pleasure, and beyond the grave the black-eyed houris of Paradise."

"Now, by His name that I most reverence in Heaven," said the Christian, "and by hers whom I most worship on earth, thou art but a blinded and a bewildered infidel!—That diamond signet, which thou wearest on thy finger, thou holdest it, doubtless, as of inestimable value?"

"Balsora and Bagdad cannot show the like," replied the Saracen; "but what avails it to our purpose?"

"Much," replied the Frank, "as thou shalt thyself confess. Take my war-axe, and dash the stone into twenty shivers;—would each fragment be as valuable as the original gem, or would they, all collected, bear the tenth part of its estimation?"

"That is a child's question," answered the Saracen; "the fragments of such a stone would not equal the entire jewel in the degree of hundreds to one."

"Saracen," replied the Christian warrior, "the love which a true knight binds on one only, fair and faithful, is the gem entire; the affection thou flingest among thy enslaved wives, and half-wedded slaves, is worthless, comparatively, as the sparkling shivers of the broken diamond."

"Now, by the Holy Caaba," said the Emir, "thou art a madman, who hugs his chain of iron as if it were of gold! Look more closely. This ring of mine would lose half its beauty were not the signet encircled and enchased with these lesser brilliants, which grace it and set it off. The central diamond is man, firm and entire, his value depending on himself alone; and this circle of lesser jewels are women, borrowing his lustre, which he deals out to them as best suits his pleasure or his convenience. Take the central stone from the signet, and the diamond itself remains as valuable as ever, while the lesser gems are comparatively of little value. And this is the true reading of thy parable; for, what sayeth the poet Mansour: 'It is the favour of man which giveth beauty and comeliness to woman, as the stream glitters no longer when the sun ceaseth to shine.'"

"Saracen," replied the Crusader, "thou speakest like one who never saw a woman worthy the affection of a soldier. Believe me, couldst thou look upon those of Europe, to whom, after Heaven, we of the order of knighthood vow fealty and devotion, thou wouldst loathe for ever the poor sensual slaves who form thy haram. The beauty of our fair ones gives point to our spears, and edge to our swords; their words are our law; and as soon will a lamp shed lustre when unkindled, as a knight distinguish himself by feats of arms, having no mistress of his affection."

"I have heard of this frenzy among the warriors of the west," said the Emir, "and have ever accounted it one of the accompanying symptoms of that insanity, which brings you hither to obtain possession of an empty sepulchre. But yet, methinks, so highly have the Franks whom I have met with extolled the beauty of their women, I could be well contented to behold with mine own eyes those charms which can transform such brave warriors into the tools of their pleasure."

"Brave Saracen," said the Knight, "if I were not on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, it should be my pride to conduct you, on assurance of safety, to the camp of Richard of England, than whom none knows better how to do honour to a noble foe; and though I be poor and unattended, yet have I interest to secure for thee, or any such as thou seemest, not

safety only, but respect and esteem. There shouldst thou see several of the fairest beauties of France and Britain form a small circle, the brilliancy of which exceeds ten-thousand fold the lustre of mines of diamonds such as thine."

"Now, by the corner-stone of the Caaba!" said the Saracen, "I will accept thy invitation as freely as it is given, if thou wilt postpone thy present intent; and, credit me, brave Nazarene, it were better for thyself to turn back thy horse's head towards the camp of thy people, for, to travel towards Jerusalem without a passport, is but a wilful casting away of thy life."

"I have a pass," answered the Knight, producing a parchment, "under Saladin's hand and signet."

The Saracen bent his head to the dust as he recognised the seal and hand-writing of the renowned Soldan of Egypt and Syria; and having kissed the paper with profound respect, he pressed it to his forehead, then returned it to the Christian, saying, "Rash Frank, thou hast sinned against thine own blood and mine, for not showing this to me when we met."

"You came with levelled spear,"—said the Knight; "had a troop of Saracens so assailed me, it might have stood with my honour to have shown the Soldan's pass, but never to one man."

"And yet one man," said the Saracen, haughtily, "was enough to interrupt your journey."

"True, brave Moslem," replied the Christian; "but there are few such as thou art. Such falcons fly not in flocks, or, if they do, they pounce not in numbers upon one."

"Thou dost us but justice," said the Saracen, evidently gratified by the compliment, as he had been touched by the implied scorn of the European's previous boast; "from us thou shouldst have had no wrong; but well was it for me that I failed to slay thee, with the safeguard of the king of kings upon thy person. Certain it were, that the cord or the sabre had justly avenged such guilt."

"I am glad to hear that its influence shall be availing to me," said the Knight; "for I have heard that the road is infested with robber-tribes, who regard nothing in comparison of an opportunity of plunder."

"The truth has been told to thee, brave Christian," said the Saracen; "but I swear to thee, by the turban of the Prophet, that shouldst thou miscarry in any haunt of such villains, I will myself undertake thy revenge with five thousand horse: I will slay every male of them, and send their women into such distant captivity, that the name of their tribe shall never again be heard within five hundred miles of Damascus. I will sow with salt the foundations of their village, and there shall never live thing dwell there, even from that time forward."

"I had rather the trouble which you design for yourself, were in revenge of some other more important person than of me, noble Emir," replied the Knight; "but my vow is recorded in Heaven, for good or for evil, and I must be indebted to you for pointing me out the way to my resting-place for this evening."

"That," said the Saracen, "must be under the black covering of my father's tent."

"This night," answered the Christian, "I must pass in prayer and penitence with a holy man, Theodorick of Engaddi, who dwells amongst these wilds, and spends his life in the service of God."

"I will at least see you safe thither," said the Saracen.

"That would be pleasant convoy for me," said the Christian, "yet might endanger the future security of the good father; for the cruel hand of your people has been red with the blood of the servants of the Lord, and therefore do we come hither in plate and mail, with sword and lance, to open the road to the Holy Sepulchre, and protect the chosen saints and anchorites who yet dwell in this land of promise and of miracle."

"Nazarene," said the Moslem, "in this the Greeks and Syrians have much belied us, seeing we do but after the word of Abubeker Alwakel, the successor of the Prophet, and, after him, the first commander of *true believers*. 'Go forth,' he said, 'Yebed Ben Sophian,' when he sent that renowned general t Syria from the infidels, 'quit yourselves like m battle, but slay neither the aged, the infirm women, nor the children. Waste not the land, destroy corn and fruit-trees, they are the g Allah. Keep faith when you have made any nant, even if it be to your own harm. If y holy men labouring with their hands, and s God in the desert, hurt them not, neither destro dwellings. But when you find them with c crowns, they are of the synagogue of Satan! with the sabre, slay, cease not till they becom lievers or tributaries.' As the Caliph, compan the Prophet, hath told us, so have we done, and whom our justice has smitten are but the pr Satan. But unto the good men who, without u up nation against nation, worship sincerely faith of Issa Ben Mariam, we are a shadow shield; and such being he whom you seek though the light of the Prophet hath not m him, from me he will only have love, favou regard."

"The anchorite, whom I would now visit, the warlike pilgrim, "is, I have heard, no prie were he of that anointed and sacred order, I prove with my good lance, against paynim a fide!"——

"Let us not defy each other, brother," inte the Saracen; "we shall find, either of us, enc Franks or of Moslemah on whom to exercis sword and lance. This Theodorick is protect by Turk and Arab; and, though one of strang ditions at intervals, yet, on the whole, he bear self so well as the follower of his own proph he merits the protection of him who was sent"

"Now, by Our Lady, Saracen," exclaim Christian, "if thou darest name in the same the camel-driver of Mecca with"——

An electrical shock of passion thrilled thro form of the Emir; but it was only moments the calmness of his reply had both dignity and in it, when he said, "Slander not him who knowest not; the rather that we venerate the of thy religion, while we condemn the doctrin your priests have spun from it. I will mysel thee to the cavern of the hermit, which, m without my help, thou wouldst find it a hard to reach. And, on the way, let us leave to and to monks, to dispute about the divinity faith, and speak on themes which belong to warriors,—upon battles, upon beautiful wome sharp swords, and upon bright armour."

CHAPTER III.

The warriors arose from their place of brief simple refreshment, and courteously aided ea while they carefully replaced and adjusted t ness, from which they had relieved for the ti trusty steeds. Each seemed familiar with an ment, which at that time was a part of ne and, indeed, of indispensable duty. Each also to possess, as far as the difference betwixt the and rational species admitted, the confidence fection of the horse, which was the constant c ion of his travels and his warfare. With the S this familiar intimacy was a part of his early for, in the tents of the Eastern military tri horse of the soldier ranks next to, and almo in importance with, his wife and his family; a the European warrior, circumstances, and necessity, rendered his war-horse scarcely l his brother in arms. The steeds, therefore, themselves quietly to be taken from their food erty and neighed and snuffed fondly arou masters, while they were adjusting their a ments for farther travel and additional toil. A warrior, as he prosecuted his own task, or with courtesy his companion, looked with ant curiosity at the equipments of his fell veller, and noted particularly what struck peculiar in the fashion in which he arranged h accoutrements.

Ere they remounted to resume their jour

Christian knight again moistened his lips, and dipt his hands in the living fountain, and said to his Pagan associate of the journey—"I would I knew the name of this delicious fountain, that I might hold it in my grateful remembrance; for never did water slake more deliciously a more oppressive thirst than I have this day experienced."

"It is called in the Arabic language," answered the Saracen, "by a name which signifies the Diamond of the Desert."

"And well is it so named," replied the Christian. "My native valley hath a thousand springs, but not to one of them shall I attach hereafter such precious recollection as to this solitary fount, which bestows its liquid treasures where they are not only delightful, but nearly indispensable."

"You say truth," said the Saracen; "for the curse is still on yonder sea of death, and neither man nor beast drink of its waves, nor of the river which feeds without filling it, until this inhospitable desert be passed."

They mounted, and pursued their journey across the sandy waste. The ardour of noon was now past, and a light breeze somewhat alleviated the terrors of the desert, though not without bearing on its wings an impalpable dust, which the Saracen little heeded, though his heavily-armed companion felt it as such an annoyance, that he hung his iron casque at his saddlebow, and substituted the light riding-cap, termed in the language of the time a *mortier*, from its resemblance in shape to an ordinary mortar. They rode together for some time in silence, the Saracen performing the part of director and guide of the journey, which he did by observing minute marks and bearings of the distant rocks, to a ridge of which they were gradually approaching. For a little time he seemed absorbed in the task, as a pilot when navigating a vessel through a difficult channel; but they had not proceeded half a league when he seemed secure of his route, and disposed, with more frankness than was usual to his nation, to enter into conversation.

"You have asked the name," he said, "of a mute fountain, which hath the semblance, but not the reality, of a living thing. Let me be pardoned to ask the name of the companion with whom I have this day encountered, both in danger and in repose, and which I cannot fancy unknown, even here among the deserts of Palestine?"

"It is not yet worth publishing," said the Christian. "Know, however, that among the soldiers of the Cross I am called Kenneth—Kenneth of the Couching Leopard; at home I have other titles, but they would sound harsh in an Eastern ear. Brave Saracen, let me ask which of the tribes of Arabia claims your descent, and by what name you are known?"

"Sir Kenneth," said the Moslem, "I joy that your name is such as my lips can easily utter. For me, I am no Arab, yet derive my descent from a line neither less wild nor less warlike. Know, Sir Knight of the Leopard, that I am Sheerkohf, the Lion of the Mountain, and that Kurdistan, from which I derive my descent, holds no family more noble than that of Seljook."

"I have heard," answered the Christian, "that your great Soldan claims his blood from the same source?"

"Thanks to the Prophet, that hath so far honoured our mountains, as to send from their bosom him whose word is victory," answered the Paynim. "I am but as a worm before the King of Egypt and Syria, and yet in my own land something my name may avail.—Stranger, with how many men didst thou come on this warfare?"

"By my faith," said Sir Kenneth, "with aid of friends and kinsmen, I was hardly pinched to furnish forth ten well-appointed lances, with maybe some fifty more men, archers and varlets included. Some have deserted my unlucky pennon—some have fallen in battle—several have died of disease—and one trusty armour-bearer, for whose life I am now doing my pilgrimage, lies on the bed of sickness."

"Christian," said Sheerkohf, "here I have five arrows in *my quiver, each feathered from* the wing of *an eagle. When I send one of them to my* tents, a thousand warriors mount on horseback—when I send another, an equal force will arise—for the five, I can command five thousand men; and if I send my bow, ten thousand mounted riders will shake the desert. And with thy fifty followers thou hast come to invade a land, in which I am one of the meanest!"

"Now, by the rood, Saracen," retorted the western warrior, "thou shouldst know, ere thou vauntest thyself, that one steel glove can crush a whole handful of hornets."

"Ay, but it must first enclose them within its grasp," said the Saracen, with a smile which might have endangered their new alliance, had he not changed the subject by adding, "And is bravery so much esteemed amongst the Christian princes, that thou, thus void of means, and of men, canst offer, as thou didst of late, to be my protector and security in the camp of thy brethren?"

"Know, Saracen," said the Christian, "since such is thy style, that the name of a knight, and the blood of a gentleman, entitle him to place himself on the same rank with sovereigns even of the first degree, in so far as regards all but regal authority and dominion. Were Richard of England himself to wound the honour of a knight as poor as I am, he could not, by the law of chivalry, deny him the combat."

"Methinks I should like to look upon so strange a scene," said the Emir, "in which a leathern belt and a pair of spurs put the poorest on a level with the most powerful."

"You must add free blood and a fearless heart," said the Christian; "then, perhaps, you will not have spoken untruly of the dignity of knighthood."

"And mix you as boldly amongst the females of your chiefs and leaders?" asked the Saracen.

"God forbid," said the Knight of the Leopard, "that the poorest Knight in Christendom should not be free in all honourable service, to devote his hand and sword, the fame of his actions, and the fixed devotion of his heart, to the fairest princess who ever wore coronet on her brow!"

"But a little while since," said the Saracen, "and you described love as the highest treasure of the heart—thine hath undoubtedly been high and nobly bestowed?"

"Stranger," answered the Christian, blushing deeply as he spoke, "we tell not rashly where it is we have bestowed our choicest treasures—it is enough for thee to know, that, as thou sayest, my love is highly and nobly bestowed—most highly—most nobly; but if thou would'st hear of love and broken lances, venture thyself, as thou sayest, to the camp of the Crusaders, and thou wilt find exercise for thine ears, and, if thou wilt, for thy hands too."

The Eastern warrior, raising himself in his stirrups, and shaking aloft his lance, replied, "Hardly, I fear, shall I find one with a crossed shoulder, who will exchange with me the cast of the jerrid."

"I will not promise for that," replied the Knight, "though there be in the camp certain Spaniards, who have right good skill in your Eastern game of hurling the javelin."

"Dogs, and sons of dogs!" ejaculated the Saracen; "what have these Spaniards to do to come hither to combat the true believers, who, in their own land, are their lords and taskmasters? with them I would mix in no warlike pastime."

"Let not the knights of Leon or Asturias hear you speak thus of them," said the Knight of the Leopard; "but," added he, smiling at the recollection of the morning's combat, "if, instead of a reed, you were inclined to stand the cast of a battle-axe, there are enough of western warriors who would gratify your longing."

"By the beard of my father, sir," said the Saracen, with an approach to laughter, "the game is too rough for mere sport—I will never shun them in battle, but my head" (pressing his hand to his brow) "will not, for a while, permit me to seek them in sport."

"I would you saw the axe of King Richard," answered the western warrior, "to which that which hangs at my saddlebow weighs but as a feather."

"We hear much of that island sovereign," said the Saracen, "art thou one of his subjects?"

"One of his followers I am, for this expedition," answered the Knight, "and honoured in the service; but not born his subject, although a native of the island in which he reigns."

"How mean you?" said the Eastern soldier; "have you then two kings in one poor island?"

"As thou sayest," said the Scot, for such was Sir Kenneth by birth,—"It is even so; and yet, although the inhabitants of the two extremities of that island are engaged in frequent war, the country can, as thou seest, furnish forth such a body of men-at-arms, as may go far to shake the unholy hold which your master hath laid on the cities of Zion."

"By the beard of Saladin, Nazarene, but that it is a thoughtless and boyish folly, I could laugh at the simplicity of your great Sultan, who comes hither to make conquests of deserts and rocks, and dispute the possession of them with those who have tenfold numbers at command, while he leaves a part of his narrow islet, in which he was born a sovereign, to the dominion of another sceptre than his. Surely, Sir Kenneth, you and the other good men of your country should have submitted yourselves to the dominion of this King Richard, ere you left your native land, divided against itself, to set forth on this expedition?"

Hasty and fierce was Kenneth's answer. "No, by the bright light of Heaven! If the King of England had not set forth to the Crusade till he was sovereign of Scotland, the crescent might, for me, and all true-hearted Scots, glimmer for ever on the walls of Zion."

Thus far he had proceeded, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he muttered, "*Mea culpa! mea culpa!* what have I, a soldier of the Cross, to do with recollection of war betwixt Christian nations!"

The rapid expression of feeling corrected by the dictates of duty, did not escape the Moslem, who, if he did not entirely understand all which it conveyed, saw enough to convince him with the assurance, that Christians, as well as Moslemah, had private feelings of personal pique, and national quarrels, which were not entirely reconcilable. But the Saracens were a race, polished, perhaps, to the utmost extent which their religion permitted, and particularly capable of entertaining high ideas of courtesy and politeness; and such sentiments prevented his taking any notice of the inconsistency of Sir Kenneth's feelings, in the opposite characters of a Scot and a Crusader.

Mean while, as they advanced, the scene began to change around them. They were now turning to the eastward, and had reached the range of steep and barren hills, which binds in that quarter the naked plain, and varies the surface of the country, without changing its sterile character. Sharp, rocky eminences began to arise around them, and, in a short time, deep declivities, and ascents, both formidable in height, and difficult from the narrowness of the path, offered to the travellers obstacles of a different kind from those with which they had recently contended. Dark caverns and chasms amongst the rocks, those grottoes so often alluded to in Scripture, yawned fearfully on either side as they proceeded, and the Scottish knight was informed by the Emir, that these were often the refuge of beasts of prey, or of men still more ferocious, who, driven to desperation by the constant war, and the oppression exercised by the soldiery, as well of the Cross as of the Crescent, had become robbers, and spared neither rank nor religion, neither sex nor age, in their depredations.

The Scottish knight listened with indifference to the accounts of ravages committed by wild beasts or wicked men, secure as he felt himself in his own valour and personal strength; but he was struck with mysterious dread, when he recollected that he was now in the awful wilderness of the forty days' fast, and the scene of the actual personal temptation, wherewith the Evil Principle was permitted to assail *the Son of Man. He* withdrew his attention gradually *from the light and worldly* conversation of the *Moslem warrior beside him,* and, however acceptable his gay and gallant bravery would have rendered him as a companion elsewhere, Sir Kenneth felt as if, in those wildernesses—the waste and dry places—in which the foul spirits were wont to wander when expelled the mortals whose forms they possessed, a barefooted friar would have been a better associate than the gay but unbelieving Paynim.

These feelings embarrassed him; the rather that the Saracen's spirits appeared to rise with the journey, and because the farther he penetrated into the gloomy recesses of the mountains, the lighter became his conversation, and when he found that unanswered, the louder grew his song. Sir Kenneth knew enough of the Eastern languages, to be assured that he chanted sonnets of love, containing all the glowing praises of beauty, in which the Oriental poets are so fond of luxuriating, and which, therefore, were peculiarly unfitted for a serious or devotional strain of thought, the feeling best becoming the Wilderness of the Temptation. With inconsistency enough, the Saracen also sung lays in praise of wine, the liquid ruby of the Persian poets, and his gayety at length became so unsuitable to the Christian knight's contrary train of sentiments, as, but for the promise of amity which they had exchanged, would most likely have made Sir Kenneth take measures to change his note. As it was, the Crusader felt as if he had by his side some gay licentious fiend, who endeavoured to ensnare his soul, and endanger his immortal salvation, by inspiring loose thoughts of earthly pleasure, and thus polluting his devotion, at a time when his faith as a Christian, and his vow as a pilgrim, called on him for a serious and penitential state of mind. He was thus greatly perplexed, and undecided how to act; and it was in a tone of hasty displeasure, that at length breaking silence, he interrupted the lay of the celebrated Rudpiki, in which he prefers the mole on his mistress's bosom to all the wealth of Bokhara and Samarcand.

"Saracen," said the Crusader, sternly, "blinded as thou art, and plunged amidst the errors of a false law, thou shouldst yet comprehend that there are some places more holy than others, and that there are some scenes also, in which the Evil One hath more than ordinary power over sinful mortals. I will not tell thee for what awful reason this place—these rocks—these caverns with their gloomy arches, leading as it were to the central abyss—are held an especial haunt of Satan and his angels. It is enough that I have been long warned to beware of this place by wise any holy men, to whom the qualities of the unholy region are well known. Wherefore, Saracen, forbear thy foolish and ill-timed levity, and turn thy thoughts to things more suited to the spot; although, alas, for thee! thy best prayers are but as blasphemy and sin."

The Saracen listened with some surprise, and then replied, with good-humour and gayety, only so far repressed as courtesy required, "Good Sir Kenneth, methinks you deal unequally by your companion, or else ceremony is but indifferently taught amongst your western tribes. I took no offence when I saw you gorge hog's flesh and drink wine, and permitted you to enjoy a treat which you called your Christian liberty, only pitying in my heart your foul pastimes—Wherefore, then, shouldst thou take scandal, because I cheer, to the best of my power, a gloomy road with a cheerful verse? What saith the poet,—'Song is like the dews of Heaven on the bosom of the desert; it cools the path of the traveller.'"

"Friend Saracen," said the Christian, "I blame not the love of minstrelsy and of the *gai science*; albeit we yield unto it even too much room in our thoughts, when they should be bent on better things. But prayers and holy psalms are better fitting than lais of love, or of wine-cups, when men walk in this Valley of the Shadow of Death, full of fiends and demons, whom the prayers of Holy men have driven forth from the haunts of humanity to wander amidst scenes as accursed as themselves."

"Speak not thus of the Genii, Christian," answered the Saracen, "for know, thou speakest to one whose line and nation drew their origin from the immortal race, which your sect fear and blaspheme."

vell thought," answered the Crusader, "that
inded race had their descent from the foul fiend,
t whose aid you would never have been able to
ain this blessed land of Palestine against so
valiant soldiers of God. I speak not thus of thee
icular, Saracen, but generally of thy people and
n. Strange is it to me, however, not that you
have the descent from the Evil One, but that
ould boast of it."

om whom should the bravest boast of descend-
ring from him that is bravest?' said the Sara-
from whom should the proudest trace their line
as from the Dark Spirit, which would rather
adlong by force, than bend the knee by his
Eblis may be hated, stranger, but he must be
and such as Eblis are his descendants of Kur-

of magic and of necromancy were the learn-
he period, and Sir Kenneth heard his compa-
confession of diabolical descent without any
, and without much wonder; yet not without
shudder at finding himself in this fearful place,
ompany of one who avouched himself to be-
such a lineage. Naturally unsusceptible, how-
fear, he crossed himself, and stoutly demanded
Saracen an account of the pedigree which he
isted. The latter readily complied.

ow, brave stranger," he said, "that when the
hauk, one of the descendants of Giamschid,
throne of Persia, he formed a league with the
of Darkness, amidst the secret vaults of Ista-
aults which the hands of the elementary spirits
wn out of the living rock, long before Adam
had an existence. Here he fed, with daily ob-
of human blood, two devouring serpents, which
ome, according to the poets, a part of himself,
sustain whom he levied a tax of daily human
s, till the exhausted patience of his subjects
some to raise up the cimeter of resistance, like
ant Blacksmith, and the victorious Feridoun,
m the tyrant was at length dethroned, and im-
d for ever in the dismal caverns of the mountain
end. But ere that deliverance had taken place,
ilst the power of the blood-thirsty tyrant was
eight, the band of ravening slaves, whom he
t forth to purvey victims for his daily sacrifice,
to the vaults of the palace of Istakhar seven
so beautiful, that they seemed seven houris.
seven maidens were the daughters of a sage,
d no treasures save those beauties and his own
. The last was not sufficient to foresee this
me, the former seemed ineffectual to prevent
eldest exceeded not her twentieth year, the
it had scarce attained her thirteenth; and so
e they to each other, that they could not have
tinguished but for the difference of height, in
they gradually rose in easy gradation above
ner, like the ascent which leads to the gates of
s. So lovely were these seven sisters when
od in the darksome vault, disrobed of all
eaving a cymar of white silk, that their charms
the hearts of those who were not mortal.
r muttered, the earth shook, the wall of the
as rent, and at the chasm entered one dressed
unter, with bow and shafts, and followed by
ers, his brethren. They were tall men, and
dark, yet comely to behold, but their eyes had
e glare of those of the dead, than the light
ives under the eyelids of the living. 'Zeineb,'
leader of the band—and as he spoke he took
st sister by the hand, and his voice was soft,
d melancholy,—'I am Cothrob, king of the
mean world, and supreme chief of Ginnistan.
y brethren are of those, who, created out of the
mentary fire, disdained even at the command
ipotence, to do homage to a clod of earth, be-
was called Man. Thou mayst have heard of
uel, unrelenting, and persecuting. It is false.
by nature kind and generous; only vengeful
sulted, only cruel when affronted. We are true
who trust us; and we have heard the invoca-
f thy father, *the sage Mithrasp, who wisely
s not alone the Origin of Good, but that which
the Source of Evil.* You and your sisters
are on the eve of death; but let each give to us one
hair from your fair tresses, in token of fealty, and we
will carry you many miles from hence to a place of
safety, where you may bid defiance to Zohauk and his
ministers.' The fear of instant death, saith the poet,
is like the rod of the prophet Haroun, which devoured
all other rods, when transformed into snakes before
the King of Pharaoh; and the daughters of the Per-
sian sage were less apt than others to be afraid of the
addresses of a spirit. They gave the tribute which
Cothrob demanded, and in an instant the sisters were
transported to an enchanted castle on the mountains
of Tugrut, in Kurdistan, and were never again seen
by mortal eye. But in process of time seven youths,
distinguished in the war, and in the chase, appeared
in the environs of the castle of the demons. They
were darker, taller, fiercer, and more resolute, than
any of the scattered inhabitants of the valleys of Kur-
distan; and they took to themselves wives, and be-
came fathers of the seven tribes of the Kurdmans,
whose valour is known throughout the universe."

The Christian knight heard with wonder the wild
tale, of which Kurdistan still possesses the traces,
and, after a moment's thought, replied,—"Verily,
Sir Knight, you have spoken well—your genealogy
may be dreaded, and hated, but it cannot be con-
temned. Neither do I any longer wonder at your
obstinacy in a false faith; since, doubtless, it is part
of the fiendish disposition which had descended from
your ancestors, those infernal huntsmen, as you have
described them, to love falsehood rather than truth;
and I no longer marvel that your spirits become high
and exalted, and vent themselves in verse, and in
tunes, when you approach the places encumbered by
the haunting of evil spirits, which must excite in you
that joyous feeling which others experience when
approaching the land of their human ancestry."

"By my father's beard, I think thou hast the right,"
said the Saracen, rather amused than offended by the
freedom with which the Christian had uttered his
reflections; "for, though the Prophet (blessed be his
name!) hath sown amongst us the seed of a better
faith than our ancestors learned in the ghostly halls
of Tugrut, yet we are not willing, like other Moslem-
mah, to pass hasty doom on the lofty and powerful
elementary spirits from whom we claim our origin.
These Genii, according to our belief and hope, are
not altogether reprobate, but are still in the way of
probation, and may hereafter be punished or re-
warded. Leave we this to the mollahs and the
imaums. Enough that with us the reverence for
these spirits is not altogether effaced by what we
have learned from the Koran, and that many of us
still sing, in memorial of our fathers' more ancient
faith, such verses as these."

So saying, he proceeded to chant verses, very an-
cient in the language and structure, which some have
thought derive their source from the worshippers of
Arimanes, the Evil Principle.

AHRIMAN.

DARK Ahriman, whom Irak still
Holds origin of wo and ill!
When bending at thy shrine,
We view the world with troubled eye,
Where see we 'neath the extended sky
An empire matching thine!

If the Benigner Power can yield
A fountain in the desert field,
Where weary pilgrims drink;
Thine are the waves that lash the rock
Thine the tornado's deadly shock,
Where countless navies sink!

Or if He bid the soul dispense
Balsams to cheer the sinking sense,
How few can they deliver
From lingering pains, or pang intense,
Red Fever, spotted Pestilence,
The arrows of thy quiver!

Chief in Man's bosom sits thy sway
And frequent, while in words we pray
Before another throne,
Whate'er of specious form be there,
The secret meaning of the prayer
Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and form,
Thunder thy voice, thy garments storm,
As Eastern Magi say;
With sentient soul of hate and wrath,
And wings to sweep thy deadly path,
And fangs to tear thy prey?

Or art thou mix'd in Nature's source,
An ever-operating force,
Converting good to ill;
An evil principle innate,
Contending with our better fate,
And oh! victorious still?

Howe'er it be, dispute is vain.
On all without thou hold'st thy reign,
Nor less on all within;
Each mortal passion's fierce career,
Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,
Thou goadest into sin.

Whene'er a sunny gleam appears,
To brighten up our vale of tears,
Thou art not distant far:
'Mid such brief solace of our lives,
Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives
To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our birth,
Long as we linger on the earth,
Thou rulest the fate of men;
Thine are the pangs of life's last hour,
And—who dare answer?—is thy power,
Dark Spirit! ended THEN!"

These verses may perhaps have been the not unnatural effusion of some half-enlightened philosopher, who, in the fabled deity, Arimanes, saw but the prevalence of moral and physical evil; but in the ears of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard, they had a different effect, and, sung as they were by one who had just boasted himself a descendant of demons, sounded very like an address of worship to the Arch-fiend himself. He weighed within himself, whether, on hearing such blasphemy in the very desert where Satan had stood rebuked for demanding homage, taking an abrupt leave of the Saracen was sufficient to testify his abhorrence; or whether he was not rather constrained by his vow as a Crusader, to defy the infidel to combat on the spot, and leave him food for the beasts of the wilderness, when his attention was suddenly caught by an unexpected apparition.

The light was now verging low, yet served the knight still to discern that they two were no longer alone in the forest, but were closely watched by a figure of great height and very thin, which skipped over rocks and bushes with so much agility, as added to the wild and hirsute appearance of the individual, reminded him of the fauns and silvans, which images he had seen in the ancient temples of Rome. As the single-hearted Scotchman had never for a moment doubted these gods of the ancient Gentiles to be actually devils, so he now hesitated not to believe that the blasphemous hymn of the Saracen had raised up an infernal spirit.

"But what recks it!" said stout Sir Kenneth to himself; "down with the fiend and his worshippers!"

"He did not, however, think it necessary to give the same warning of defiance to two enemies, as he would unquestionably have afforded to one. His hand was upon his mace, and perhaps the unwary Saracen would have been paid for his Persian poetry, by having his brains dashed out on the spot without any reason assigned for it; but the Scottish Knight was spared from committing what would have been a sore blot in his shield of arms. The apparition, on which his eyes had been fixed for some time, had at first appeared to dog their path by concealing itself behind rocks and shrubs, using those advantages of the ground with great address, and surmounting its irregularities with surprising agility. At length, just as the Saracen paused in his song, the figure, which was that of a tall man clothed in goat-skins, sprang into the midst of the path, and seized a rein of the Saracen's bridle in either hand, confronting thus and bearing back the noble horse, which, unable to endure the manner in which this sudden assailant pressed the long-armed bit, and the severe curb, which, according to the Eastern fashion, was a solid ring of iron, reared upright, and finally fell backwards on his master, who, however, avoided the peril of the fall, by lightly throwing himself to one side.

The assailant then shifted his grasp from the bridle of the horse to the throat of the rider, flung himself above the struggling Saracen, and, despite of his youth and activity, kept him undermost, wreathing his long arms above those of his prisoner, who called out angrily, and yet half-laughing at the same time—"Hamako—fool—unloose me—this passes thy privilege—unloose me, or I will use my dagger!"

"Thy dagger!—infidel dog!" said the figure in the goat-skins, "hold it in thy gripe if thou canst!" and in an instant he wrenched the Saracen's weapon out of its owner's hand, and brandished it over his head.

"Help, Nazarene!" cried Sheerkohf, now seriously alarmed; "help, or the Hamako will slay me."

"Slay thee!" replied the dweller of the desert; "and well hast thou merited death, for singing thy blasphemous hymns, not only to the praise of thy false prophet, who is the foul fiend's harbinger, but to that of the Author of Evil himself."

The Christian Knight had hitherto looked on as one stupified, so strangely had this rencontre contradicted, in its progress and event, all that he had previously conjectured. He felt, however, at length, that it touched his honour to interfere in behalf of his discomfited companion; and therefore addressed himself to the victorious figure in the goat-skins.

"Whosoe'er thou art," he said, "and whether of good or of evil, know that I am sworn for the time to be true companion to the Saracen whom thou boldest under thee; therefore, I pray thee to let him arise else I will do battle with thee in his behalf."

"And a proper quarrel it were," answered the Hamako, "for a Crusader to do battle in—for the sake of an unbaptized dog to combat one of his own holy faith! Art thou come forth to the wilderness to fight for the Crescent against the Cross? A goodly soldier of God art thou, to listen to those who sing the praises of Satan!"

"Yet while he spoke thus, he arose himself, and, suffering the Saracen to arise also, returned him his cangiar, or poniard.

"Thou seest to what a point of peril thy presumption hath brought thee," continued he of the goat-skins, now addressing Sheerkohf, "and by what weak means thy practised skill and boasted agility can be foiled, when such is Heaven's pleasure. Wherefore, beware, O Ilderim! for know that, were there not a twinkle in the star of thy nativity, which promises for thee something that is good and gracious in Heaven's good time, we two had not parted till I had torn asunder the throat which so lately trilled forth blasphemies."

"Hamako," said the Saracen, without any appearance of resenting the violent language, and yet more violent assault, to which he had been subjected, "I pray thee, good Hamako, to beware how thou dost again urge thy privilege over far; for though, as a good Moslem, I respect those whom Heaven hath deprived of ordinary reason, in order to endow them with the spirit of prophecy, yet I like not other men's hands on the bridle of my horse, neither upon my own person. Speak, therefore, what thou wilt, secure of any resentment from me; but gather so much sense as to apprehend, that if thou shalt again proffer me any violence, I will strike thy shagged head from thy meager shoulders.—And, to thee, friend Kenneth," he added, as he remounted his steed, "I must needs say, that, in a companion through the desert, I love friendly deeds better than fair words. Of the last

* The worthy and learned clergyman, by whom this species of hymn has been translated, desires, that, for fear of misconception, we should warn the reader to recollect, that it is composed by a heathen, to whom the real causes of moral and physical evil are unknown, and who views their predominance in the system of the universe, as all must view that appalling fact, who have not the benefit of the Christian Revelation. On our own part, we beg to add, that we understand the style of the translator is more paraphrastic than can be approved by those who are acquainted with the singularly curious original. The translator seems to have despaired of rendering into English verse the flights of Oriental poetry; and, possibly, like many learned and ingenious men, finding it impossible to discover the sense of the original, he may have tacitly substituted his own.

thou hast given me enough; but it had been better to have aided me more especially in my struggle with this Hamako, who had well nigh taken my life in his frenzy."

"By my faith," said the Knight, "I did somewhat fail—was somewhat tardy in rendering thee instant help; but the strangeness of the assailant, the suddenness of the scene—it was as if thy wild and wicked lay had raised the devil among us—and such was my confusion, that two or three minutes elapsed ere I could take to my weapon."

"Thou art but a cold and considerate friend," said the Saracen; "and, had the Hamako been one grain more frantic, thy companion had been slain by thy side, to thy eternal dishonour, without thy stirring a finger in his aid, although thou satest by, mounted, and in arms."

"By my word, Saracen," said the Christian, "if thou wilt have it in plain terms, I thought that strange figure was the devil; and being of thy lineage, I knew not what family secret you might be communicating to each other, as you lay lovingly rolling together on the sand."

"Thy gibe is no answer, brother Kenneth," said the Saracen; "for know, that had my assailant been in very deed the Prince of Darkness, thou wert bound not the less to enter into combat with him in thy comrade's behalf. Know, also, that whatever there may be of foul or of fiendish about the Hamako, belongs more to your lineage than to mine; this Hamako being, in truth, the anchorite whom thou art come hither to visit."

"This!" said Sir Kenneth, looking at the athletic, yet wasted figure before him—"this!—thou mockest, Saracen—this cannot be the venerable Theodorick!"

"Ask himself, if thou wilt not believe me," answered Sheerkohf; and ere the words had left his mouth, the hermit gave evidence in his own behalf.

"I am Theodorick of Engaddi," he said,—"I am the walker of the desert—I am friend of the cross, and flail of all infidels, heretics, and devil-worshippers. Avoid ye, avoid ye!—Down with Mahound, Termagaunt, and all their adherents!"—So saying, he pulled from under his shaggy garment a sort of flail or jointed club, bound with iron, which he brandished round his head with singular dexterity.

"Thou seest thy saint," said the Saracen, laughing, for the first time, at the unmitigated astonishment with which Sir Kenneth looked on the wild gestures, and heard the wayward muttering of Theodorick, who, after swinging his flail in every direction, apparently quite reckless whether it encountered the head of either of his companions, finally showed his own strength, and the soundness of the weapon, by striking into fragments a large stone which lay near him.

"This is a madman," said Sir Kenneth.

"Not the worse saint," returned the Moslem, speaking according to the well-known Eastern belief that madmen are under the influence of immediate inspiration. "Know, Christian, that when one eye is extinguished, the other becomes more keen—when one hand is cut off, the other becomes more powerful; so, when our reason in human things is disturbed or destroyed, our view heavenward becomes more acute and perfect."

Here the voice of the Saracen was drowned in that of the hermit, who began to halloo aloud in a wild chanting tone,—"I am Theodorick of Engaddi—I am the torch-brand of the desert—I am the flail of the infidels! The lion and the leopard shall be my comrades, and draw nigh to my cell for shelter; neither shall the goat be afraid of their fangs—I am the torch and the lantern—Kyrie Eleison!"

He closed his song by a short race, and ended that again by three forward bounds, which would have done him great credit in a gymnastic academy, but became his character of hermit so indifferently, that the Scottish knight was altogether confounded and bewildered.

The Saracen seemed to understand him better.—"You see," he said, "that he expects us to follow him to his cell, which, *indeed, is our only place of refuge for the night. You are the leopard*, from the portrait on your shield—I am the lion, as my name imports—and, by the goat, alluding to his garb of goat-skins, he means himself. We must keep him in sight, however, for he is as fleet as a dromedary."

In fact, the task was a difficult one, for though the reverend guide stopped from time to time, and waved his hand, as if to encourage them to come on, yet, well acquainted with all the winding dells and passes of the desert, and gifted with uncommon activity, which, perhaps, an unsettled state of mind kept in constant exercise, he led the knights through chasms, and along footpaths, where even the light-armed Saracen, with his well-trained barb, was in considerable risk, and where the iron-sheathed European, and his over-burdened horse, found themselves in such imminent peril, as the rider would gladly have exchanged for the dangers of a general action. Glad he was when, at length, after this wild race, he beheld the holy man who had led it standing in front of a cavern, with a large torch in his hand, composed of a piece of wood dipt in bitumen, which cast a broad and flickering light, and emitted a strong sulphureous smell.

Undeterred by the stifling vapour, the knight threw himself from his horse and entered the cavern, which afforded small appearance of accommodation. The cell was divided into two parts, in the outward of which were an altar of stone, and a crucifix made of reeds: This served the anchorite for his chapel. On one side of this outward cave the Christian knight, though not without scruple, arising from religious reverence to the objects around, fastened up his horse, and arranged him for the night, in imitation of the Saracen, who gave him to understand that such was the custom of the place. The hermit, mean while, was busied putting his inner apartment in order to receive his guests, and there they soon joined him. At the bottom of the outer cave, a small aperture, closed with a door of rough plank, led into the sleeping-apartment of the hermit, which was more commodious. The floor had been brought to a rough level by the labour of the inhabitant, and then strewed with white sand, which he daily sprinkled with water from a small fountain which bubbled out of the rock in one corner, affording, in that stifling climate, refreshment alike to the ear and the taste. Mattresses, wrought of twisted flags, lay by the side of the cell; the sides, like the floor, had been roughly brought to shape, and several herbs and flowers were hung around them. Two waxen torches, which the hermit lighted, gave a cheerful air to the place, which was rendered agreeable by its fragrance and coolness.

There were implements of labour in one corner of the apartment, in the other was a niche for a rude statue of the Virgin. A table and two chairs showed that they must be the handiwork of the anchorite, being different in their form from Oriental accommodations. The former was covered, not only with reeds and pulse, but also with dried flesh, which Theodorick assiduously placed in such arrangement as should invite the appetite of his guests. This appearance of courtesy, though mute, and expressed by gesture only, seemed to Sir Kenneth something entirely irreconcilable with his former wild and violent demeanour. The movements of the hermit were now become composed, and apparently it was only a sense of religious humiliation which prevented his features, emaciated as they were by his austere mode of life, from being majestic and noble. He trode his cell, as one who seemed born to rule over men, but who had abdicated his empire to become the servant of Heaven. Still, it must be allowed that his gigantic size, the length of his unshaven locks and beard, and the fire of a deep-set and wild eye, were rather attributes of a soldier than of a recluse.

Even the Saracen seemed to regard the anchorite with some veneration, while he was thus employed, and he whispered in a low tone to Sir Kenneth, "The Hamako is now in his better mind, but he will not speak until we have eaten—such is his vow."

It was in silence, accordingly, that Theodorick motioned to the Scot to take his place on one of the low chairs, while Sheerkohf placed himself after the

custom of his nation, upon a cushion of mats. The hermit then held up both hands, as if blessing the refreshment which he had placed before his guests, and they proceeded to eat in silence as profound as his own. To the Saracen this gravity was natural, and the Christian imitated his taciturnity, while he employed his thoughts on the singularity of his own situation, and the contrast betwixt the wild, furious gesticulations, loud cries, and fierce actions of Theodorick, when they first met him, and the demure, solemn, decorous assiduity with which he now performed the duties of hospitality.

When their meal was ended, the hermit, who had not himself eaten a morsel, removed the fragments from the table, and placing before the Saracen a pitcher of sherbet, assigned to the Scot a flask of wine.

"Drink," he said, "my children,"—they were the first words he had spoken,—"the gifts of God are to be enjoyed, when the Giver is remembered."

Having said this, he retired to the outward cell, probably for performance of his devotions, and left his guests together in the inner apartment; when Sir Kenneth endeavoured, by various questions, to draw from Sheerkohf what that Emir knew concerning his host. He was interested by more than mere curiosity in these inquiries. Difficult as it was to reconcile the outrageous demeanour of the recluse at his first appearance, to his present humble and placid behaviour, it seemed yet more impossible to think it consistent with the high consideration in which, according to what Sir Kenneth had learned, this hermit was held by the most enlightened divines of the Christian world. Theodorick, the hermit of Engaddi, had, in that character, been the correspondent of popes and councils; to whom his letters, full of eloquent fervour, had described the miseries imposed by the unbelievers upon the Latin Christians in the Holy Land, in colours, scarce inferior to those employed at the Council of Clermont by the Hermit Peter, when he preached the first Crusade. To find, in a person so reverend, and so much revered, the frantic gestures of a mad fakir, induced the Christian knight to pause ere he could resolve to communicate to him certain important matters, which he had in charge from some of the leaders of the Crusade.

It had been a main object of Sir Kenneth's pilgrimage, attempted by a route so unusual, to make such communications; but what he had that night seen induced him to pause and reflect ere he proceeded to the execution of his commission. From the Emir he could not extract much information, but the general tenor was as follows:—That, as he had heard, the hermit had been once a brave and valiant soldier, wise in council, and fortunate in battle, which last he could easily believe from the great strength and agility which he had often seen him display;—that he had appeared at Jerusalem in the character not of a pilgrim, but in that of one who had devoted himself to dwell for the remainder of his life in the Holy Land. Shortly afterwards, he fixed his residence amid the scenes of desolation where they now found him, respected by the Latins for his austere devotion, and by the Turks and Arabs on account of the symptoms of insanity which he displayed, and which they ascribed to inspiration. It was from them he had the name of Hamako, which expresses such a character in the Turkish language. Sheerkohf himself seemed at a loss how to rank their host. He had been, he said, a wise man, and could often for many hours together speak lessons of virtue or wisdom, without the slightest appearance of inaccuracy. At other times he was wild and violent, but never before had he seen him so mischievously disposed as he had that day appeared to be. His rage was chiefly provoked by any affront to his religion; and there was a story of some wandering Arabs, who had insulted his worship and defaced his altar, and whom he had on that account attacked and slain with the short flail, which he carried with him in lieu of all other weapons. This incident had *made a great noise*, and it was as much the fear of *hermit's iron flail*, as regard for his character as a *mako which caused the* roving tribes to respect his dwelling and his chapel. His fame had spread so far, that Saladin had issued particular orders that he should be spared and protected. He himself, and other Moslem lords of rank, had visited the cell more than once, partly from curiosity, partly that they expected from a man so learned as the Christian Hamako, some insight into the secrets of futurity. "He had," continued the Saracen, "a rashid, or observatory, of great height, contrived to view the heavenly bodies, and particularly the planetary system; by whose movements and influences, as both Christian and Moslem believed, the course of human events was regulated, and might be predicted."

This was the substance of the Emir Sheerkohf's information, and it left Sir Kenneth in doubt whether the character of insanity arose from the occasional excessive fervour of the hermit's zeal, or whether it was not altogether fictitious, and assumed for the sake of the immunities which it afforded. Yet it seemed that the infidels had carried their complaisance towards him to an uncommon length, considering the fanaticism of the followers of Mohammed, in the midst of whom he was living, though the professed enemy of their faith. He thought also there was more intimacy of acquaintance between the hermit and the Saracen, than the words of the latter had induced him to anticipate; and it had not escaped him, that the former had called the latter by a name different from that which he himself had assumed. All these considerations authorized caution, if not suspicion. He determined to observe his host closely, and not to be over hasty in communicating with him on the important charge intrusted to him.

"Beware, Saracen," he said; "methinks our host's imagination wanders as well on the subject of names as upon other matters. Thy name is Sheerkohf, and he called thee but now by another."

"My name, when in the tent of my father," replied the Kurdman, "was Ilderim, and by this I am still distinguished by many. In the field, and to soldiers, I am known as the Lion of the Mountain, being the name my good sword hath won for me.—But hush, the Hamako comes—it is to warn us to rest—I know his custom—none must watch him at his vigils."

The anchorite accordingly entered, and folding his arms on his bosom as he stood before them, said with a solemn voice,—"Blessed be His name, who hath appointed the quiet night to follow the busy day, and the calm sleep to refresh the wearied limbs, and to compose the troubled spirit!"

Both warriors replied "Amen!" and, arising from the table, prepared to partake themselves to the couches, which their host indicated by waving his hand, as, making a reverence to each, he again withdrew from the apartment.

The King of the Leopard then disarmed himself of his heavy panoply, his Saracen companion kindly assisting him to undo his buckler and clasps, until he remained in the close dress of chamois leather, which knights and men-at-arms used to wear under their harness. The Saracen, if he had admired the strength of his adversary when sheathed in steel, was now as less struck with the accuracy of proportion displayed in his nervous and well-compacted figure. The knight, on the other hand, as, in exchange of courtesy, he assisted the Saracen to disrobe himself of his upper garments, that he might sleep with more convenience, was on his side at a loss to conceive how such slender proportions, and slimness of figure, could be reconciled with the vigour he had displayed in personal contest.

Each warrior prayed, ere he addressed himself to his place of rest. The Moslem turned towards his *kebla*, the point to which the prayer of each follower of the Prophet was to be addressed, and murmured his heathen orisons, while the Christian, withdrawing from the contamination of the infidel's neighbourhood, placed his huge cross-handled sword upright, and kneeling before it as the sign of salvation, told his rosary with a devotion which was enhanced by the recollection of the scenes through which he had passed, and the dangers from which he had been rescued in the course of the day. Both warriors, worn

by toil and travel, were soon fast asleep, each on his separate pallet.

CHAPTER IV.

KENNETH, the Scot, was uncertain how long his senses had been lost in profound repose, when he was roused to recollection by a sense of oppression on his chest, which at first suggested a flitting dream of struggling with a powerful opponent, and at length recalled him fully to his senses. He was about to demand who was there, when, opening his eyes, he beheld the figure of the anchorite, wild and savage-looking as we have described him, standing by his bedside, and pressing his right hand upon his breast, while he held a small silver lamp in the other.

"Be silent," said the hermit, as the prostrate knight looked up in surprise; "I have that to say to you which yonder infidel must not hear."

The words he spoke in the French language, and not in the Lingua Franca, or compound of Eastern and European dialects, which had hitherto been used amongst them.

"Arise," he continued. "put on thy mantle—speak not, but tread lightly, and follow me."

Sir Kenneth arose, and took his sword.

"It needs not," answered the anchorite, in a whisper; "we are going where spiritual arms avail much, and fleshly weapons are but as the reed and the decayed gourd."

The knight deposited his sword by the bedside as before, and, armed only with his dagger, from which in this perilous country he never parted, prepared to attend his mysterious host.

The hermit then moved slowly forwards, and was followed by the knight, still under some uncertainty whether the dark form which glided on before to show him the path, was not, in fact, the creation of a disturbed dream. They passed, like shadows, into the outer apartment, without disturbing the paynim Emir, who lay still buried in repose. Before the cross and altar, in the outward room, a lamp was still burning, a missal was displayed, and on the floor lay a discipline or penitential scourge of small cord and wire, the lashes of which were recently stained with blood, a token, no doubt, of the severe penance of the recluse. Here Theodorick kneeled down, and pointed to the knight to take his place beside him upon the sharp flints, which seemed placed for the purpose of rendering the posture of reverential devotion as uneasy as possible; he read many prayers of the Catholic Church, and chanted, in a low but earnest voice, three of the penitential psalms. These last he intermixed with sighs and tears, and convulsive throbs, which bore witness how deeply he felt the divine poetry which he recited. The Scottish knight assisted with profound sincerity at these acts of devotion, his opinions of his host beginning, in the mean time, to be so much changed, that he doubted whether, from the severity of his penance, and the ardour of his prayers, he ought not to regard him as a saint; and when they arose from the ground, he stood with reverence before him, as a pupil before an honoured master. The hermit was on his side silent and abstracted, for the space of a few minutes.

"Look into yonder recess my son," he said, pointing to the farther corner of the cell; "there thou wilt find a veil—bring it hither."

The knight obeyed; and, in a small aperture cut out of the wall, and secured with a door of wicker, he found the veil inquired for. When he brought it to the light, he discovered that it was torn, and soiled in some places with some dark substance. The anchorite looked at it with a deep but smothered emotion, and ere he could speak to the Scottish knight, was compelled to vent his feelings in a convulsive groan.

"Thou art now about to look upon the richest treasure that the earth possesses," he at length said; "wo is me, that my eyes are unworthy to be lifted towards it! Alas! I am but the vile and despised *sign, which points out to the wearied traveller a harbour of rest and security, but must itself* remain for ever without doors. In vain have I fled to the very depths of the rocks, and the very bosom of the thirsty desert. Mine enemy hath found me—even he whom I have denied has pursued me to my fortresses!"

He paused again for a moment, and turning to the Scottish knight, said in a firmer tone of voice, "You bring me a greeting from Richard of England?"

"I come from the Council of Christian Princes," said the knight; "but the King of England being indisposed, I am not honoured with his Majesty's commands."

"Your token?" demanded the recluse.

Sir Kenneth hesitated—former suspicions, and the marks of insanity which the hermit had formerly exhibited, rushed suddenly on his thoughts; but how suspect a man whose manners were so saintly?—"My pass-word," he said at length, "is this—Kings begged of a beggar."

"It is right," said the hermit, while he paused; "I know you well; but the sentinel upon his post—and mine is an important one—challenges friend as well as foe."

He then moved forward with the lamp, leading the way into the room which they had left. The Saracen lay on his couch, still fast asleep. The hermit paused by his side, and looked down on him.

"He sleeps," he said, "in darkness, and must not be awakened."

The attitude of the Emir did indeed convey the idea of profound repose. One arm, flung across his body, as he lay with his face half turned to the wall, concealed, with its loose and long sleeve, the greater part of his face; but the high forehead was yet visible. Its nerves, which during his waking hours were so uncommonly active, were now motionless, as if the face had been composed of dark marble, and his long silken eyelashes closed over his piercing and hawk-like eyes. The open and relaxed hand, and the deep, regular, and soft breathing, gave all tokens of the most profound repose. The slumberer formed a singular group along with the tall forms of the hermit in his shaggy dress of goat-skins, bearing the lamp, and the knight in his close leathern coat; the former with an austere expression of ascetic gloom, the latter with anxious curiosity deeply impressed on his manly features.

"He sleeps soundly," said the hermit, in the same low tone as before, and repeating the words, though he had changed the meaning from that which is literal to a metaphorical sense,—"He sleeps in darkness, but there shall be for him a day-spring.—O, Ilderim, thy waking thoughts are yet as vain and wild as those which are wheeling their giddy dance through thy sleeping brain; but the trumpet shall be heard, and the dream shall be dissolved."

"So saying, and making the knight a sign to follow him, the hermit went towards the altar, and, passing behind it, pressed a spring, which, opening without noise, showed a small iron door wrought in the side of the cavern, so as to be almost imperceptible, unless upon the most severe scrutiny. The hermit, ere he ventured fully to open the door, dropt some oil on the hinges, which the lamp supplied. A small staircase, hewn in the rock, was discovered, when the iron door was at length completely opened.

"Take the veil which I hold," said the hermit, in a melancholy tone, "and blind mine eyes; for I may not look on the treasure which thou art presently to behold, without sin and presumption."

Without reply, the knight hastily muffled the recluse's head in the veil, and the latter began to ascend the staircase as one too much accustomed to the way to require the use of light, while at the same time he held the lamp to the Scot, who followed him for many steps up the narrow ascent. At length they rested in a small vault of irregular form, in one nook of which the staircase terminated, while in another corner a corresponding stair was seen to continue the ascent. In a third angle was a Gothic door, very rudely ornamented with the usual attributes of clustered columns and carving, and defended by a wicket, strongly guarded with iron, and studded with large nails. To this last point the hermit directed his steps, which seemed to falter as he approached it.

"Put off thy shoes," he said to his attendant; "the ground on which thou standest is holy. Banish from thy innermost heart each profane and carnal thought, for to harbour such while in this place, were a deadly impiety."

The knight laid aside his shoes as he was commanded, and the hermit stood in the mean while as if communing with his soul in secret prayer, and when he again moved, commanded the knight to knock at the wicket three times. He did so. The door opened spontaneously, at least Sir Kenneth beheld no one, and his senses were at once assailed by a stream of the purest light, and by a strong and almost oppressive sense of the richest perfumes. He stepped two or three paces back, and it was the space of a minute ere he recovered the dazzling and overpowering effects of the sudden change from darkness to light.

When he entered the apartment in which this brilliant lustre was displayed, he perceived that the light proceeded from a combination of silver lamps, fed with purest oil, and sending forth the richest odours, hanging by silver chains from the roof of a small Gothic chapel, hewn, like most part of the hermit's singular mansion, out of the sound and solid rock. But, whereas, in every other place which Sir Kenneth had seen, the labour employed upon the rock had been of the simplest and coarsest description, it had in this chapel employed the invention and the chisels of the most able architects. The groined roofs rose from six columns on each side, carved with the rarest skill; and the manner in which the crossings of the concave arches were bound together, as it were, with appropriate ornaments, were all in the finest tone of the architecture, and of the age. Corresponding to the line of pillars, there were on each side six richly wrought niches, each of which contained the image of one of the twelve apostles.

At the upper and eastern end of the chapel stood the altar, behind which a very rich curtain of Persian silk, embroidered deeply with gold, covered a recess, containing, unquestionably, some image or relic of no ordinary sanctity, in honour of whom this singular place of worship had been erected. Under the persuasion that this must be the case, the knight advanced to the shrine, and kneeling down before it, repeated his devotions with fervency, during which his attention was disturbed by the curtain being suddenly raised, or rather pulled aside, how or by whom he saw not; but in the niche which was thus disclosed, he beheld a cabinet of silver and ebony, with a double folding door, the whole formed into the miniature resemblance of a Gothic church.

As he gazed with anxious curiosity on the shrine, the two folding doors also flew open, discovering a large piece of wood, on which were blazoned the words VERA CRUX, at the same time a choir of female voices sung GLORIA PATRI. The instant the strain had ceased, the shrine was closed, and the curtain again drawn, and the knight who knelt at the altar might now continue his devotions undisturbed, in honour of the holy relic which had been just disclosed to his view. He did this under the profound impression of one who had witnessed, with his own eyes, an awful evidence of the truth of his religion, and it was some time ere, concluding his orisons, he arose, and ventured to look around him for the hermit, who had guided him to this sacred and mysterious spot. He beheld him, his head still muffled in the veil, which he had himself wrapped around it, couching, like a rated hound, upon the threshold of the chapel; but, apparently, without venturing to cross it: the holiest reverence, the most penitential remorse, was expressed by his posture, which seemed that of a man borne down and crushed to the earth by the burden of his inward feelings. It seemed to the Scot, that only the sense of the deepest penitence, remorse, and humiliation, could have thus prostrated a frame so strong, and a spirit so fiery.

He approached him as if to speak, but the recluse anticipated his purpose, murmuring in stifled tones, *from* beneath the fold in which his head was muffled, *and which sounded like* a voice proceeding from the *cerements of a corpse*.—"Abide, abide—happy thou *canst mayst—the vision is not* yet ended."—So saying, he reared himself from the ground, drew back from the threshold on which he had hitherto lain prostrate, and closed the door of the chapel, which, secured by a spring bolt within, the snap of which resounded through the place, appeared so much like a part of the living rock from which the cavern was hewn, that Kenneth could hardly discern where the aperture had been. He was now alone in the lighted chapel, which contained the relic to which he had lately rendered his homage, without other arms than his dagger, or other companion than his pious thoughts and dauntless courage.

Uncertain what was next to happen, but resolved to abide the course of events, Sir Kenneth paced the solitary chapel, till about the time of the earliest cock-crowing. At this dead season, when night and morning met together, he heard, but from what quarter he could not discover, the sound of such a small silver bell as is rung at the elevation of the host, in the ceremony, or sacrifice, as it has been called, of the mass. The hour and the place rendered the sound fearfully solemn, and, bold as he was, the knight withdrew himself into the farther nook of the chapel, at the end opposite to the altar, in order to observe, without interruption, the consequences of this unexpected signal.

He did not wait long ere the silken curtain was again withdrawn, and the relic again presented to his view. As he sunk reverentially on his knee, he heard the sound of the lauds, or earliest office of the Catholic church, sung by female voices, which united together in the performance as they had done in the former service. The knight was soon aware that the voices were no longer stationary in the distance, but approached the chapel and became louder, when a door, imperceptible when closed, like that by which he had himself entered, opened on the other side of the vault, and gave the tones of the choir more room to swell along the ribbed arches of the roof.

The knight fixed his eyes on the opening with breathless anxiety, and, continuing to kneel in the attitude of devotion which the place and scene required, expected the consequence of these preparations. A procession appeared about to issue from the door. First, four beautiful boys, whose arms, neck, and legs were bare, showing the bronze complexion of the East, and contrasting with the snow-white tunics which they wore, entered the chapel by two and two. The first pair bore censers, which they swung from side to side, adding double fragrance to the odours with which the chapel already was impregnated. The second pair scattered flowers.

After these followed, in due and majestic order, the females who composed the choir; six, who, from their black scapularies, and black veils over their white garments, appeared to be professed nuns of the order of Mount Carmel; and as many whose veils, being white, argued them to be novices, or occasional inhabitants in the cloister, who were not as yet bound to it by vows. The former held in their hands large rosaries, while the younger and lighter figures who followed, carried each a chaplet of red and white roses. They moved in procession around the chapel, without appearing to take the slightest notice of Kenneth, although passing so near him that their robes almost touched him; while they continued to sing, the knight doubted not that he was in one of those cloisters where the noble Christian maidens had formerly openly devoted themselves to the services of the church. Most of them had been suppressed since the Mahometans had reconquered Palestine, but many, purchasing connivance by presents, or receiving it from the clemency or contempt of the victors, still continued to observe in private the ritual to which their vows had consecrated them. Yet, though Kenneth knew this to be the case, the solemnity of the place and hour, the surprise at the sudden appearance of these votresses, and the visionary manner in which they moved past him, had such influence on his imagination, that he could scarce conceive that the fair procession which he beheld was formed of creatures of this world, so much did they resemble a choir of supernatural beings, rendering homage to the universal object of adoration.

was the knight's first idea, as the procession him, scarce moving, save just sufficiently to e their progress; so that, seen by the sha- ind religious light, which the lamps shed the clouds of incense which darkened the ent, they appeared rather to glide than to walk. is a second time, in surrounding the chapel, ssed the spot on which he kneeled, one of the toled maidens, as she glided by him, detached e chaplet which she carried, a rosebud, which from her fingers, perhaps unconsciously, on of Sir Kenneth. The knight started as if a d suddenly struck his person; for, when the wound up to a high pitch of feeling and ex- n, the slightest incident, if unexpected, gives he train which imagination has already laid. uppressed his emotion, recollecting how easily lent so indifferent might have happened, and was only the uniform monotony of the move- the choristers, which made the incident in htest degree remarkable.

while the procession, for the third time, sur- l the chapel, the thoughts and the eyes of h followed exclusively the one among the no- ho had dropped the rose-bud. Her step, her r form, were so completely assimilated to the the choristers, that it was impossible to per- e least marks of individuality, and yet Ken- heart throbbed like a bird that would burst cage, as if to assure him, by its sympathetic ions, that the female who held the right file second rank of the novices, was dearer to t only than all the rest that were present, but e whole sex besides. The romantic passion as it was cherished, and indeed enjoined, by s of chivalry, associated well with the no less ic feelings of devotion; and they might be said ore to enhance than to counteract each other. therefore, with a glow of expectation, that had ing even of a religious character, that Sir Ken- s sensations thrilling from his heart to the his fingers, expected some second sign of the e of one, who, he strongly fancied, had al- estowed on him the first. Short as the space ring which the procession again completed a rambulation of the chapel, it seemed an eter- Kenneth. At length the form, which he had d with such devoted attention, drew nigh— as no difference betwixt that shrouded figure others, with whom it moved in concert and m, until, just as she passed for the third time eling Crusader, a part of a little and well- oned hand, so beautifully formed as to give nest idea of the perfect proportions of the form h it belonged, stole through the folds of the ike a moonbeam through the fleecy cloud of a night, and again a rose-bud lay at the feet of ght of the Leopard.

second intimation could not be accidental—it ot be fortuitous the resemblance of that half- it beautiful female hand, with one which his once touched, and, while they touched it, had lly sworn allegiance to the lovely owner. Had proof been wanting, there was the glimmer of atchless ruby ring on that snow-white finger, invaluable worth Kenneth would yet have ess than the slightest sign which that finger ave made—and, veiled too, as she was, he ee, by chance, or by favour, a stray curl of the sses, each hair of which was dearer to him a d times than a chain of massive gold. It was of his love! But that she should be here—in age and sequestered desert—among vestals, ndered themselves habitants of wilds and of , that they might perform in secret those n rites which they dared not assist in openly this should be so—in truth and in reality— too incredible—it must be a dream—a delu- nce of the imagination. While these thoughts through the mind of Kenneth, the same pas- which the procession had entered the chapel, d them on their return. The young sacristans, ble nuns, *vanished successively through the or—at length she from whom he had received* this double intimation, passed also—yet, in passing, turned her head, slightly indeed, but perceptibly, towards the place where he remained fixed as an image. He marked the last wave of her veil—it was gone—and a darkness sunk upon his soul, scarce less palpable than that which almost immediately enveloped his external sense; for the last chorister had no sooner crossed the threshold of the door, than it shut with a loud sound, and at the same instant the voices of the choir were silent, the lights of the chapel were at once extinguished, and Sir Kenneth remained solitary, and in total darkness. But to Kenneth, solitude, and darkness, and the uncertainty of his mysterious situation, were as nothing—he thought not of them—cared not for them—cared for naught in the world save the flitting vision which had just glided past him, and the tokens of her favour which she had bestowed. To grope on the floor for the buds which she had dropped—to press them to his lips—to his bosom—now alternately, now together—to rivet his lips to the cold stones on which, as near as he could judge, she had so lately stept—to play all the extravagances which strong affection suggests and vindicates to those who yield themselves up to it, were but the tokens of passionate love, common to all ages. But it was peculiar to the times of chivalry, that in his wildest rapture the knight imagined of no attempt to follow or to trace the object of such romantic attachment; that he thought of her as of a deity, who, having deigned to show herself for an instant to her devoted worshipper, had again returned to the darkness of her sanctuary—or as an influential planet, which, having darted in some auspicious minute one favourable ray, wrapped itself again in its veil of mist. The motions of the lady of his love were to him those of a superior being, who was to move without watch or control, rejoice him by her appearance, or depress him by her absence, animate him by her kindness, or drive him to despair by her cruelty—all at her own free-will, and without other importunity or remonstrance than that expressed by the most devoted services of the heart and sword of the champion, whose sole object in life was to fulfil her commands, and, by the splendour of his own achievements, to exalt her fame.

Such were the rules of chivalry, and of the love which was its ruling principle. But Sir Kenneth's attachment was rendered romantic by other and still more peculiar circumstances. He had never even heard the sound of his lady's voice, though he had often beheld her beauty with rapture. She moved in a circle, which his rank of knighthood permitted him indeed to approach, but not to mingle with; and highly as he stood distinguished for warlike skill and enterprise, still the poor Scottish soldier was compelled to worship his divinity at a distance, almost as great as divides the Persian from the sun which he adores. But when was the pride of woman too lofty to overlook the passionate devotion of a lover, however inferior in degree? Her eye has been on him in the tournament, her ear had heard his praises in the report of the battles which were daily fought; and while count, duke, and lord, contended for her grace, it flowed, unwillingly perhaps at first, or even unconsciously, towards the poor Knight of the Leopard, who, to support his rank, had little besides his sword. When she looked, and when she listened, the lady saw and heard enough to encourage her in a partiality, which had at first crept on her unawares. If a knight's personal beauty was praised, even the most prudish dames of the military court of England would make an exception in favour of the Scottish Kenneth; and it oftentimes happened, that notwithstanding the very considerable largesses which princes and peers bestowed on the minstrels, an impartial spirit of independence would seize the poet, and the harp was swept to the heroism of one, who had neither palfreys nor garments to bestow in guerdon of his applause.

The moments when she listened to the praises of her lover became gradually more and more dear to the high-born Edith, relieving the flattery with which her ear was weary, and presenting to her a subject of secret contemplation, more worthy, as he seemed by

general report, than those who surpassed him in rank and in the gifts of fortune. As her attention became constantly, though cautiously, fixed on Sir Kenneth, she grew more and more convinced of his personal devotion to herself, and more and more certain in her mind, that in Kenneth of Scotland she beheld the fated knight doomed to share with her through weal and wo—and the prospect looked gloomy and dangerous—the passionate attachment to which the poets of the age ascribed such universal dominion, and which its manners and morals placed nearly on the same rank with devotion itself.

Let us not disguise the truth from our readers. When Edith became aware of the state of her own sentiments, chivalrous as were her sentiments, becoming a maiden not distant from the throne of England—gratified as her pride must have been with the mute though unceasing homage rendered to her by the knight whom she had distinguished, there were moments when the feelings of the woman, loving and beloved, murmured against the restraints of state and form by which she was surrounded, and when she almost blamed the timidity of her lover, who seemed resolved not to infringe them. The etiquette, to use a modern phrase, of birth and rank, had drawn around her a magical circle, beyond which Sir Kenneth might indeed bow and gaze, but within which he could no more pass, than an evoked spirit can transgress the boundaries prescribed by the rod of a powerful enchanter. The thought involuntarily pressed on her, that she herself must venture, were it but the point of her fairy foot, beyond the prescribed boundary, if she ever hoped to give a lover, so reserved and bashful, an opportunity of so slight a favour, as but to salute her shoe-tie. There was an example, the noted precedent of the "King's daughter of Hungary," who thus generously encouraged the "squire of low degree;" and Edith, though of kingly blood, was no king's daughter, any more than her lover was of low degree—fortune had put no such extreme barrier in obstacle to their affections. Something, however, within the maiden's bosom—that modest pride, which throws fetters even on love itself—forbade her, notwithstanding the superiority of her condition, to make those advances, which, in every case, delicacy assigns to the other sex; above all, Sir Kenneth was a knight so gentle and honourable, so highly accomplished, as her imagination at least suggested, together with the strictest feelings of what was due to himself and to her, that however constrained her attitude might be while receiving his adorations, like the image of some deity, who is neither supposed to feel nor to reply to the homage of its votaries, still the idol feared that to step prematurely from her pedestal, would be to degrade herself in the eyes of her devoted worshipper.

Yet the devout adorer of an actual idol can even discover signs of approbation in the rigid and immovable features of a marble image, and it is no wonder that something, which could be as favourably interpreted, glanced from the bright eye of the lovely Edith, whose beauty, indeed, consisted rather more in that very power of expression, than on absolute regularity of contour, or brilliancy of complexion. Some slight marks of distinction had escaped from her, notwithstanding her own jealous vigilance, else how could Sir Kenneth have so readily, and so undoubtingly, recognised the lovely hand, of which scarce two fingers were visible from under the veil, or how could he have rested so thoroughly assured that two flowers, successively dropt on the spot, were intended as a recognition on the part of his lady love? By what train of observation—by what secret signs, looks, or gestures—by what instinctive free-masonry of love, this degree of intelligence came to subsist between Edith and her lover, we cannot attempt to trace; for we are old, and such slight vestiges of affection, quickly discovered by younger eyes, defy the power of ours. Enough, that such affection did subsist between parties who had never even spoken to one another, though, on the side of Edith, it was checked by a deep sense of the difficulties and dangers which must necessarily attend the further progress of their attachment, and upon that of the knight by a thousand doubts and fears lest he had over-estimated the slight tokens of the lady's notice, varied, as they necessarily were, by long intervals of apparent coldness, during which, either the fear of exciting the observation of others, and thus drawing danger upon her lover, or that of sinking in his esteem by seeming too willing to be won, made her behave with indifference, and as if unobservant of his presence.

This narrative, tedious perhaps, but which the story renders necessary, may serve to explain the state of intelligence, if it deserves so strong a name, betwixt the lovers, when Edith's unexpected appearance in the chapel produced so powerful an effect on the feelings of her knight.

CHAPTER V.

Their necromantic forms in vain
Haunt us on the tented plain;
We bid these spectre shapes avaunt,
Ashtaroth and Termagaunt. WARTON

THE most profound silence, the deepest darkness, continued to brood for more than an hour over the chapel in which we left the Knight of the Leopard still kneeling, alternately expressing thanks to Heaven, and gratitude to his lady, for the boon which had been vouchsafed to him. His own safety, his own destiny, for which he was at all times little anxious, had not now the weight of a grain of dust in his reflections. He was in the neighbourhood of Lady Edith, he had received tokens of her grace, he was in a place hallowed by relics of the most awful sanctity. A Christian soldier, a devoted lover, could fear nothing, think of nothing, but his duty to Heaven, and his devoir to his lady.

At the lapse of the space of time which we have noticed, a shrill whistle, like that with which a falconer calls his hawk, was heard to ring sharply through the vaulted chapel. It was a sound ill suited to the place, and reminded Sir Kenneth how necessary it was he should be upon his guard. He started from his knee, and laid his hand upon his poniard. A creaking sound, as of a screw or pulleys, succeeded, and a light streaming upwards, as from an opening in the floor, showed that a trap-door had been raised or depressed. In less than a minute, a long skinny arm, partly naked, partly clothed in a sleeve of red samite, arose out of the aperture, holding a lamp as high as it could stretch upwards, and the figure to which the arm belonged, ascended step by step to the level of the chapel floor. The form and face of the being who thus presented himself, were those of a frightful dwarf, with a large head, a cap fantastically adorned with three peacock-feathers, a dress of red samite, the richness of which rendered his ugliness more conspicuous, distinguished by gold bracelets and armlets, and a white silk sash, in which he wore a gold-hilted dagger. This singular figure had in his left hand a kind of broom. So soon as he had stepped from the aperture through which he arose, he stood still, and, as if to show himself more distinctly, moved the lamp which he held slowly over his face and person, successively illuminating his wild and fantastic features, and his misshapen, but nervous limbs. Though disproportioned in person, the dwarf was not so distorted as to argue any want of strength or activity. While Sir Kenneth gazed on this disagreeable object, the popular creed occurred to his remembrance, concerning the gnomes, or earthly spirits, which make their abode in the caverns of the earth; and so much did this figure correspond with ideas he had formed of their appearance, that he looked on it with disgust, mingled not indeed with fear, but that sort of awe which the presence of a supernatural creature may infuse into the most steady bosom.

The dwarf again whistled, and summoned from beneath a companion. This second figure ascended in the same manner as the first; but it was a female arm, in this second instance, which upheld the lamp from the subterranean vault out of which these presentiments arose, and it was a female form much resembling the first in shape and proportions, which slowly emerged from the floor. Her dress was also of red samite, fantastically cut and flounced, as if she had been dressed for some exhibition of mimes or

jugglers; and with the same minuteness which her predecessor had exhibited, she passed the lamp over her face and person, which seemed to rival the male's in ugliness. But, with all this most unfavourable exterior, there was one trait in the features of both which argued alertness and intelligence in the most uncommon degree. This arose from the brilliancy of their eyes, which, deep-set beneath black and shaggy brows, gleamed with a lustre, which, like that in the eye of the toad, seemed to make some amends for the extreme ugliness of countenance and person.

Sir Kenneth remained as if spellbound, while this unlovely pair, moving round the chapel close to each other, appeared to perform the duty of sweeping it, like menials; but, as they used only one hand, the floor was not much benefitted by the exercise, which they plied with such oddity of gestures and manner, as befitted their bizarre and fantastic appearance. When they approached near to the knight, in the course of their occupation, they ceased to use their brooms, and placing themselves side by side, directly opposite to Sir Kenneth, they again slowly shifted the lights which they held so as to allow him distinctly to survey features which were not rendered more agreeable by being brought nearer, and to observe the extreme quickness and keenness with which their black and glittering eyes flashed back the light of the lamps. They then turned the gleam of both lights upon the knight, and having accurately surveyed him, turned their faces to each other, and set up a loud yelling laugh, which resounded in his ears. The sound was so ghastly, that Sir Kenneth started at hearing it, and hastily demanded, in the name of God, who they were who profaned that holy place with such antic gestures and elritch exclamations.

"I am the dwarf Nectabanus," said the abortion-seeming male, in a voice corresponding to his figure, and resembling the voice of the night-crow more than any sound which is heard by daylight.

"And I am Guenevra, his lady and his love," replied the female, in tones which, being shriller, were yet wilder than those of her companion.

"Wherefore are you here?" again demanded the knight, scarcely yet assured that it was human beings which he saw before him.

"I am," replied the male dwarf, with much assumed gravity and dignity, "the twelfth Imaum—I am Mahommed Mohadi, the guide and the conductor of the faithful. A hundred horses stand ready saddled for me and my train at the Holy City, and as many at the City of Refuge. I am he who shall bear witness, and this is one of my houris."

"Thou liest!" answered the female, interrupting her companion, in tones yet shriller than his own; "I am none of thy houris, and thou art no such infidel trash as the Mahommed of whom thou speakest. May my curse rest upon his coffin!—I tell thee, thou ass of Issachar, thou art King Arthur of Britain, whom the fairies stole away from the field of Avalon; and I am Dame Guenevra, famed for her beauty."

"But, in truth, noble sir," said the male, "we are distressed princes, dwelling under the wing of King Guy of Jerusalem, until he was driven out from his own nest by the foul infidels—Heaven's bolts consume them!"

"Hush," said a voice from the side upon which the knight had entered—"Hush, fools, and begone; your ministry is ended."

The dwarfs had no sooner heard the command, than, gibbering in discordant whispers to each other, they blew out their lights at once, and left the knight in utter darkness, which, when the pattering of their retiring feet had died away, was soon accompanied by its fittest companion, total silence.

The knight felt the departure of these unfortunate creatures a relief. He could not, from their language, manners, and appearance, doubt that they belonged to the degraded class of beings whom deformity of person, and weakness of intellect, recommended to the painful situation of appendages to great families, where their personal appearance and imbecility were found *for merriment to the householder*. Superior in *no respect to the ideas and manners* of his time, the Scottish knight might, at another period, have been much amused by the mummery of these poor effigies of humanity; but now, their appearance, gesticulations and language, broke the train of deep and solemn feeling with which he was impressed, and he rejoiced in the disappearance of the unhappy objects.

A few minutes after they had retired, the door at which they had entered opened slowly, and, remaining ajar, discovered a faint light arising from a lantern placed upon the threshold. Its doubtful and wavering gleam showed a dark form reclined beside the entrance, but without its precincts, which, on approaching it more nearly, he recognised to be the hermit couching in the same humble posture in which he had at first laid himself down, and which doubtless he had retained during the whole time of his guest's continuing in the chapel.

"All is over," said the hermit, as he heard the knight approaching—"and the most wretched of earthly sinners, with him who should think himself most honoured and most happy among the race of humanity, must retire from this place. Take the light, and guide me down the descent, for I may not uncover my eyes until I am far from this hallowed spot."

The Scottish knight obeyed in silence, for a solemn and yet ecstatic sense of what he had seen had silenced even the eager workings of curiosity. He led the way, with considerable accuracy, through the various secret passages and stairs by which they had ascended, until at length they found themselves in the outward cell of the hermit's cavern.

"The condemned criminal is restored to his dungeon, reprieved from one miserable day to another, until his awful Judge shall at length appoint the well-deserved sentence to be carried into execution."

As the hermit spoke these words, he laid aside the veil with which his eyes had been bound, and looked at it with a suppressed and hollow sigh. No sooner had he restored it to the crypt from which he had caused the Scot to bring it, than he said hastily and sternly to his companion,—"Begone, begone—to rest, to rest. You may sleep—you can sleep—I neither can, nor may."

Respecting the profound agitation with which this was spoken, the knight retired into the inner cell; but, casting back his eye as he left the exterior grotto, he beheld the anchorite stripping his shoulders with frantic haste, of their shaggy mantle, and ere he could shut the frail door which separated the two compartments of the cavern, he heard the clang of the scourge, and the groans of the penitent under his self-inflicted penance. A cold shudder came over the knight as he reflected what could be the foulness of the sin, what the depth of the remorse, which, apparently, such severe penance could neither cleanse nor assuage. He told his beads devoutly, and flung himself on his rude couch, after a glance at the still sleeping Moslem, and, wearied by the various scenes of the day and the night, soon slept as sound as infancy. Upon his awaking in the morning, he held certain conferences with the hermit upon matters of importance, and the result of their intercourse induced him to remain for two days longer in the grotto. He was regular, as became a pilgrim, in his devotional exercises, but was not again admitted to the chapel in which he had seen such wonders.

CHAPTER VI.

Now change the scene—and let the trumpets sound,
For we must rouse the lion from his lair.—*Old Play.*

THE scene must change, as our programme has announced, from the mountain wilderness of Jordan to the camp of King Richard of England, then stationed betwixt Jean d'Acre and Ascalon; and containing that army with which he of the Lion Heart had promised himself a triumphant march to Jerusalem, and in which he would probably have succeeded, if not hindered by the jealousies of the Christian princes engaged in the same enterprise, and the offence taken by them at the uncurbed haughtiness of the English monarch, and Richard's unveiled contempt for his brother sovereigns, who, his equals in rank, were yet far his inferiors in courage, hardihood,

and military talents. Such discords, and particularly those betwixt Richard and Philip of France, created disputes and obstacles which impeded every active measure proposed by the heroic though impetuous Richard, while the ranks of the Crusaders were daily thinned, not only by the desertion of individuals, but of entire bands, headed by their respective feudal leaders, who withdrew from a contest in which they had ceased to hope for success.

The effects of the climate became, as usual, fatal to soldiers from the north, and the more so, that the dissolute license of the Crusaders, forming a singular contrast to the principles and purpose of their taking up arms, rendered them more easy victims to the insalubrious influence of burning heat and chilling dews. To these discouraging causes of loss was to be added the sword of the enemy. Saladin, than whom no greater name is recorded in Eastern history, had learnt to his fatal experience, that his light-armed followers were little able to meet in close encounter with the iron-clad Franks, and had been taught, at the same time, to apprehend and dread the adventurous character of his antagonist Richard. But if his armies were more than once routed with great slaughter, his numbers gave the Saracen the advantage in those lighter skirmishes, of which many were inevitable.

As the army of his assailants decreased, the enterprises of the Sultan became more numerous and more bold in this species of petty warfare. The camp of the Crusaders was surrounded, and almost besieged by clouds of light cavalry, resembling swarms of wasps, easily crushed when they are once grasped, but furnished with wings to elude superior strength, and stings to inflict harm and mischief. There was perpetual warfare of posts and foragers, in which many valuable lives were lost, without any corresponding object being gained; convoys were intercepted, and communications were cut off. The Crusaders had to purchase the means of sustaining life, by life itself; and water, like that of the well of Bethlehem, longed for by King David, one of its ancient monarchs, was then, as before, only obtained by the expenditure of blood.

These evils were, in a great measure, counterbalanced by the stern resolution and restless activity of King Richard, who, with some of his best knights, was ever on horseback, ready to repair to any point where danger occurred, and often, not only bringing unexpected succour to the Christians, but discomfiting the infidels when they seemed most secure of victory. But even the iron frame of Cœur de Lion could not support, without injury, the alternations of the unwholesome climate, joined to senseless exertions of body and mind. He became afflicted with one of those slow and wasting fevers peculiar to Asia, and, in despite of his great strength, and still greater courage, grew first unfit to mount on horseback, and then unable to attend the councils of war, which were, from time to time, held by the Crusaders. It was difficult to say whether this state of personal inactivity was rendered more galling or more endurable to the English monarch, by the resolution of the council to engage in a truce of thirty days with the Sultan Saladin; for on the one hand if he was incensed at the delay which this interposed to the progress of the great enterprise, he was, on the other, somewhat consoled by knowing that others were not acquiring laurels, while he remained inactive upon a sick-bed.

That, however, which Cœur de Lion could least excuse, was the general inactivity which prevailed in the camp of the Crusaders, so soon as his illness assumed a serious aspect; and the reports which he extracted from his unwilling attendants gave him to understand, that the hopes of the host had abated in proportion to his illness, and that the interval of truce was employed, not in recruiting their numbers, reanimating their courage, fostering their spirit of conquest, and preparing for a speedy and determined advance upon the Holy City, which was the object of their expedition, but in securing the camp occupied by their diminished followers, with trenches, palisades, and other fortifications, as if preparing rather to repel an attack from a powerful enemy so soon as hostilities should recommence, than to assume the proud character of conquerors and assailants.

The English King chafed under these reports, like the imprisoned lion viewing his prey from the iron barriers of his cage. Naturally rash and impetuous, the irritability of his temper preyed on itself. He was dreaded by his attendants, and even the medical assistants feared to assume the necessary authority, which a physician, to do justice to his patient, must needs exercise over him. One faithful baron, who, perhaps from the congenial nature of his disposition, was devoutly attached to the King's person, dared alone to come between the dragon and his wrath, and quietly, but firmly, maintained a control which no other dared assume over the dangerous invalid, and which Thomas de Multon only exercised, because he esteemed his sovereign's life and honour more than he did the degree of favour which he might lose, or even the risk which he might incur, in nursing a patient so intractable, and whose displeasure was so perilous.

Sir Thomas was the Lord of Gilsland, in Cumberland, and, in an age when surnames and titles were not distinctly attached, as now, to the individuals who bore them, he was called by the Normans the Lord de Vaux, and in English, by the Saxons, who clung to their native language, and were proud of the share of Saxon blood in this renowned warrior's veins, he was termed Thomas, or, more familiarly, Thom of the Gills, or Narrow Valleys, from which his extensive domains derived their well-known appellation.

This chief had been exercised in almost all the wars, whether waged betwixt England and Scotland, or amongst the various domestic factions which then tore the former country asunder, and in all had been distinguished, as well from his military conduct as his personal prowess. He was, in other respects, a rude soldier, blunt and careless in his bearing, and taciturn, nay almost sullen, in his habits of society, and seeming, at least, to disclaim all knowledge of policy and of courtly art. There were men, however, who pretended to look deeply into character, who asserted that the Lord de Vaux was not less shrewd and aspiring, than he was blunt and bold, and who thought that, while he assimilated himself to the king's own character of blunt hardihood, it was, in some degree at least, with an eye to establish his favour, and to gratify his own hopes of deep-laid ambition. But no one cared to thwart his schemes, if such he had, by rivalling him in the dangerous occupation of daily attendance on the sick-bed of a patient, whose disease was pronounced infectious, and more especially when it was remembered that the patient was Cœur de Lion, suffering under all the furious impatience of a soldier withheld from battle, and a sovereign sequestered from authority; and the common soldiers, at least in the English army, were generally of opinion that De Vaux attended on the King like comrade upon comrade, in the honest and disinterested frankness of military friendship, contracted between the partakers of daily dangers.

It was on the decline of a Syrian day that Richard lay on his couch of sickness, loathing it as much in mind as his illness made it irksome to his body. His bright blue eye, which at all times shone with uncommon keenness and splendour, had its vivacity augmented by fever and mental impatience, and glanced from among his curled and unshorn locks of yellow hair, as fitfully and as vividly, as the last gleams of the sun shoot through the clouds of an approaching thunder-storm, which still, however, are gilded by its beams. His manly features showed the progress of wasting illness, and his beard, neglected and untrimmed, had overgrown both lips and chin. Casting himself from side to side, now clutching towards him the coverings, which at the next moment he flung as impatiently from him, his tossed couch and impatient gestures showed at once the energy and the reckless impatience of a disposition, whose natural sphere was that of the most active exertion.

Beside his couch stood Thomas de Vaux, in face, attitude, and manner, the strongest possible contrast to the suffering monarch. His stature approached the gigantic, and his hair in thickness might have re-

embled that of Sampson, though only after the Israelitish champion's locks had passed under the shears of the Philistines, for those of De Vaux were cut short, that they might be enclosed under his helmet. The ght of his broad, large hazel eye, resembled that of he autumn morn, and it was only perturbed for a moent, when from time to time it was attracted by Richard's vehement marks of agitation and restlessess. His features, though massive like his person, night have been handsome before they were defaced rith scars; his upper lip, after the fashion of the Norans, was covered with thick mustaches, which grew o long and luxuriantly as to mingle with his hair, nd, like his hair, were dark brown, slightly brindled rith gray. His frame seemed of that kind which ost readily defies both toil and climate, for he was in-flanked, broad-chested, long-armed, deep-breathd, and strong limbed. He had not laid aside his buffoat, which displayed the cross cut on the shoulder, or more than three nights, enjoying but such momentary repose as the warder of a sick monarch's ouch might by snatches indulge. This Baron rarely hanged his posture, except to administer to Richard he medicine or refreshments, which none of his less avoured attendants could persuade the impatient moarch to take; and there was something affecting in he kindly, yet awkward manner, in which he dischared offices so strangely contrasted with his blunt nd soldierly habits and manners.

The pavilion in which these personages were, had, s became the time, as well as the personal character f Richard, more of a warlike than a sumptuous or oyal character. Weapons offensive and defensive, everal of them of strange and newly invented conruction, were scattered about the tented apartment, r disposed upon the pillars which supported it. Skins f animals slain in the chase were stretched on the ground, or extended along the sides of the pavilion, nd, upon a heap of these silvan spoils, lay three *lans*, as they were then called, (wolf-greyhounds, hat is.) of the largest size, and as white as snow. Their faces, marked with many a scar from clutch nd fang, showed their share in collecting the trophies pon which they reposed, and their eyes, fixed from ime to time, with an expressive stretch and yawn pon the bed of Richard, evinced how much they marvelled at and regretted the unwonted inactivity which they were compelled to share. These were ut the accompaniments of the soldier and huntsman; but, on a small table close by the bed, was laced a shield of wrought steel, of triangular form, earing the three lions passant, first assumed by the hivalrous monarch, and before it the golden circlet, esembling much a ducal coronet, only that it was igher in front than behind, which, with the purple elvet and embroidered tiara that lined it, formed then the emblem of England's sovereignty. Beside it, as f prompt for defending the regal symbol, lay a mighty urtal-axe, which would have wearied the arm of any other than Cœur de Lion.

In an outer partition of the pavilion waited two r three officers of the royal household, depressed, anxious for their master's health, and not less so for their own safety, in case of his decease. Their gloomy apprehensions spread themselves to the wardrs without, who paced about in downcast and silent contemplation, or, resting on their halberds, stood motionless on their post, rather like armed trophies than living warriors.

"So thou hast no better news to bring me from without, Sir Thomas?" said the King, after a long and perturbed silence, spent in the feverish agitation which we have endeavoured to describe. "All our knights turned women, and our ladies become devotees, and neither a spark of valour nor of gallantry to enlighten a camp, which contains the choicest of Europe's chivalry—Ha!"

"The truce, my lord," said De Vaux, with the same patience with which he had twenty times repeated the explanation—"the truce prevents us bearing ourselves as men of action; and, for the ladies, I am no great reveller, as is well known to your Majesty, and seldom exchange *steel and buff for velvet* and gold—*but thus far I know, that our choicest* beauties are waiting upon the Queen's Majesty and the Princess, to a pilgrimage to the convent of Engaddi, to accomplish their vows for your Highness's deliverance from this trouble."

"And is it thus," said Richard, with the impatience of indisposition, "that royal matrons and maidens should risk themselves, where the dogs who defile the land have as little truth to man, as they have faith towards God?"

"Nay, my lord," said De Vaux, "they have Saladin's word for their safety."

"True, true!" replied Richard, "and I did the heathen Soldan injustice—I owe him reparation for it.—Would God I were but fit to offer it him upon my body between the two hosts—Christendom and Heathenesse both looking on!"

As Richard spoke, he thrust his right arm out of bed naked to the shoulder, and, painfully raising himself in his couch, shook his clenched hand, as if it grasped sword or battle-axe, and was then brandished over the jewelled turban of the Soldan. It was not without a gentle degree of violence, which the King would scarce have endured from another, that De Vaux, in his character of sick-nurse, compelled his royal master to replace himself in the couch, and covered his sinewy arm, neck and shoulders, with the care which a mother bestows upon an impatient child.

"Thou art a rough nurse, though a willing one, De Vaux," said the King, laughing with a bitter expression, while he submitted to the strength which he was unable to resist; "methinks a coif would become thy lowering features as well as a child's biggin would beseem mine. We should be a babe and nurse to frighten girls with!"

"We have frightened men in our time, my liege," said De Vaux; "and, I trust, may live to frighten them again. What is a fever-fit, that we should not endure it patiently, in order to get rid of it easily?"

"Fever-fit!" exclaimed Richard, impetuously; "thou mayst think, and justly, that it is a fever-fit with me; but what is it with all the other Christian princes—with Philip of France—with that dull Austrian—with him of Montserrrat—with the Hospitallers—with the Templars—what is it with all them?—I will tell thee—it is a cold palsy—a dead lethargy—a disease that deprives them of speech and action—a canker that has eaten into the heart of all that is noble and chivalrous, and virtuous among them—that has made them false to the noblest vow ever knights were sworn to—has made them indifferent to their fame and forgetful of their God!"

"For the love of Heaven, my liege," said De Vaux, "take it less violently! You will be heard without doors, where such speeches are but too current already among the common soldiery, and engender discord and contention in the Christian host. Bethink you that your illness mars the mainspring of their enterprise: a mangonel will work without screw and lever better than the Christian host without King Richard."

"Thou flatterest me, De Vaux," said Richard; and, not insensible to the power of praise, he reclined his head on the pillow, with a more deliberate attempt to repose than he had yet exhibited. But Thomas de Vaux was no courtier; the phrase which had offered had risen spontaneously to his lips; and he knew not how to pursue the pleasing theme, so as to soothe and prolong the vein which he had excited. He was silent, therefore, until, relapsing into his moody contemplations, the King demanded of him sharply, "Despardieux! This is smoothly said to soothe a sick man; but does a league of monarchs, an assemblage of nobles, a convocation of all the chivalry of Europe, droop with the sickness of one man, though he chances to be King of England? Why should Richard's illness, or Richard's death, check the march of thirty thousand men, as brave as himself? When the master stag is struck down, the herd do not disperse upon his fall—when the falcon strikes the leading crane, another takes the guidance of the phalanx.—Why do not the powers assemble and choose some one, to whom they may intrust the guidance of the host?"

"Forsooth, an if it please your Majesty," said De Vaux, "I hear consultations have been held among the royal leaders for some such purpose."

"Ha!" exclaimed Richard, his jealousy awakened, giving his mental irritation another direction—"Am I forgot by my allies ere I have taken the last sacrament?—do they hold me dead already?—But no, no—they are right—And whom do they select as leader of the Christian host?"

"Rank and dignity," said De Vaux, "point to the King of France."

"Oh, ay," answered the English monarch, "Philip of France and Navarre—Dennis Mountjoie—his Most Christian Majesty!—mouth-filling words these!—There is but one risk—that he might mistake the words *En arrière* for *En avant*, and lead us back to Paris, instead of marching to Jerusalem. His politic head has learned by this time, that there is more to be gotten by oppressing his feudatories, and pillaging his allies, than fighting with the Turks for the Holy Sepulchre."

"They might choose the Archduke of Austria," said De Vaux.

"What! because he is big and burly like thyself, Thomas—nearly as thick-headed, but without thy indifference to danger, and carelessness of offence? I tell thee that Austria has in all that mass of flesh no bolder animation, than is afforded by the peevishness of a wasp, and the courage of a wren. Out upon him! *he* a leader of chivalry to deeds of glory! —Give him a flagon of rhenish to drink with his besmirched baaren-hauters and lance-knechts."

"There is the Grand Master of the Templars," continued the baron, not sorry to keep his master's attention engaged on other topics than his own illness, though at the expense of the characters of prince and potentate—"There is the Grand Master of the Templars," he continued, "undaunted, skilful, brave in battle, and sage in council, having no separate kingdoms of his own to divert his exertions from the recovery of the Holy Land—what thinks your Majesty of the Master as a general leader of the Christian host?"

"Ha, Beau-Seant?" answered the King. "Oh, no exception can be taken to Brother Giles Amaury—he understands the ordering of a battle, and the fighting in front where it begins. But, Sir Thomas, were it fair to take the Holy Land from the heathen Saladin, so full of all the virtues which may distinguish unchristened man, and give it to Giles Amaury, a worse Pagan than himself—an idolater—a devil-worshipper—a necromancer—who practises crimes the most dark and unnatural, in the vaults and secret places of abomination and darkness?"

"The Grand Master of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem is not tainted by fame, either with heresy or magic," said Thomas de Vaux.

"But is he not a sordid miser?" said Richard, hastily; "has he not been suspected—ay, more, than suspected—of selling to the infidels those advantages which they would never have won by fair force? Tush, man, better give the army to be made merchandise of by Venetian skippers and Lombardy pedlars, than trust it to the Grand Master of St. John."

"Well, then, I will venture but another guess," said the Baron de Vaux—"What say you to the gallant Marquis of Montserrat, so wise, so elegant, such a good man-at-arms?"

"Wise? cunning, you would say," replied Richard; "elegant in a lady's chamber, if you will. Oh, ay, Comrade of Montserrat,—who knows not the popinjay? Politic and versatile, he will change you his purposes as often as the trimmings of his doublet, and you shall never be able to guess the hue of his inmost vestments from their outward colours. A man-at-arms? ay, a fine figure on horseback, and can bear him well in the tilt-yard, and at the barriers, when swords are blunted at point and edge, and spears are tipped with trenchers of wood, instead of *steel pikes*. Wert thou not with me, when I said to *that same gay Marquis*, 'Here we be, three good *Christians, and on yonder* plain there pricks a band *of some threescore Saracens*, what say you to charge them briskly? There are but twenty unbelieving miscreants to each true knight.'"

"I recollect the Marquis replied," said De Vaux, "that his limbs were of flesh, not of iron, and that he would rather bear the heart of a man than of a beast, though that beast were the lion. But I see how it is—we shall end where we began, without hope of praying at the Sepulchre, until Heaven shall restore King Richard to health."

At this grave remark, Richard burst out into a hearty fit of laughter, the first which he had for some time indulged in. "Why, what a thing is conscience," he said, "that through its means even such a thick-witted northern lord as thou canst bring thy sovereign to confess his folly! It is true, that, did they not propose themselves as fit to hold my leading-staff, little should I care for plucking the silken trappings off the puppets thou hast shown me in succession—What concerns it me what fine tinsel robes they swagger in, unless when they are named as rivals in the glorious enterprise to which I have vowed myself? Yes, De Vaux, I confess my weakness, and the wilfulness of my ambition. The Christian camp contains, doubtless, many a better knight than Richard of England, and it would be wise and worthy to assign to the best of them the leading of the host—but," continued the warlike monarch, raising himself in his bed, and shaking the cover from his head, while his eyes sparkled as they were wont to do on the eve of battle, "were such a knight to plant the banner of the Cross on the Temple of Jerusalem, while I was unable to bear my share in the noble task, he should, so soon as I was fit to lay lance in rest, undergo my challenge to mortal combat, for having diminished my fame, and pressed in before to the object of my enterprise.—But hark, what trumpets are those at a distance?"

"Those of King Philip, as I guess, my liege," said the stout Englishman."

"Thou art dull of ear, Thomas," said the King, endeavouring to start up—"hearest thou not that clash and clang? By Heaven, the Turks are in the camp—I hear their lelies."*

He again endeavoured to get out of bed, and De Vaux was obliged to exercise his own great strength, and also to summon the assistance of the chamberlains from the inner tent, to restrain him.

"Thou art a false traitor, De Vaux," said the incensed monarch, when, breathless and exhausted with struggling, he was compelled to submit to superior strength, and to repose in quiet on his couch. "I would I were—I would I were but strong enough to dash thy brains out with my battle-axe!"

"I would you had the strength, my liege," said De Vaux, "and would even take the risk of its being so employed. The odds would be great in favour of Christendom, were Thomas Multon dead, and Coeur de Lion himself again."

"Mine honest faithful servant," said Richard, extending his hand, which the baron reverentially saluted, "forgive my master's impatience of mood. It is this burning fever which chides thee, and not thy kind master, Richard of England. But go, I prithee, and bring me word what strangers are in the camp, for these sounds are not of Christendom."

De Vaux left the pavilion on the errand assigned, and in his absence, which he had resolved should be brief, he charged the chamberlains, pages, and attendants, to redouble their attention on their sovereign, with threats of holding them to responsibility, which rather added to than diminished their timid anxiety in the discharge of their duty; for next perhaps to the ire of the monarch himself, they dreaded that of the stern and inexorable Lord of Gilsland.†

* The war-cries of the Moslemah.

† He was a historical hero, faithfully attached, as is here expressed, to King Richard, and is noticed with distinction in the romance mentioned in the Introduction. At the beginning of the romance, mention is made of a tournament, in which the king returns three times with a fresh suit of armour, which acted as a disguise; and at each appearance, some knight of great prowess had a sharp encounter with him. When Richard returned the second time, the following is Mr. Ellis's account of his proceedings:—"He now mounted a bay horse, covered with a suit of armour painted red, and a helmet, the crest of which

CHAPTER VII.

There never was a time on the March parts yet
When Scottish with English met,
But it was marvel if the red blood ran not
As the rain does in the street.—*Battle of Otterbourne.*

A CONSIDERABLE band of Scottish warriors had joined the Crusaders, and had naturally placed themselves under the command of the English monarch, being, like his native troops, most of them of Saxon and Norman descent, speaking the same languages, possessed, some of them, of English as well as Scottish demesnes, and allied, in some cases, by blood and intermarriage. The period also preceded that when the grasping ambition of Edward I. gave a deadly and envenomed character to the wars betwixt the two nations; the English fighting for the subjugation of Scotland, and the Scottish, with all the stern determination and obstinacy which has ever characterized their nation, for the defence of their independence, by the most violent means, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, and at the most extreme hazard. As yet, wars betwixt the two nations, though fierce and frequent, had been conducted on principles of fair hostility, and admitted of those softening shades by which courtesy, and the respect for open and generous foemen, qualify and mitigate the horrors of war. In time of peace, therefore, and especially when both, as at present, were engaged in war, waged in behalf of a common cause, and rendered dear to them by their ideas of religion, the adventurers of both countries frequently fought side by side, their national emulation serving only to stimulate them to excel each other in their efforts against the common enemy.

The frank and martial character of Richard, who made no distinction betwixt his own subjects and those of William of Scotland, excepting as they bore themselves in the field of battle, tended much to conciliate the troops of both nations. But upon his illness, and the disadvantageous circumstances in which the Crusaders were placed, the national dissension between the various bands united in the Crusade, began to display itself, just as old wounds break out afresh in the human body, when under the influence of disease or debility.

The Scottish and English, equally jealous and high-spirited, and apt to take offence,—the former the more so, because the poorer and the weaker nation,—began to fill up, by internal dissension, the period when the grace forbade them to wreak their united vengeance on the Saracens. Like the contending Roman chiefs of old, the Scottish would admit no superiority, and their southern neighbours would brook no equality. There were charges and recriminations, and both the common soldiery, and their leaders and commanders, who had been good comrades in time of victory, lowered on each other in the period of adversity, as if their union had not been then more essential than ever, not only to the success of their common cause, but to their joint safety. The same disunion had begun to show itself betwixt the French and English, the Italians and the Germans, and even between the Danes and the Swedes; but it is only that which divided the two nations whom one island bred, and who seemed more animated against each other for the very reason, that our narrative is principally concerned with.

Of all the English nobles who had followed their King to Palestine, De Vaux was most prejudiced against the Scottish; they were his near neighbours, with whom he had been engaged during his whole life in private or public warfare, and on whom he had inflicted many calamities, while he had sustained at their hands not a few. His love and devotion to the King was like the vivid affection of the old English mastiff to his master, leaving him churlish and inaccessible to all others even towards those to whom he was indifferent, and rough and dangerous to any against whom he entertained a prejudice. De Vaux had never observed, without jealousy and displeasure, his King exhibit any mark of courtesy or favour to the wicked, deceitful, and ferocious race, born on the other side of a river, or an imaginary line drawn through waste and wilderness, and he even doubted the success of a Crusade in which they were suffered to bear arms, holding them in his secret soul little better than the Saracens, whom he came to combat. It may be added, that, as being himself a blunt and downright Englishman, unaccustomed to conceal the slightest movement either of love or of dislike, he accounted the fair-spoken courtesy, which the Scots had learned, either from imitation of their frequent allies, the French, or which might have arisen from their own proud and reserved character, as a false and astucious mark of the most dangerous designs against their neighbours, over whom he believed, with genuine English confidence, they could, by fair manhood, never obtain any advantage.

Yet, though De Vaux entertained these sentiments concerning his northern neighbours, and extended them, with little mitigation, even to such as had assumed the Cross, his respect for the King, and a sense of the duty imposed by his vow as a Crusader, prevented him from displaying them otherwise than by regularly shunning all intercourse with his Scottish brethren-at-arms, as far as possible, by observing a sullen taciturnity, when compelled to meet them occasionally,—and by looking scornfully upon them when they encountered on the march and in camp. The Scottish barons and knights were not men to bear his scorn unobserved or unreplied to; and it came to that pass, that he was regarded as the determined and active enemy of a nation, whom, after all, he only disliked, and in some sort despised. Nay, it was remarked by close observers, that if he had not towards them the charity of Scripture, which suffereth long and judges kindly, he was by no means deficient in the subordinate and limited virtue, which alleviates and relieves the wants of others. The wealth of Thomas of Gilsland procured supplies of provisions and medicines, and some of these usually flowed by secret channels into the quarters of the Scottish; his surly benevolence proceeding on the principle, that, next to a man's friend, his foe was of most importance to him, passing over all the intermediate relations, as too indifferent to merit even a thought. This explanation is necessary, in order that the reader may fully understand what we are now to detail.

Thomas de Vaux had not made many steps beyond the entrance of the royal pavilion, when he was aware of what the far more acute ear of the English monarch, no mean proficient in the art of minstrelsy, had instantly discovered, that the musical strains, namely, which had reached their ears, were produced by the pipes, shalms, and kettledrums of the Saracens; and, at the bottom of an avenue of tents, which formed a broad access to the pavilion of Richard, he could see a crowd of idle soldiers assembled around the spot from which the music was heard almost in the centre of the camp; and he saw, with great surprise, mingled amid the helmets of various forms worn by the Crusaders of different nations, white turbans and long pikes, announcing the presence of armed Saracens, and the huge deformed heads of several camels or dromedaries, overlooking the multitude by aid of their long disproportioned necks.

Wondering and displeased at a sight so unexpected and singular,—for it was customary to leave all flags of truce and other communications from the enemy at an appointed place without the barriers,—the baron looked eagerly round for some one of whom he might inquire the cause of this alarming novelty.

The first person whom he met advancing to him, he set down at once, by his grave and haughty step as

was a red hound, with a long tail which reached to the earth; a emblem intended to convey his indignation against the heathen hounds who defiled the Holy Land, and his determination attempt their destruction. Having sufficiently signalized himself in his new disguise, he rode into the ranks for the purose of selecting a more formidable adversary; and, delivering is spear to his squire, took his mace, and assaulted Sir Thomas de Multon, a knight whose prowess was deservedly held the highest estimation. Sir Thomas, apparently not at all disordered by a blow which would have felled a common adversary, calmly advised him to go and amuse himself elsewhere: at Richard, having aimed at him a second and more violent troke, by which his helmet was nearly crushed, he returned it ith such vigour that the king *lost his stirrups*, and, recovering *himself with some difficulty, rode off with all speed into the west.*'—*Ellis's Specimens, pp. 153, 154.*

a Spaniard or a Scot; and presently after muttered to himself—"And a Scot it is—he of the Leopard.—I have seen him fight indifferently well, for one of his country."

Loath to ask even a passing question, he was about to pass Sir Kenneth, with that sullen and lowering port which seems to say, "I know thee, but I will hold no communication with thee;" but his purpose was defeated by the northern knight, who moved forward directly to him, and accosting him with formal courtesy, said, "My Lord de Vaux of Gilsland, I have in charge to speak with you."

"Ha!" returned the English baron, "with me? But say your pleasure, so it be shortly spoken—I am on the King's errand."

"Mine touches King Richard yet more nearly," answered Sir Kenneth; "I bring him, I trust, health."

The Lord of Gilsland measured the Scot with incredulous eyes, and replied, "Thou art no leech, I think, Sir Scot—I had as soon thought of your bringing the King of England wealth."

Sir Kenneth, though displeased with the manner of the baron's reply, answered calmly; "Health to Richard is glory and wealth to Christendom.—But my time presses; I pray you, may I see the King?"

"Surely not, fair sir," said the baron, "until your errand be told more distinctly. The sick chambers of princes open not to all who inquire, like a northern hostelry."

"My lord," said Kenneth, "the cross which I wear in common with yourself, and the importance of what I have to tell, must for the present, cause me to pass over a bearing which else I were unapt to endure. In plain language, then, I bring with me a Moorish physician, who undertakes to work a cure on King Richard."

"A Moorish physician?" said De Vaux; "and who will warrant that he brings not poisons instead of remedies?"

"His own life, my lord—his head, which he offers as a guarantee."

"I have known many a resolute ruffian," said De Vaux, "who valued his own life as little as it deserved, and would troop to the gallows as merrily as if the hangman were his partner in a dance."

"But thus it is, my lord," replied the Scot; "Saladin, to whom none will deny the credit of a generous and valiant enemy, hath sent this leech hither with an honourable retinue and guard, befitting the high estimation in which El Hakim* is held by the Soldan, and with fruits and refreshments for the King's private chamber, and such message as may pass betwixt honourable enemies, praying him to be recovered of his fever, that he may be the fitter to receive a visit from the Soldan, with his naked cimeter in his hand, and a hundred thousand cavaliers at his back. Will it please you, who are of the King's secret council, to cause these camels to be discharged of their burdens, and some order taken as to the reception of the learned physician?"

"Wonderful!" said De Vaux, as speaking to himself.—"And who will vouch for the honour of Saladin, in a case when bad faith would rid him at once of his most powerful adversary?"

"I myself," replied Sir Kenneth, "will be his guarantee, with honour, life, and fortune."

"Strange!" again ejaculated De Vaux; "the North vouches for the South—the Scot for the Turk!—May I crave of you, Sir Knight, how you became concerned in this affair?"

"I have been absent on a pilgrimage, in the course of which," replied Sir Kenneth, "I had a message to scharge towards the holy hermit of Engaddi."

"May I not be intrusted with it, Sir Kenneth, and with the answer of the holy man?"

"It may not be, my lord," answered the Scot.

"I am of the secret council of England," said the Englishman, haughtily.

"To which land I owe no allegiance," said Kenneth. "*Though I have voluntarily followed in this war the personal fortunes of England's sovereign, I was despatched by the General Council of the kings, princes, and supreme leaders of the army of the Blessed Cross, and to them only I render my errand.*"

"Ha! say'st thou?" said the proud Baron de Vaux, "But know, messenger of the kings and princes as thou mayst be, no leech shall approach the sick-bed of Richard of England, without the consent of him of Gilsland; and they will come on evil errand who dare to intrude themselves against it."

He was turning loftily away, when the Scot, placing himself closer, and more opposite to him, asked in a calm voice, yet not without expressing his share of pride, whether the Lord of Gilsland esteemed him a gentleman and a good knight.

"All Scots are ennobled by their birthright," answered Thomas de Vaux, something ironically; but, sensible of his own injustice, and perceiving that Kenneth's colour rose, he added, "For a good knight it were sin to doubt you, in one at least who has seen you well and bravely discharge your devoir."

"Well, then," said the Scottish Knight, satisfied with the frankness of the last admission, "and let me swear to you, Thomas of Gilsland, that as I am true Scottish man, which I hold a privilege equal to my ancient gentry, and as sure as I am a belted knight, and come hither to acquire *los** and fame in this mortal life, and forgiveness of my sins in that which is to come—so truly, and by the blessed Cross which I wear, do I protest unto you, that I desire but the safety of Richard Cœur de Lion, in recommending the ministry of this Moslem physician."

The Englishman was struck with the solemnity of the obtestation, and answered with more cordiality than he had yet exhibited, "Tell me, Sir Knight of the Leopard, granting (which I do not doubt) that thou art thyself satisfied in this matter, shall I do well, in a land where the art of poisoning is as general as that of cooking, to bring this unknown physician to practise with his drugs on a health so valuable to Christendom?"

"My lord," replied the Scot, "thus only can I reply; that my squire, the only one of my retinue whom war and disease had left in attendance on me, has been of late suffering dangerously under the same fever, which, in valiant King Richard, has disabled the principal limb of our holy enterprise. This leech, this El Hakim, hath ministered remedies to him not two hours since, and already he hath fallen into a refreshing sleep. That he *can* cure the disorder, which has proved so fatal, I nothing doubt; that he hath the purpose to do it, is, I think, warranted by his mission from the royal Soldan, who is truehearted and loyal, so far as a blinded infidel may be called so; and, for his eventual success, the certainty of reward in case of succeeding, and punishment in case of voluntary failure, may be a sufficient guarantee."

The Englishman listened with downcast looks, as one who doubted, yet was not unwilling to receive conviction. At length he looked up and said, "May I see your sick squire, fair sir?"

The Scottish knight hesitated and coloured, yet answered at last, "Willingly, my Lord of Gilsland; but you must remember, when you see my poor quarter, that the nobles and knights of Scotland feed not so high, sleep not so soft, and care not for the magnificence of lodgement, which is proper to their southern neighbours. I am *poorly* lodged, my Lord of Gilsland," he added, with a haughty emphasis on the word, while with some unwillingness, he led the way to his temporary place of abode.

Whatever were the prejudices of De Vaux against the nation of his new acquaintance, and though we undertake not to deny that some of these were excited by its proverbial poverty, he had too much nobleness of disposition to enjoy the mortification of a brave individual, thus compelled to make known wants which his pride would gladly have concealed.

"Shame to the soldier of the Cross," he said, "who thinks of worldly splendour, or of luxurious accommodation, when pressing forward to the conquest of the Holy City. Fare as hard as we may, we shall yet be better than the host of martyrs and of saints, who, having trod these scenes before us, now hold golden lamps, and evergreen palms."

* The Physician

* Los—laus, praise, or renown.

This was the most metaphorical speech which Thomas of Gilsland was ever known to utter, the rather, perhaps (as will sometimes happen,) that it did not entirely express his own sentiments, being somewhat a lover of good cheer and splendid accommodation. By this time they reached the place of the camp, where the Knight of the Leopard had assumed his abode.

Appearances here did indeed promise no breach of the laws of mortification, to which the Crusaders, according to the opinion expressed by him of Gilsland, ought to subject themselves. A space of ground, large enough to accommodate perhaps thirty tents, according to the Crusaders' rules of castrametation, was partly vacant—because, in ostentation the knight had demanded ground to the extent of his original retinue—partly occupied by a few miserable huts, hastily constructed of boughs, and covered with palm leaves. These habitations seemed entirely deserted, and several of them were ruinous. The central hut, which represented the pavilion of the leader, was distinguished by his swallow-tailed pennon, placed on the point of a spear; from which its long folds dropt motionless to the ground, as if sickening under the scorching rays of the Asiatic sun. But no pages or squires, not even a solitary warder, was placed by the emblem of feudal power and knightly degrees. If its reputation defended it not from insult, it had no other guard.

Sir Kenneth cast a melancholy look around him, but, suppressing his feelings, entered the hut, making a sign to the Baron of Gilsland to follow. He also cast around a glance of examination, which implied pity not altogether unmingled with contempt, to which, perhaps, it is as nearly akin as it is said to be to love. He then stooped his lofty crest, and entered a lowly hut, which his bulky form seemed almost entirely to fill.

The interior of the hut was chiefly occupied by two beds. One was empty, but composed of collected leaves, and spread with an antelope's hide. It seemed, from the articles of armour laid beside it, and from a crucifix of silver, carefully and reverentially disposed at the head, to be the couch of the knight himself. The other contained the invalid, of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, a strong-built and harsh-featured man, past, as his looks betokened, the middle age of life. His couch was trimmed more softly than his master's, and it was plain, that the more courtly garments of the latter, the loose robe, in which the knights showed themselves on pacific occasions, and the other little spare articles of dress and adornment, had been applied by Sir Kenneth to the accommodation of his sick domestic. In an outward part of the hut, which yet was within the range of the English Baron's eye, a boy, rudely attired with buskins of deer's hide, a blue cap or bonnet, and a doublet, whose original finery was much tarnished, sat on his knees by a chafing dish filled with charcoal, cooking upon a plate of iron the cakes of barley-bread, which were then, and still are, a favourite food with the Scottish people. Part of an antelope was suspended against one of the main props of the hut, nor was it difficult to know how it had been procured; for a large stag greyhound, nobler in size and appearance than those even which guarded King Richard's sick-bed, lay eyeing the process of baking the cake. The sagacious animal, on their first entrance, uttered a stifled growl, which sounded from his deep chest like distant thunder. But he saw his master, and acknowledged his presence by wagging his tail and couching his head, abstaining from more tumultuous or noisy greeting, as if his noble instinct had taught him the propriety of silence in a sick man's chamber.

Beside the couch, sat on a cushion, also composed of skins, the Moorish physician of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, cross-legged, after the Eastern fashion. The imperfect light showed little of him, save that the lower part of his face was covered with a long black beard, which descended over his breast—that he wore a high *tolpach*, a Tartar cap of the lamb's wool manufactured at Astracan, bearing the same dusky colour, *and that his ample caftain, or* Turkish robe, *was also of a dark hue. Two piercing eyes,* which gleamed with unusual lustre, were the only lineaments of his visage that could be discerned amid the darkness in which he was enveloped. The English lord stood silent with a sort of reverential awe; for, notwithstanding the roughness of his general bearing, a scene of distress and poverty, firmly endured without complaint or murmur, would at any time have claimed more reverence from Thomas de Vaux, than would all the splendid formalities of a royal presence-chamber, unless that presence-chamber were King Richard's own. Nothing was, for a time, heard, but the heavy and regular breathings of the invalid, who seemed in profound repose.

"He hath not slept for six nights before," said Sir Kenneth, "as I am assured by the youth, his attendant."

"Noble Scot," said Thomas de Vaux, grasping the Scottish knight's hand, with a pressure which had more of cordiality than he permitted his words to utter, "this gear must be amended—Your esquire is but too evil fed and looked to."

In the latter part of this speech, he naturally raised his voice to its usual decided tone. The sick man was disturbed in his slumbers.

"My master," he said, murmuring as in a dream, "noble Sir Kenneth—taste not, to you as to me, the waters of the Clyde cold and refreshing, after the brackish springs of Palestine?"

"He dreams of his native land, and is happy in his slumbers," whispered Sir Kenneth to De Vaux; but had scarce uttered the words, when the physician, arising from the place which he had taken near the couch of the sick, and laying the hand of the patient, whose pulse he had been carefully watching, quietly upon the couch, came to the two knights, and taking them each by the arm, while he intimated to them to remain silent, led them to the front of the hut.

"In the name of Issa Ben Mariam," he said, "whom we honour as you, though not with the same blinded superstition, disturb not the effect of the blessed medicine of which he hath partaken. To awaken him now, is death or deprivation of reason; but return at the hour when the Muezzin calls from the minaret to evening prayer in the mosque, and, if left undisturbed until then, I promise you, this same Frankish soldier shall be able, without prejudice to his health, to hold some brief converse with you, on any matters on which either, and especially his master, may have to question him."

The knights retreated before the authoritative commands of the leech, who seemed fully to comprehend the importance of the Eastern proverb, that the sick chamber of the patient is the kingdom of the physician.

They paused, and remained standing together, at the door of the hut, Sir Kenneth, with the air of one who expected his visiter to say farewell—and De Vaux, as if he had something on his mind which prevented him from doing so. The hound, however, had pressed out of the tent after them, and now thrust his long rough countenance into the hand of his master, as if modestly soliciting some mark of his kindness. He had no sooner received the notice which he desired, in the shape of a kind word and slight caress, than, eager to acknowledge his gratitude, and joy for his master's return, he flew off at full speed, galloping in full career, and with outstretched tail, here and there, about and around, crossways and endlong, through the decayed huts, and the esplanade we have described, but never transgressing those precincts which his sagacity knew were protected by his master's pennon. After a few gambols of this kind, the dog, coming close up to his master, laid at once aside his frolicsome mood, relapsed into his usual gravity and slowness of gesture and deportment, and looked as if he were ashamed that any thing should have moved him to depart so far out of his sober self-control.

Both knights looked on with pleasure; for Sir Kenneth was justly proud of his noble hound, and the northern English baron was of course an admirer of the chase, and a judge of the animal's merits.

"A right able dog," he said; "I think, fair sir, King Richard hath not an alan which may match him."

he be as stanch as he is swift. But let me pray you—speaking in all honour and kindness—have you not heard the proclamation, that no one, under the rank of earl, shall keep hunting dogs within King Richard's camp, without the royal license, which, I think, Sir Kenneth, hath not been issued to you?—I speak as Master of the Horse."

"And I answer as a free Scottish knight," said Kenneth, sternly. "For the present I follow the banner of England, but I cannot remember that I have ever subjected myself to the forest-laws of that kingdom, nor have I such respect for them as would incline me to do so. When the trumpet sounds to arms, my foot is in the stirrup as soon as any—when it clangs for the charge, my lance has not yet been the last laid in the rest. But for my hours of liberty or of idleness, King Richard has no title to bar my recreation."

"Nevertheless," said De Vaux, "it is a folly to disobey the King's ordinance—so, with your good leave, I, as having authority in that matter, will send you a protection for my friend here."

"I thank you," said the Scot, coldly; "but he knows my allotted quarters, and within these I can protect him myself.—And yet," he said, suddenly changing his manner, "this is but a cold return for a well-meant kindness. I thank you, my lord, most heartily. The King's equerries, or prickers, might find Roswal at disadvantage, and do him some injury, which I should not, perhaps, be slow in returning, and so ill might come of it. You have seen so much of my housekeeping, my lord," he added with a smile, "that I need not shame to say that Roswal is our principal purveyor; and well I hope our Lion Richard will not be like the lion in the minstrel fable, that went a-hunting, and kept the whole booty to himself. I cannot think he would grudge a poor gentleman, who follows him faithfully, his hour of sport, and his morsel of game, more especially when other food is hard enough to come by."

"By my faith, you do the King no more than justice—and yet, said the baron, "there is something in these words, vert and venison, that turns the very brains of our Norman princes."

"We have heard of late," said the Scot, "by minstrels and pilgrims, that your outlawed yeomen have formed great bands in the shires of York and Nottingham, having at their head a most stout archer, called Robin Hood, with his lieutenant, Little John. Methinks it were better that Richard relaxed his forest-code in England, than endeavoured to enforce it in the Holy Land."

"Wild work, Sir Kenneth," replied De Vaux, shrugging his shoulders, as one who would avoid a perilous or unpleasing topic—"a mad world, sir.—I must now bid you adieu, having presently to return to the King's pavilion. At vespers, I will again, with your leave, visit your quarters, and speak with this same infidel physician. I would, in the mean time, were it no offence, willingly send you what would somewhat mend your cheer."

"I thank you, sir," said Sir Kenneth, "but it needs not; Roswal hath already stocked my larder for two weeks, since the sun of Palestine, if it brings diseases, serves also to dry venison."

The two warriors parted much better friends than they had met; but ere they separated, Thomas de Vaux informed himself at more length of the circumstances attending the mission of the Eastern physician, and received from the Scottish knight the credentials which he had brought to King Richard on the part of Saladin.

CHAPTER VIII.

A wise physician, skill'd our wounds to heal,
Is more than armies to the common weal.—*Pope's Iliad.*

"This is a strange tale, Sir Thomas," said the sick monarch, when he had heard the report of the trusty Baron of Gilsland; "art thou sure this Scottish man *is a tall man and true?*"

"*I cannot say, my lord,*" replied the jealous Bordorer; "*I live a little too near the Scots to gather much truth among them, having found them ever fair and false.* But this man's bearing is that of a true man, were he devil as well as a Scot—that I must needs say for him in conscience."

"And for his carriage as a knight, how say'st thou, De Vaux?" demanded the King.

"It is your Majesty's business more than mine to note men's bearings; and I warrant you have noted the manner in which this man of the Leopard hath borne himself. He hath been full well spoken of."

"And justly, Thomas," said the King. "We have ourselves witnessed him. It is indeed our purpose in placing ourselves ever in the front of battle, to see how our liegemen and followers acquit themselves, and not from a desire to accumulate vain glory to ourselves, as some have supposed. We know the vanity of the praise of man, which is but a vapour, and buckle on our armour for other purposes than to win it."

De Vaux was alarmed when he heard the King make a declaration so inconsistent with his nature, and believed at first that nothing short of the approach of death could have brought him to speak in depreciating terms of military renown, which was the very breath of his nostrils. But recollecting he had met the royal confessor in the outer pavilion, he was shrewd enough to place this temporary self-abasement to the effect of the reverend man's lesson, and suffered the King to proceed without reply.

"Yes," continued Richard, "I have indeed marked the manner in which this knight does his devoir. My leading-staff were not worth a fool's bauble, had he escaped my notice—and he had ere now tasted of our bounty, but that I have also marked his overweening and audacious presumption."

"My liege," said the Baron of Gilsland, observing the King's countenance change, "I fear I have transgressed your pleasure in lending some countenance to his transgression."

"How, De Multon, thou?" said the King, contracting his brows, and speaking in a tone of angry surprise.—"Thou countenance his insolence?—It cannot be."

"Nay, your Majesty will pardon me to remind you, that I have by mine office right to grant liberty to men of gentle blood, to keep them a hound or two within camp, just to cherish the noble art of venerie; and besides, it were a sin to have maimed or harmed a thing so noble as this gentleman's dog."

"Has he then a dog so handsome?" said the King.

"A most perfect creature of Heaven," said the baron, who was an enthusiast in field-sports—"of the noblest Northern breed—deep in the chest, strong in the stern, black colour, and brindled on the breast and legs—not spotted with white, but just shaded into gray—strength to pull down a bull—swiftness to cote an antelope."

The King laughed at his enthusiasm. "Well, thou hast given him leave to keep the hound, so there is an end of it. Be not, however, liberal of your licenses among those knights adventurers, who have no prince or leader to depend upon—they are ungovernable, and leave no game in Palestine.—But to this piece of learned heathenesse—say'st thou the Scot met him in the desert?"

"No, my liege, the Scot's tale runs thus:—He was despatched to the old hermit of Engaddi, of whom men talk so much'——

"'Sdeath and hell!" said Richard, starting up, "By whom despatched, and for what? Who dared send any one thither, when our Queen was in the Convent of Engaddi, upon her pilgrimage for our recovery?"

"The Council of the Crusade sent him, my lord," answered the Baron de Vaux; "for what purpose, he declined to account to me. I think it is scarce known in the camp that your royal consort is on a pilgrimage—and even the princes may not have been aware, as the Queen has been sequestered from company since your love prohibited her attendance in case of infection."

"Well, it shall be looked into," said Richard.—"So this Scottish man, this envoy, met with a wandering physician at the grotto of Engaddi—ha!"

so, my liege," replied De Vaux; "but he met, near that place, with a Saracen Emir with e had some *mêlée* in the way of proof of valour, ling him worthy to bear brave men company, nt together, as errant knights are wont, to the f Engaddi."

De Vaux stopped, for he was not one of those tell a long story in a sentence.

did they there meet the physician?" demanded g, impatiently.

my liege," replied De Vaux; "but the Sara- ning your Majesty's grievous illness, undertook ladin should send his own physician to you, many assurances of his eminent skill; and to the grotto accordingly, after the Scottish had tarried a day for him and more. He is l as if he were a prince, with drums and ata- d servants on horse and foot, and brings with ers of credence from Saladin."

e they been examined by Giacomo Loredani?" owed them to the interpreter ere bringing them nd behold their contents in English."

rd took a scroll, in which were inscribed these —"The blessing of Allah and his Prophet med, ["Out upon the hound!" said Richard, in contempt, by way of interjection;] Saladin, kings, Soldan of Egypt and of Syria, the light ige of the earth, to the great Melech Ric, of England, greeting. Whereas, we have formed that the hand of sickness hath been pon thee, our royal brother, and that thou h thee only such Nazarene and Jewish medi- s work without the blessing of Allah and our phet, ["Confusion on his head!" again mut- e English monarch,] we have therefore sent and wait upon thee at this time, the physician wn person, Adonbec el Hakim, before whose angel Azrael* spreads his wings, and departs e sick chamber; who knows the virtues of nd stones, the path of the sun, moon, and id can save man from all that is not written orehead. And this we do, praying you heartily ur and make use of his skill; not only that do service to thy worth and valour, which glory of all the nations of Frangistan, but may bring the controversy which is at pre- tween us to an end, either by honourable nt, or by open trial thereof with our weapons, r field; seeing that it neither becomes thy id courage, to die the death of a slave who n overwrought by his task-master, nor befits me that a brave adversary be snatched from pon by such a disease. And, therefore, may

"—

l, hold," said Richard, I will have no more of of a Prophet! It makes me sick to think the nd worthy Soldan should believe in a dead es, I will see his physician. I will put myself charge of this Hakim—I will repay the noble his generosity—I will meet Saladin in the he so worthily proposes, and he shall have to term Richard of England ungrateful. I ke him to the earth with my battle-axe—I vert him to the Holy Church with such blows s rarely endured—He shall recant his errors ny good cross-handled sword, and I will n baptized in the battle-field, from my own though the cleansing waters were mixed with d of us both.—Haste, De Vaux, why dost thou conclusion so pleasing? Fetch the Hakim

lord," said the baron, who perhaps saw some n of fever in this overflow of confidence, "be- e, the Soldan is a pagan, and that you are his midable enemy"——

which reason he is the more bound to do me n this matter, lest a paltry fever end the quar- ixt two such kings. I tell thee, he loves me e him—as noble adversaries ever love each y my honour, it were sin to doubt his good

ertheless, my lord, it were well to wait the *these medicines upon the Scottish squire,*"

* *The Angel of Death.*

said the Lord of Gilsland; "my own life depends upon it, for worthy were I to die like a dog, did I proceed rashly in this matter, and make shipwreck of the weal of Christendom."

"I never knew thee before hesitate for fear of life," said Richard, upbraidingly.

"Nor would I now, my liege," replied the stout-hearted baron, "save that yours lies at pledge as well as my own."

"Well, thou suspicious mortal," answered Richard, "begone then, and watch the progress of this remedy. I could almost wish it might either cure or kill me, for I am weary of lying here like an ox dying of the murrain, when tambours are beating, horses stamping, and trumpets sounding without."

The baron hastily departed, resolved, however, to communicate his errand to some churchman, as he felt something burdened in conscience at the idea of his master being attended by an unbeliever.

The Archbishop of Tyre was the first to whom he confided his doubts, knowing his interest with his master, Richard, who both loved and honoured that sagacious prelate. The bishop heard the doubts which De Vaux stated, with that acuteness of intelligence which distinguishes the Roman Catholic clergy. The religious scruples of De Vaux he treated with as much lightness as propriety permitted him to exhibit on such a subject to a layman.

"Mediciners," he said, "like the medicines which they employed, were often useful, though the one were by birth or manners the vilest of humanity, as the others are, in many cases, extracted from the basest materials. Men may use the assistance of pagans and infidels," he continued, "in their need, and there is reason to think, that one cause of their being permitted to remain on earth, is that they might minister to the convenience of true Christians—Thus, we lawfully make slaves of heathen captives.—Again," proceeded the prelate, "there is no doubt that the primitive Christians used the services of the unconverted heathen—thus, in the ship of Alexandria, in which the blessed Apostle Paul sailed to Italy, the sailors were doubtless pagans; yet what said the holy saint when their ministry was needful—'*Nisi hi in nari manse rint, vos salvi fieri non potestis*—Unless these men abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' Again, Jews are infidels to Christianity, as well as Mahommedans. But there are few physicians in the camp excepting Jews, and such are employed without scandal or scruple. Therefore Mahommedans may be used for their service in that capacity—*quod erat demonstrandum.*"

This reasoning entirely removed the scruples of Thomas de Vaux, who was particularly moved by the Latin quotation, as he did not understand a word of it.

But the Bishop proceeded with far less fluency, when he considered the possibility of the Saracen's acting with bad faith; and here he came not to a speedy decision. The baron showed him the letters of credence. He read and re-read them, and compared the original with the translation.

"It is a dish choicely cooked," he said, "to the palate of King Richard, and I cannot but have my suspicions of the wily Saracen. They are curious in the art of poisons, and can so temper them that they shall be weeks in acting upon the party, during which time the perpetrator has leisure to escape. They can impregnate cloth and leather, nay, even paper and parchment, with the most subtle venom—Our Lady forgive me!—And wherefore, knowing this, hold I these letters of credence so close to my face?—Take them, Sir Thomas, take them speedily."

Here he gave them at arm's-length, and with some appearance of haste, to the baron. "But come, my Lord de Vaux," he continued, "wend we to the tent of this sick squire, where we shall learn whether this Hakim hath really the art of curing which he professeth, ere we consider whether there be safety in permitting him to exercise his art upon King Richard.—Yet, hold! let me first take my pouncet-box, for these fevers spread like an infection. I would advise you to use dried rosemary steeped in vinegar, my lord. I, too, knew something of the healing art."

"I thank your reverend lordship," replied Thomas

of Gilsland; "but had I been accessible to the fever, I had caught it long since by the bed of my master."

The Bishop of Tyre blushed, for he had rather avoided the presence of the sick monarch; and he bid the baron lead on.

As they paused before the wretched hut in which Kenneth of the Leopard and his follower abode, the Bishop said to De Vaux, "Now, of a surety, my lord, these Scottish knights have worse care of their followers than we of our dogs. Here is a knight, valiant they say in battle, and thought fitting to be graced with charges of weight in time of truce, whose esquire of the body is lodged worse than in the worst dog-kennel in England. What say you of your neighbours?"

"That a master doth well enough for his servant, when he lodgeth him in no worse dwelling than his own," said De Vaux, and entered the hut.

The bishop followed, not without evident reluctance; for though he lacked not courage in some respects, yet it was tempered with a strong and lively regard for his own safety. He recollected, however, the necessity there was for judging personally of the skill of the Arabian physician, and entered the hut with a stateliness of manner, calculated, as he thought, to impose respect on the stranger.

The prelate was, indeed, a striking and commanding figure. In his youth he had been eminently handsome, and, even in age, was unwilling to appear less so. His episcopal dress was of the richest fashion, trimmed with costly fur, and surrounded by a cope of curious needle-work. The rings on his fingers were worth a goodly barony, and the hood which he wore, though now unclasped and thrown back for heat, had studs of pure gold to fasten it around his throat and under his chin when he so inclined. His long beard, now silvered with age, descended over his breast. One of two youthful acolytes who attended him, created an artificial shade, peculiar then to the East, by bearing over his head an umbrella of palmetto leaves, while the other refreshed his reverend master by agitating a fan of peacock-feathers.

When the Bishop of Tyre entered the hut of the Scottish knight, the master was absent; and the Moorish physician, whom he had come to see, sat in the very posture in which De Vaux had left him several hours before, cross-legged upon a mat made of twisted leaves, by the side of the patient, who appeared in deep slumber, and whose pulse he felt from time to time. The bishop remained standing before him in silence for two three minutes, as if expecting some honourable salutation, or at least that the Saracen would seem struck with the dignity of his appearance. But Adonbecle Hakim took no notice of him beyond a passing glance, and when the prelate at length saluted him in the lingua franca current in the country, he only replied by the ordinary Oriental greeting, "*Salam alicum*—peace be with you."

"Art thou a physician, infidel?" said the bishop, somewhat mortified at this cold reception,—"I would speak with thee on that art."

"If thou knewest aught of medicine," answered El Hakim, "thou wouldst be aware, that physicians hold no counsel or debate in the sick chamber of their patient. Hear," he added, as the low growling of the stag-hound was heard from the inner hut, "even the dog might teach thee reason, Ulemat. His instinct teaches him to suppress his barking in the sick man's hearing.—Come without the tent," said he, rising and leading the way, "if thou hast aught to say with me."

Notwithstanding the plainness of the Saracen leech's dress, and his inferiority of size, when contrasted with the tall prelate and gigantic English baron, there was something striking in his manner and countenance, which prevented the Bishop of Tyre from expressing strongly the displeasure he felt at this unceremonious rebuke. When without the hut, he gazed upon Adonbec in silence, for several minutes, before he could fix on the best manner to renew *the conversation. No locks* were seen under the high *bonnet of the Arabian, which hid* also part of a brow *that seemed lofty and expanded,* smooth, and free *from wrinkles, as were his* cheeks, where they were seen under the shade of his long beard. We have elsewhere noticed the piercing quality of his dark eyes.

The prelate, struck with his apparent youth, at length broke a pause, which the other seemed in no haste to interrupt, by demanding of the Arabian how old he was?

"The years of ordinary men," said the Saracen, "are counted by their wrinkles; those of sages by their studies. I dare not call myself older than a hundred revolutions of the Hegira."*

The Baron of Gilsland, who took this for a literal assertion, that he was a century old, looked doubtfully upon the prelate, who, though he better understood the meaning of El Hakim, answered his glance by mysteriously shaking his head. He resumed an air of importance, when he again authoritatively demanded, what evidence Adonbec could produce of his medical proficiency.

"Ye have the word of the mighty Saladin," said the sage, touching his cap in sign of reverence; "a word which was never broken towards friend or foe—what, Nazarene, wouldst thou demand more?"

"I would have ocular proof of thy skill," said the baron, "and without it thou approachest not to the couch of King Richard."

"The praise of the physician," said the Arabian, "is in the recovery of his patient. Behold this sergeant, whose blood has been dried up by the fever which has whitened your camp with skeletons, and against which the art of your Nazarene leeches hath been like a silken doublet against a lance of steel. Look at his fingers and arms, wasted like the claws and shanks of the crane. Death had this morning his clutch on him; but had Azrael been on one side of the couch, I being on the other, his soul should not have been reft from his body. Disturb me not with farther questions, but await the critical minute, and behold in silent wonder the marvellous event."

The physician had then recourse to his astrolabe, the oracle of Eastern science, and, watching with grave precision until the precise time of the evening prayer had arrived, he sunk on his knees, with his face turned to Mecca, and recited the petitions which close the Moslemah's day of toil. The bishop and the English baron looked on each other, mean while, with symptoms of contempt and indignation, but neither judged it fit to interrupt El Hakim in his devotions, unholy as they considered them to be.

The Arab arose from the earth, on which he had prostrated himself, and, walking into the hut where the patient lay extended, he drew a sponge from a small silver box, dipt perhaps in some aromatic distillation; for when he put it to the sleeper's nose, he sneezed, awoke, and looked wildly around. He was a ghastly spectacle, as he sat up almost naked on his couch, the bones and cartilages as visible through the surface of his skin, as if they had never been clothed with flesh; his face was long, and furrowed with wrinkles, but his eye, though it wandered at first, became gradually more settled. He seemed to be aware of the presence of his dignified visiters, for he attempted feebly to pull the covering from his head, in token of reverence, as he inquired, in a subdued and submissive voice, for his master.

"Do you know us, vassal?" said the Lord of Gilsland.

"Not perfectly, my lord," replied the squire, faintly, "My sleep has been long and full of dreams. Yet I know that you are a great English lord, as seemeth by the red cross, and this a holy prelate, whose blessing I crave on me a poor sinner."

"Thou hast it—*Benedictio Domini sit vobiscum*," said the prelate, making the sign of the cross, but without approaching nearer to the patient's bed.

"Your eyes witness," said the Arabian, "the fever hath been subdued—he speaks with calmness and recollection—his pulse beats composedly as yours—try its pulsations yourself."

The prelate declined the experiment; but Thomas of Gilsland, more determined on making the trial, did so, and satisfied himself that the fever was indeed gone.

* Meaning, that his attainments were those which might have been made in a hundred years.

"This is most wonderful," said the knight, looking to the bishop; "the man is assuredly cured. I must conduct this mediciner presently to King Richard's tent—What thinks your reverence?"

"Stay, let me finish one cure ere I commence another," said the Arab; "I will pass with you when I have given my patient the second cup of this most holy elixir."

So saying he pulled out a silver cup, and filling it with water from a gourd which stood by the bed-side, he next drew forth a small silken bag made of network, twisted with silver, the contents of which the bystanders could not discover, and immersing it in the cup, continued to watch it in silence during the space of five minutes. It seemed to the spectators as if some effervescence took place during the operation, but if so, it instantly subsided.

"Drink," said the physician to the sick man—"sleep, and awaken free from malady."

"And with this simple-seeming draught, thou wilt undertake to cure a monarch?" said the Bishop of Tyre.

"I have cured a beggar, as you may behold," replied the sage. "Are the kings of Frangistan made of other clay than the meanest of their subjects?"

"Let us have him presently to the King," said the Baron of Gilsland. "He hath shown that he possesses the secret which may restore his health. If he fails to exercise it, I will put himself past the power of medicine."

As they were about to leave the hut, the sick man, raising his voice as much as his weakness permitted, exclaimed, "Reverend father, noble knight, and you, kind leech, if you would have me sleep and recover, tell me in charity what is become of my dear master?"

"He is upon a distant expedition, friend," replied the prelate; "on an honourable embassy, which may detain him for some days."

"Nay," said the Baron of Gilsland, "why deceive the poor fellow?—Friend, thy master has returned to the camp, and you will presently see him."

The invalid held up, as if in thankfulness, his wasted hands to Heaven, and resisting no longer the soporiferous operation of the elixir, sunk down in a gentle sleep.

"You are a better physician than I, Sir Thomas," said the prelate; "a soothing falsehood is fitter for a sick room than an unpleasing truth."

"How mean you, my reverend lord?" said de Vaux, hastily. "Think you I would tell a falsehood to save the lives of a dozen such as he?"

"You said" replied the bishop, with manifest symptoms of alarm—"you said the esquire's master was returned—he, I mean, of the Couchant Leopard?"

"And he *is* returned," said De Vaux. "I spoke with him but a few hours since. This learned leech came in his company."

"Holy Virgin! why told you not of his return to me?" said the bishop, in evident perturbation.

"Did I not say that this same Knight of the Leopard had returned in company with the physician?—I thought I had," replied De Vaux, carelessly; 'but what signified his return, to the skill of the physician, or the cure of his Majesty?"

"Much, Sir Thomas—it signified much," said the bishop, clenching his hands, pressing his foot against the earth, and giving signs of impatience, as if in an involuntary manner. "But where can he be gone now, this same knight?—God be with us—here may be some fatal errors!"

"Yonder serf in the outer space," said De Vaux, not without wonder at the bishop's emotion, "can probably tell us whither his master has gone."

The lad was summoned, and, in a language nearly incomprehensible to them, gave them at length to understand, that an officer had summoned his master to the royal tent, some time before their arrival at that of his master. The anxiety of the bishop appeared to rise to the highest, and became evident to De Vaux, though neither an acute observer, nor of a suspicious temper. But with his anxiety seemed to increase his wish to keep it subdued and unobserved. He took a hasty leave of De Vaux, who looked after him with astonishment; and, after shrugging up his shoulders in silent wonder, proceeded to conduct the Arabian physician to the tent of King Richard.

CHAPTER IX.

> This is the Prince of Leeches; fever, plague,
> Cold rheum, and hot podagra, do but look on him,
> And quit their grasp upon the tortured sinews.
>
> *Anonymous.*

THE Baron of Gilsland walked with slow step and an anxious countenance towards the royal pavilion. He had much diffidence of his own capacity, except in a field of battle, and, conscious of no very acute intellect, was usually contented to wonder at circumstances, which a man of livelier imagination would have endeavoured to investigate and understand, or at least would have made the subject of speculation. But it seemed very extraordinary, even to him, that the attention of the bishop should have been at once abstracted from all reflection on the marvellous cure which they had witnessed, and upon the probability it afforded of Richard being restored to health, by what seemed a very trivial piece of information, announcing the motions of a beggarly Scottish knight, than whom Thomas of Gilsland knew nothing within the circle of gentle blood more unimportant or contemptible; and, despite his usual habit of passively beholding passing events, the baron's spirit toiled with unwonted attempts to form conjectures on the cause.

At length the idea occurred at once to him, that the whole might be a conspiracy against King Richard, formed within the camp of the allies, and to which the bishop, who was by some represented as a politic and unscrupulous person, was not unlikely to have been accessory. It was true, that, in his own opinion, there existed no character so perfect as that of his master; for Richard being the flower of chivalry, and the chief of Christian leaders, and obeying in all points the commands of Holy Church, De Vaux's ideas of perfection went no farther. Still he knew that, however unworthily, it had been always his master's fate to draw as much reproach and dislike, as honour and attachment, from the display of his great qualities; and that in the very camp, and amongst those princes bound by oath to the Crusade, were many who would have sacrificed all hope of victory over the Saracens, to the pleasure of ruining, or at least of humbling, Richard of England.

"Wherefore," said the baron to himself, "it is in no sense impossible that this El Hakim, with this his cure, or seeming cure, wrought on the body of the Scottish squire, may mean nothing but a trick, to which he of the Leopard may be accessory, and wherein the Bishop of Tyre, prelate as he is, may have some share."

This hypothesis, indeed, could not be so easily reconciled with the alarm manifested by the bishop, on learning that, contrary to his expectation, the Scottish knight had suddenly returned to the Crusaders' camp. But De Vaux was influenced only by his general prejudices, which dictated to him the assured belief, that a wily Italian priest, a false-hearted Scot, and an infidel physician, formed a set of ingredients from which all evil, and no good, was likely to be extracted. He resolved, however, to lay his scruples bluntly before the King, of whose judgment he had nearly as high an opinion as of his valour.

Mean time, events had taken place very contrary to the suppositions which Thomas de Vaux had entertained. Scarce had he left the royal pavilion, when, betwixt the impatience of the fever, and that which was natural to his disposition, Richard began to murmur at his delay, and express an earnest desire for his return. He had seen enough to try to reason himself out of this irritation, which greatly increased his bodily malady. He wearied his attendants by demanding from them amusements, and the breviary of the priest, the romance of the clerk, even the harp of his favourite minstrel, were had recourse to in vain. At length, some two hours before sundown, and long

therefore, ere he could expect a satisfactory account of the process of the cure which the Moor or Arabian had undertaken, he sent, as we have already heard, a messenger commanding the attendance of the Knight of the Leopard, determined to soothe his impatience by obtaining from Sir Kenneth a more particular account of the cause of his absence from the camp, and the circumstances of his meeting with this celebrated physician.

The Scottish knight, thus summoned, entered the royal presence as one who was no stranger to such scenes. He was scarcely known to the King of England, even by sight, although, tenacious of his rank, as devout in the adoration of the lady of his secret heart, he had never been absent on those occasions when the munificence and hospitality of England opened the Court of its monarch to all who held a certain rank in chivalry. The King gazed fixedly on Sir Kenneth approaching his bed-side, while the knight bent his knee for a moment, then arose, and stood before him, as became an officer in the presence of his sovereign, in a posture of deference, but not of subservience or humility.

"Thy name," said the King, "is Kenneth of the Leopard—From whom hadst thou degree of knighthood?"

"I took it from the sword of William the Lion, King of Scotland," replied the Scot.

"A weapon," said the King, "well worthy to confer honour, nor has it been laid on an undeserving shoulder. We have seen thee bear thyself knightly and valiantly in press of battle, when most need there was; and thou hadst not been yet to learn that thy deserts were known to us, but that thy presumption in other points has been such, that thy services can challenge no better reward than that of pardon for thy transgression. What sayst thou—ha?"

Kenneth attempted to speak, but was unable to express himself distinctly; the consciousness of his too ambitious love, and the keen falcon glance with which Cœur de Lion seemed to penetrate his inmost soul, combining to disconcert him.

"And yet," said the King, "although soldiers should obey command, and vassals be respectful towards their superiors, we might forgive a brave knight greater offence than the keeping a simple hound, though it were contrary to our express public ordinance."

Richard kept his eye fixed on the Scot's face, beheld, and beholding, smiling inwardly at the relief produced by the turn he had given to his general accusation.

"So please you, my lord," said the Scot, "your Majesty must be good to us poor gentlemen of Scotland in this matter. We are far from home, scant of revenues, and cannot support ourselves as your wealthy nobles, who have credit of the Lombards. The Saracens shall feel our blows the harder that we eat a piece of dried venison from time to time, with our herbs and barley-cakes."

"It skills not asking my leave," said Richard, "since Thomas de Vaux, who doth, like all around me, that which is fittest in his own eyes, hath already given thee permission for hunting and hawking."

"For hunting only, and please you," said the Scot; "but, if it please your Majesty to indulge me with the privilege of hawking also, and you list to trust me with a falcon on fist, I trust I could supply your royal mess with some choice waterfowl."

"I dread me if thou hadst but the falcon," said the King, "thou wouldst scarce wait for the permission. I wot well it is said abroad that we of the line of Anjou resent offence against our forest laws, as highly as we would do treason against our crown. To brave and worthy men, however, we could pardon either misdemeanour. But enough of this.—I desire to know of you, Sir Knight, wherefore, and by whose authority, you took this recent journey to the wilderness of the Red Sea, and Engaddi?"

"By order," replied the knight, "of the Council of the Princes of the Holy Crusade."

"And how dared any one to give such an order, *when I—not the least*, surely, in the league—was unacquainted with it?"

"*It was not my part*, please your highness," said the Scot, "to inquire into such particulars soldier of the Cross—serving, doubtless, fo sent, under your highness's banner, and pre permission to do so—but still one who hath him the holy symbol for the rights of Ch and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, a therefore, to obey, without question, the ord princes and chiefs by whom the blessed en directed. That indisposition should seclud for but a short time, your highness from th cils, in which you hold so potential a voi lament with all Christendom; but, as a must obey those on whom the lawful righ mand devolves, or set but an evil examp Christian camp."

"Thou say'st well," said King Richard; blame rests not with thee, but with th whom, when it shall please Heaven to rais this accursed bed of pain and inactivity, I reckon roundly. What was the purpor message?"

"Methinks, and please your highness," r Kenneth, "that were best asked of those me, and who can render the reasons of min whereas, I can only tell its outward form port."

"Palter not with me, Sir Scot—it were safety," said the irritable monarch.

"My safety, my lord," replied the knigt "I cast behind me as a regardless thing whe myself to this enterprise, looking rather t mortal welfare, than to that which con earthly body."

"By the mass," said King Richard, "t brave fellow! Hark thee, Sir Knight, I love tish people: they are hardy, though dogged born, and, I think, true men in the main, t necessity of state has sometimes constrain be dissemblers. I deserve some love at th for I have voluntarily done what they cou arms have extorted from me, any more than predecessors—I have re-established the for Roxburgh and Berwick, which lay in pledg land—I have restored your ancient bounda finally, I have renounced a claim to homag crown of England, which I thought unjus on you. I have endeavoured to make honor independent friends, where former kings of attempted only to compel unwilling and vassals."

"All this you have done, my Lord King, Kenneth, bowing—"All this you have don royal treaty with our sovereign at Canterbur fore have you me, and many better Scot making war against the infidels, under you who would else have been ravaging your f England. If their numbers are now few cause their lives have been freely waged and

"I grant it true," said the King; "and fo offices I have done your land, I require you t ber, that, as a principal member of the league, I have a right to know the negotiat confederates. Do me, therefore, the justice what I have a title to be acquainted with, I am certain to know more truly from you others."

"My lord," said the Scot, "thus conju speak the truth; for I well believe that you towards the principal object of our expe single-hearted and honest; and it is mo dare warrant for others of the Holy Le pleased therefore, to know, my charge w pose, through the medium of the hermit o —a holy man, respected and protected b himself"——

"A continuation of the truce, I doubt Richard, hastily interrupting him.

"No, by Saint Andrew, my liege," said tish knight; "but the establishment of peace, and the withdrawing our armies fr tine."

"Saint George!" said Richard, in astoni "Ill as I have justly thought of them, I have dreamed they would have humbled

to such dishonour. Speak, Sir Kenneth, with what will did you carry such a message?"

"With right good-will, my lord," said Kenneth; "because, when we had lost our noble leader, under whose guidance alone I hoped for victory, I saw none who could succeed him likely to lead us to conquest, and I accounted it well in such circumstances to avoid defeat."

"And on what conditions was this hopeful peace to be contracted?" said King Richard, painfully suppressing the passion with which his heart was almost bursting.

"These were not intrusted to me, my lord," answered the Knight of the Couchant Leopard. "I delivered them sealed to the hermit."

"And for what hold you this reverend hermit?—for fool, madman, traitor, or saint?" said Richard.

"His folly sire," replied the shrewd Scottishman, "I hold to be assumed to win favour and reverence from the Paynimrie, who regard madmen as the inspired of Heaven; at least it seemed to me as exhibited only occasionally, and not as mixing, like natural folly, with the general tenor of his mind."

"Shrewdly replied," said the monarch, throwing himself back on his couch, from which he had half-raised himself.—"Now of his penitence?"

"His penitence," continued Kenneth, "appears to me sincere, and the fruits of remorse for some dreadful crime, for which he seems, in his own opinion, condemned to reprobation."

"And for his policy?" said King Richard.

"Methinks, my lord," said the Scottish knight, he despairs of the security of Palestine, as of his own salvation, by any means short of a miracle—at least, since the arm of Richard of England hath ceased to strike for it."

"And therefore, the coward policy of this hermit is like that of these miserable princes, who, forgetful of their knighthood and their faith, are only resolved and determined when the question is retreat, and, rather than go forward against an armed Saracen, would trample in their flight over a dying ally!"

"Might I so far presume, my Lord King," said the Scottish knight, "this discourse but heats your disease, the enemy from which Christendom dreads more evil, than from armed hosts of infidels."

The countenance of King Richard was, indeed, more flushed, and his action became more feverishly vehement, as, with clenched hand, expanded arm, and flashing eyes, he seemed at once to suffer under bodily pain, and at the same time under vexation of mind, while his high spirit led him to speak on, as if in contempt of both.

"You can flatter, Sir Knight," he said, "but you escape me not. I must know more from you than you have yet told me. Saw you my royal consort when at Engaddi?"

"To my knowledge—no, my lord," replied Sir Kenneth, with considerable perturbation; for he remembered the midnight procession in the chapel of the rocks.

"I ask you," said the King, in a sterner voice, "whether you were not in the chapel of the Carmelite Nuns at Engaddi, and there saw Berengaria, Queen of England, and the ladies of her Court, who went thither on pilgrimage?"

"My lord," said Sir Kenneth, "I will speak the truth as in the confessional. In a subterranean chapel, to which the anchorite conducted me, I beheld a choir of ladies do homage to a relic of the highest sanctity; but as I saw not their faces, nor heard their voices, unless in the hymns which they chanted, I cannot tell whether the Queen of England was of the bevy."

"And was there no one of these ladies known to you?"

Sir Kenneth stood silent.

"I ask you," said Richard, raising himself on his elbow, "as a knight and a gentleman, and I shall know by your answer how you value either character—did you, or did you not, know any lady amongst that band of worshippers?"

"*My lord,*" *said Kenneth, not without much hesitation,* "*I might guess.*"

"And I also may guess," said the King, frowning sternly; "but it is enough. Leopard as you are, Sir Knight, beware tempting the lion's paw. Hark ye—to become enamoured of the moon would be but an act of folly; but to leap from the battlements of a lofty tower, in the wild hope of coming within her sphere, were self-destructive madness."

At this moment some bustling was heard in the outer apartment, and the King, hastily changing to his more natural manner, said, "Enough—begone—speed to De Vaux, and send him hither with the Arabian physician. My life for the faith of the Soldan! Would he but abjure his false law, I would aid him with my sword to drive this scum of French and Austrians from his dominions, and think Palestine as well ruled by him as when her kings were anointed by the decree of Heaven itself."

The Knight of the Leopard retired, and presently afterwards the chamberlain announced a deputation from the Council, who had come to wait on the Majesty of England.

"It is well they allow that I am living yet," was his reply. "Who are the reverend ambassadors?"

"The Grand Master of the Templars, and the Marquis of Montserrat."

"Our brother of France loves not sick-beds," said Richard; "yet, had Philip been ill, I had stood by his couch long since.—Jocelyn, lay me the couch more fairly, it is tumbled like a stormy sea—reach me yonder steel mirror—pass a comb through my hair and beard. They look, indeed, liker a lion's mane than a Christian man's locks—bring water."

"My lord," said the trembling chamberlain, "the leeches say that cold water may be fatal."

"To the foul fiend with the leeches!" replied the monarch; "if they cannot cure me, think you I will allow them to torment me?—There, then"—he said, after having made his ablutions, "admit the worshipful envoys; they will now, I think, scarcely see that disease has made Richard negligent of his person."

The celebrated Master of the Templars was a tall, thin, war-worn man, with a slow yet penetrating eye, and a brow on which a thousand dark intrigues had stamped a portion of their obscurity. At the head of that singular body, to whom their order was every thing, and their individuality nothing—seeking the advancement of its power, even at the hazard of that very religion which the fraternity were originally associated to protect—accused of heresy and witchcraft, although by their character Christian priests—suspected of secret league with the Soldan, though by oath devoted to the protection of the Holy Temple, or its recovery—the whole order, and the whole personal character of its commander, or Grand Master, was a riddle, at the exposition of which most men shuddered. The Grand Master was dressed in his white robes of solemnity, and he bare the *abacus*, a mystic staff of office, the peculiar form of which has given rise to such singular conjectures and commentaries, leading to suspicions that this celebrated fraternity of Christian knights were embodied under the foulest symbols of Paganism.

Conrade of Montserrat had a much more pleasing exterior than the dark and mysterious priest-soldier by whom he was accompanied. He was a handsome man, of middle age, or something past that term, bold in the field, sagacious in council, gay and gallant in times of festivity; but, on the other hand, he was generally accused of versatility, of a narrow and selfish ambition, of a desire to extend his own principality, without regard to the weal of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, and of seeking his own interest, by private negotiations with Saladin, to the prejudice of the Christian leaguers.

When the usual salutations had been made by these dignitaries, and courteously returned by King Richard, the Marquis of Montserrat commenced an explanation of the motives of their visit, sent, as he said they were, by the anxious Kings and Princes who composed the Council of the Crusaders, "to inquire into the health of their magnanimous ally, the valiant King of England."

"We know the importance in which the Princes

of the Council hold our health,' replied the English King; "and are well aware how much they must have suffered by suppressing all curiosity concerning it for fourteen days, for fear, doubtless, of aggravating our disorder, by showing their anxiety regarding the event."

The flow of the Marquis's eloquence being checked, and he himself thrown into some confusion by this reply, his more austere companion took up the thread of the conversation, and, with as much dry and brief gravity as was consistent with the presence which he addressed, informed the King that they came from the Council, to pray, in the name of Christendom, "that he would not suffer his health to be tampered with by an infidel physician, said to be despatched by Saladin, until the Council had taken measures to remove or confirm the suspicion, which they at present conceived did attach itself to the mission of such a person."

"Grand Master of the Holy and Valiant Order of Knights Templars, and you, Most Noble Marquis of Montserrat," replied Richard, "if it please you to retire into the adjoining pavilion, you shall presently see what account we make of the tender remonstrances of our royal and princely colleagues in this religious warfare."

The Marquis and Grand Master retired accordingly; nor had they been many minutes in the outward pavilion when the Eastern physician arrived, accompanied by the Baron of Gilsland, and Kenneth of Scotland. The baron, however, was a little later of entering the tent than the other two, stopping, perchance, to issue some orders to the warders without.

As the Arabian physician entered, he made his obeisance, after the Oriental fashion, to the Marquis and Grand Master, whose dignity was apparent, both from their appearance and their bearing. The Grand Master returned the salutation with an expression of disdainful coldness, the Marquis, with the popular courtesy which he habitually practised to men of every rank and nation. There was a pause; for the Scottish knight, waiting for the arrival of De Vaux, presumed not, of his own authority, to enter the tent of the King of England, and, during this interval, the Grand Master sternly demanded of the Moslem,—"Infidel, hast thou the courage to practise thine art upon the person of an anointed sovereign of the Christian host?"

"The sun of Allah," answered the sage, "shines on the Nazarene as well as on the true believer, and his servant dare make no distinction between them, when called on to exercise the art of healing."

"Misbelieving Hakim," said the Grand Master, "or whatsoever they call thee for an unbaptized slave of darkness, dost thou well know, that thou shalt be torn asunder by wild horses should King Richard die under thy charge?"

"That were hard justice," answered the physician; "seeing that I can but use human means, and that the issue is written in the book of light."

"Nay, reverend and valiant Grand Master," said the Marquis of Montserrat, "consider that this learned man is not acquainted with our Christian order, adopted in the fear of God, and for the safety of his anointed.—Be it known to thee, grave physician, whose skill we doubt not, that your wisest course is to repair to the presence of the illustrious Council of our Holy League, and there to give account and reckoning to such wise and learned leeches as they shall nominate, concerning your means of process and cure of this illustrious patient; so shall you escape all the danger, which, rashly taking such a high matter upon your sole answer, you may else most likely incur."

"My lords," said El Hakim, "I understand you well. But knowledge hath its champions as well as your military art, nay, hath sometimes had its martyrs as well as religion. I have the command of my sovereign, the Soldan Saladin, to heal this Nazarene *King, and, with the blessing of the Prophet, I will obey his commands. If I fail, ye wear swords thirsting for the blood of the faithful, and I proffer my body to your weapons. But I will not reason with one* uncircumcised upon the virtue of the medi which I have obtained knowledge through t of the Prophet, and I pray you interpose between me and my office."

"Who talks of delay?" said the Baron hastily entering the tent; "we have had but t already.—I salute you, my Lord of Montse you, valiant Grand Master. But I must pass with this learned physician to the bedsi master."

"My lord," said the Marquis, in Norman or the language of Ouie, as it was then call you well advised that we came to expostula part of the Council of the Monarchs and P the Crusade, against the risk of permitting and Eastern physician to tamper with a l valuable as that of your master King Richa

"Noble Lord Marquis," replied the Eng bluntly, "I can neither use many words, delight in listening to them—moreover, I more ready to believe what my eyes have what my ears have heard. I am satisfied heathen can cure the sickness of King Rich I believe and trust he will labour to do so. precious. If Mahommed—May God's cur him!—stood at the door of the tent, with purpose as this Adonbec el Hakim entertains hold it sin to delay him for a minute—So God'en, my lords."

"Nay, but," said Conrade of Montserr King himself said we should be present w same physician dealt upon him."

The baron whispered the chamberlain, to know whether the Marquis spoke truly, replied, "My lords, if you will hold your pati are welcome to enter with us; but if you int action or threat, this accomplished physici duty, be it known, that, without respect to quality, I will enforce your absence from t tent; for know, I am so well satisfied of of this man's medicines, that were Richard to refuse them, by Our Lady of Lancrcost, could find in my heart to force him to take t of his cure whether he would or no.—Move El Hakim."

The last word was spoken in the lingu and instantly obeyed by the physician. Th Master looked grimly on the unceremonious dier, but, on exchanging a glance with the smoothed his frowning brow as well as and both followed De Vaux and the Arabia inner tent, where Richard lay expecting th that impatience with which the sick man wa step of his physician. Sir Kenneth, whos ance seemed neither asked nor prohibited, fel by the circumstances in which he stood, e follow these high dignitaries, but, conscio inferior power and rank, remained aloof d scene which took place.

Richard, when they entered his apartm mediately exclaimed, "So ho! a goodly f come to see Richard take his leap in the d noble allies, I greet you as the representativ assembled league; Richard will again be you in his former fashion, or ye shall bear to what is left of him.—De Vaux, lives he o thou hast the thanks of thy prince.—There other—but this fever hath wasted my eyesigh the bold Scot, who would climb Heaven v ladder?—he is welcome too.—Come, Sir K the work, to the work."

The physician, who had already informed of the various symptoms of the King's illn felt his pulse for a long time, and with deep while all around stood silent, and in breat pectation. The sage next filled a cup wi water, and dipt into it the small red purse, formerly, he took from his bosom. When h to think it sufficiently medicated, he was offer it to the sovereign, who prevented him ing, "Hold an instant.—Thou hast felt m let me lay my finger on thine.—I too, as b good knight, know something of thine art."

The Arabian yielded his hand without

d his long slender dark fingers were, for an instant, closed, and almost buried in the large enfoldment King Richard's hand.

'His blood beats calm as an infant's,' said the ag; "so throb not theirs who poison princes. De ux, whether we live or die, dismiss this Hakim h honour and safety—Commend us, friend, to the le Saladin. Should I die, it is without doubt of faith—should I live, it will be to thank him as a rrior would desire to be thanked."

He then raised himself in bed, took the cup in his nd, and, turning to the Marquis and the Grand ster,—"Mark what I say, and let my royal bre- en pledge me in Cyprus wine—'To the immortal nour of the first Crusader who shall strike lance or ord on the gate of Jerusalem; and to the shame d eternal infamy of whomsoever shall turn back m the plough on which he hath laid his hand!'"

He drained the cup to the bottom, resigned it to Arabian, and sunk back, as if exhausted, upon cushions which were arranged to receive him. e physician, then, with silent but expressive signs, ected that all should leave the tent excepting him- f and De Vaux, whom no remonstrance could luce to withdraw. The apartment was cleared cordingly.

CHAPTER X.

And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And, to your quick-conceiving discontent,
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous.
Henery IV. Part I.

THE Marquis of Montserrat, and the Grand Master the Knights Templars, stood together in the front the royal pavilion, within which this singular scene d passed, and beheld a strong guard of bills and ws drawn out to form a circle around it, and keep a distance all which might disturb the sleeping onarch. The soldiers wore the downcast, silent, d sullen looks, with which they trail their arms at funeral, and stepped with such caution that you uld not hear a buckler ring, or a sword clatter, ough so many men in armour were moving around e tent. They lowered their weapons in deep reve- nce, as the dignitaries passed through their files, but ith the same profound silence.

"There is a change of cheer among these island gs," said the Grand Master to Conrade, when they d passed Richard's Guards. "What hoarse tumult d revel used to be before this pavilion! naught but tching the bar, hurling the ball, wrestling, roaring songs, clattering of wine-pots, and quaffing of gons, among these burly yeomen, as if they were lding some country wake, with a Maypole in the idst of them, instead of a royal standard."

"Mastiffs are a faithful race," said Conrade; "and s King their master has won their love by being ady to wrestle, brawl, or revel amongst the foremost them, whenever the humour seized him."

"He is totally compounded of humours," said the rand Master. "Marked you the pledge he gave us, stead of a prayer, over his grace-cup yonder?"

"He would have felt it a grace-cup, and a well iced one too," said the Marquis, "were Saladin like ay other Turk that ever wore turban, or turned m to Mecca at call of the Muezzin. But he affects ith, and honour, and generosity,—as if it were for a unbaptized dog like him to practise the virtuous earing of a Christian knight! It is said he hath pplied to Richard to be admitted within the pale of ivalry!"

"By Saint Bernard!" exclaimed the Grand Master, it were time then to throw off our belts and spurs, ir Conrade, deface our armorial bearings, and re- ounce our burgonets, if the highest honour of Chris- anity were conferred on an unchristened Turk of mpence."

"You rate the Soldan cheap," replied the Marquis; yet though he be a likely man, I have seen a better eathen sold for forty pence at the bagnio."

They were now near their horses, which stood at me distance from the royal tent, prancing among e gallant *train of squires and pages* by whom they were attended, when Conrade, after a moment's pause, proposed that they should enjoy the cool- ness of the evening breeze, which had arisen, and, dismissing their steeds and attendants, walk home- wards to their own quarters, through the lines of the extended Christian camp. The Grand Master as sented, and they proceeded to walk together accord- ingly, avoiding, as if by mutual consent, the more inhabited parts of the canvass city, and tracing the broad esplanade which lay between the tents and the external defences, where they could converse in private, and unmarked, save by the sentinels as they passed them.

They spoke for a time upon the military points and preparations for defence; but this sort of dis- course, in which neither seemed to take interest, at length died away, and there was a long pause, which terminated by the Marquis of Montserrat stopping short, like a man who has formed a sudden resolu- tion, and, gazing for some moments on the dark inflexible countenance of the Grand Master, he at length addressed him thus:—"Might it consist with your valour and sanctity, reverend Sir Giles Amaury, I would pray you for once to lay aside the dark vizor which you wear, and to converse with a friend barefaced."

The Templar half-smiled.

"There are light-coloured masks," he said, "as well as dark visors, and the one conceals the natural features as completely as the other."

"Be it so," said the Marquis, putting his hand to his chin, and withdrawing it with the action of one who unmasks himself; "there lies my disguise. And now, what think you, as touching the interests of your own Order, of the prospects of this Crusade?"

"This is tearing the veil from my thoughts rather than exposing your own," said the Grand Master; "yet I will reply with a parable told to me by a santon of the desert.—'A certain farmer prayed to Heaven for rain, and murmured when it fell not at his need. To punish his impatience, Allah,' said the santon, 'sent the Euphrates upon his farm, and he was de- stroyed with all his possessions, even by the granting of his own wishes.'"

"Most truly spoken," said the Marquis Conrade; "would that the ocean had swallowed up nineteen parts of the armaments of these western princes! what remained would better have served the purpose of the Christian nobles of Palestine, the wretched remnant of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Left to ourselves, we might have bent to the storm, or moderately supported with money and troops, we might have compelled Saladin to respect our valour, and grant us peace and protection on easy terms. But, from the extremity of danger with which this power- ful Crusade threatens the Soldan, we cannot suppose, should it pass over, that the Saracen will suffer any one of us to hold possessions or principalities in Syria, far less permit the existence of the Christian military fraternities, from whom they have experienced so much mischief."

"Ay, but," said the Templar, "these adventurous Crusaders may succeed, and again plant the Cross on the bulwarks of Zion."

"And what will that advantage either the Order of the Templars, or Conrade of Montserrat?" said the Marquis.

"You it may advantage," replied the Grand Master. "Conrade of Montserrat might become Conrade King of Jerusalem."

"That sounds like something," said the Marquis, "and yet it rings but hollow.—Godfrey of Bouillon might well choose the crown of thorns for his emblem. Grand Master, I will confess to you I have caught some attachment to the Eastern form of government: A pure and simple monarchy should consist but of King and subjects. Such is the simple and primitive structure—a shepherd and his flock. All this internal chain of feudal dependence is artificial and sophisti- cated, and I would rather hold the batoon of my poor marquisate with a firm gripe, and wield it after my pleasure, than the sceptre of a monarch, to be in effect restrained and curbed by the will of as many proud feudal barons as hold land under the Crown of

Jerusalem.* A King should tread freely, Grand Master, and should not be controlled by here a ditch, and there a fence—here a feudal privilege, and there a mail-clad baron, with his sword in his hand to maintain it. To sum the whole, I am aware that Guy de Lusignan's claims to the throne would be preferred to mine, if Richard recovers, and has aught to say in the choice."

"Enough," said the Grand Master; "thou hast indeed convinced me of thy sincerity. Others may hold the same opinions, but few, save Conrade of Montserrat, dared frankly avow that he desires not the restitution of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but rather prefers being master of a portion of its fragments, like the barbarous islanders, who labour not for the deliverance of a goodly vessel from the billows, expecting rather to enrich themselves at the expense of the wreck."

"Thou wilt not betray my counsel?" said Conrade, looking sharply and suspiciously. "Know, for certain, that my tongue shall never wrong my head, nor my hand forsake the defence of either. Impeach me if thou wilt—I am prepared to defend myself in the lists against the best Templar who ever laid lance in rest."

"Yet thou start'st somewhat suddenly for so bold a steed," said the Grand Master. "However, I swear to thee by the Holy Temple, which our Order is sworn to defend, that I will keep counsel with thee as a true comrade."

"By which Temple?" said the Marquis of Montserrat, whose love of sarcasm often outran his policy and discretion; "swearest thou by that on the hill of Zion, which was built by King Solomon, or by that symbolical, emblematical edifice, which is said to be spoken of in the counsels held in the vaults of your Preceptories, as something which infers the aggrandizement of thy valiant and venerable Order?"

The Templar scowled upon him with an eye of death, but answered calmly, "By whatever temple I swear, be assured, Lord Marquis, my oath is sacred. I would I knew how to bind *thee* by one of equal obligation."

"I will swear truth to thee," said the Marquis, laughing, "by the Earl's coronet, which I hope to convert, ere these wars are over, into something better. It feels cold on my brow, that same slight coronal; a duke's cap of maintenance were a better protection against such a night-breeze as now blows, and a king's crown more preferable still, being lined with comfortable ermine and velvet. In a word, our interests bind us together; for think not, Lord Grand Master, that, were these allied Princes to regain Jerusalem, and place a king of their own choosing there, they would suffer your Order, any more than my poor marquisate, to retain the independence which we now hold. No, by Our Lady! In such case, the proud Knights of Saint John must again spread plasters, and dress plague-sores, in the hospitals; and you, most puissant and venerable Knights of the Temple, must return to your condition of simple men-at-arms, sleep three on a pallet, and mount two upon one horse, as your present seal still expresses to have been your ancient most simple custom."

"The rank, privileges, and opulence of our Order prevent so much degradation as you threaten," said the Templar, haughtily.

"These are your bane," said Conrade of Montserrat; "and you, as well as I, reverend Grand Master, know, that, were the allied Princes to be successful in Palestine, it would be their first point of policy to abate the independence of your Order, which, but for the protection of our holy father the Pope, and the necessity of employing your valour in the conquest of Palestine, you would long since have experienced. Give them complete success, and you will be flung aside, as the splinters of a broken lance are tossed out of the tilt-yard."

"There may be truth in what you say," said the Templar, darkly smiling; "but what were our hopes should the allies withdraw their forces, and leave Palestine in the grasp of Saladin?"

"Great and assured," replied Conrade; "the Soldan would give large provinces to maintain at his behest a body of well-appointed Frankish lances. In Egypt, in Persia, a hundred such auxiliaries, joined to his own light cavalry, would turn the battle against the most fearful odds. This dependence would be but for a time—perhaps during the life of this enterprising Soldan—but, in the East, empires arise like mushrooms. Suppose him dead, and us strengthened with a constant succession of fiery and adventurous spirits from Europe, what might we not hope to achieve, uncontrolled by these monarchs, whose dignity throws us at present into the shade—and, were they to remain here, and succeed in this expedition, would willingly consign us for ever to degradation and dependence?"

"You say well, my Lord Marquis," said the Grand Master; "and your words find an echo in my bosom. Yet must we be cautious; Philip of France is wise as well as valiant."

"True, and will be therefore the more easily diverted from an expedition, to which, in a moment of enthusiasm, or urged by his nobles, he rashly bound himself. He is jealous of King Richard, his natural enemy, and longs to return to prosecute plans of ambition nearer to Paris than Palestine. Any fair pretence will serve him for withdrawing from a scene, in which he is aware he is wasting the force of his kingdom."

"And the Duke of Austria?" said the Templar.

"Oh, touching the Duke," returned Conrade, "his self-conceit and folly lead him to the same concessions as do Philip's policy and wisdom. He conceives himself, God help the while, ungratefully treated, because men's mouths,—even those of his own *minnesingers*,*—are filled with the praises of King Richard, whom he fears and hates, and in whose harm he would rejoice, like those unbred dastardly curs, who, if the foremost of the pack is hurt by the gripe of the wolf, are much more likely to assail the sufferer from behind, than to come to his assistance.—But wherefore tell I this to thee, save to show that I am in sincerity in desiring that this league be broken up, and the country freed of these great monarchs with their hosts? and thou well knowest, and hast thyself seen, how all the princes of influence and power, one alone excepted, are eager to enter into treaty with the Soldan."

"I acknowledge it," said the Templar; "he were blind that had not seen this in their last deliberations. But lift yet thy mask an inch higher, and tell me thy real reason for pressing upon the Council that Northern Englishman, or Scot, or whatever you call yonder Knight of the Leopard, to carry their proposals for a treaty?"

"There was a policy in it," replied the Italian; "his character of native of Britain was sufficient to meet what Saladin required, who knew him to belong to the band of Richard, while his character of Scot, and certain other personal grudges which I wot of, rendered it most unlikely that our envoy should, on his return, hold any communication with the sick-bed of Richard, to whom his presence was ever unacceptable."

"Oh, too fine-spun policy," said the Grand Master; "trust me, that Italian spiders' webs will never bind this unshorn Sampson of the Isle—well if you can do it with new cords, and those of the toughest. See you not that the envoy whom you have selected so carefully, hath brought us, in this physician, the means of restoring the lion-hearted, bull-necked Englishman, to prosecute his Crusading enterprise; and, so soon as he is able once more to rush on, which of the princes dare hold back?—They must follow him for very shame, although they would march under the banner of Satan as soon."

"Be content," said Conrade of Montserrat; "our

* The Assizes de Jerusalem were the digest of feudal law, composed by Godfrey of Boulone, for the government of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, when reconquered from the Saracens. "It was composed with advice of the patriarch and *barons, the clergy and laity*," and is, says the historian Gibbon, "a precious monument of feudatory jurisprudence, founded upon those principles of freedom which were essential to the system

* The German minstrels were so termed.

his physician, if he work by any thing short of miraculous agency, can accomplish Richard's cure, it may be possible to put some open rupture betwixt the Frenchman, at least the Austrian, and his allies of England, so that the breach shall be irreconcilable; and Richard may arise from his bed, perhaps to command his own native troops, but never again, by his sole energy, to wield the force of the whole Crusade."

"Thou art a willing archer," said the Templar; "but, Conrade of Montserrat, thy bow is over slack to carry an arrow to the mark."

He then stopt short, cast a suspicious glance to see that no one overheard him, and taking Conrade by the hand, pressed it eagerly as he looked the Italian in the face, and repeated slowly,—"Richard arise from his bed, say'st thou?—Conrade, he must never arise!"

The Marquis of Montserrat started—"What!—spoke you of Richard of England—of Cœur de Lion—the champion of Christendom?"

His cheek turned pale, and his knees trembled as he spoke. The Templar looked at him, with his iron visage contorted into a smile of contempt.

"Know'st thou what thou look'st like, Sir Conrade, at this moment? Not like the politic and valiant Marquis of Montserrat—not like him who would direct the Council of Princes, and determine the fate of empires—but like a novice, who, stumbling upon a conjuration in his master's book of gramarye, has raised the devil when he least thought of it, and now stands terrified at the spirit which appears before him."

"I grant you," said Conrade, recovering himself, "that unless some other sure road could be discovered—thou hast hinted at that which leads most direct to our purpose. But, blessed Mary! we shall become the curse of all Europe, the malediction of every one, from the Pope on his throne to the very beggar at the church gate, who, ragged and leprous, in the last extremity of human wretchedness, shall bless himself that he is neither Giles Amaury, nor Conrade of Montserrat."

"If thou takest it thus," said the Grand Master, with the same composure which characterized him all through this remarkable dialogue, "let us hold there as nothing passed between us—that we have spoken in our sleep—have awakened, and the vision is gone."

"It never can depart," answered Conrade.

"Visions of ducal crowns and kingly diadems are, indeed, somewhat tenacious of their place in the imagination," replied the Grand Master.

"Well," answered Conrade, "let me but first try to break peace between Austria and England."

They parted.—Conrade remained standing still upon the spot, and watching the flowing white cloak of the Templar, as he stalked slowly away, and gradually disappeared amid the fast-sinking darkness of the Oriental night. Proud, ambitious, unscrupulous, and politic, the Marquis of Montserrat was yet not cruel by nature. He was a voluptuary and an epicurean, and, like many who profess this character, was averse, even upon selfish motives, from inflicting pain, or witnessing acts of cruelty; and he retained also a general sense of respect for his own reputation, which sometimes supplies the want of the better principle by which reputation is to be maintained.

"I have," he said, as his eyes still watched the point at which he had seen the last slight wave of the Templar's mantle,—"I have, in truth, raised the devil with a vengeance! Who would have thought this stern ascetic Grand Master, whose whole fortune and misfortune is merged in that of his Order, would be willing to do more for its advancement, than I who labour for my own interest? To check this wild Crusade was my motive, indeed, but I durst not think on the ready mode which this determined priest has dared to suggest—yet it is the surest—perhaps even the safest."

Such were the Marquis's meditations, when his muttered soliloquy was broken by a voice from a little distance, which proclaimed with the emphatic tone of a herald,—"Remember the Holy Sepulchre!"

The *exhortation was echoed from post to* post, for *it was the duty of the sentinels to raise this* cry from time to time upon their periodical watch, that the host of the Crusaders might always have in their remembrance the purpose of their being in arms. But though Conrade was familiar with the custom, and had heard the warning voice on all former occasions as a matter of habit; yet it came at the present moment so strongly in contact with his own train of thought, that it seemed a voice from Heaven warning him against the iniquity which his heart meditated. He looked around anxiously, as if, like the patriarch of old, though from very different circumstances, he was expecting some ram caught in a thicket—some substitution for the sacrifice, which his comrade proposed to offer, not to the Supreme Being, but to the Moloch of their own ambition. As he looked, the broad folds of the ensign of England, heavily distending itself to the failing night-breeze, caught his eye. It was displayed upon an artificial mound, nearly in the midst of the camp, which perhaps of old some Hebrew chief or champion had chosen as a memorial of his place of rest. If so, the name was now forgotten, and the Crusaders had christened it Saint George's Mount, because from that commanding height the banner of England was supereminently displayed, as if an emblem of sovereignty over the many distinguished, noble, and even royal ensigns, which floated in lower situations.

A quick intellect like that of Conrade catches ideas from the glance of a moment. A single look on the standard seemed to dispel the uncertainty of mind which had affected him. He walked to his pavilion with the hasty and determined step of one who has adopted a plan which he is resolved to achieve, dismissed the almost princely train who waited to attend him, and, as he committed himself to his couch, muttered his amended resolution, that the milder means are to be tried before the more desperate are resorted to.

"To-morrow," he said, "I sit at the board of the Archduke of Austria—we will see what can be done to advance our purpose, before prosecuting the dark suggestions of this Templar."

CHAPTER XI.

> One thing is certain in our Northern land
> Allow that birth, or valour, wealth, or wit,
> Give each precedence to their possessor,
> Envy, that follows on such eminence,
> As comes the lime-hound on the roebuck's trace,
> Shall pull them down each one.
>
> SIR DAVID LINDSAY.

LEOPOLD, Grand Duke of Austria, was the first possessor of that noble country to whom the princely rank belonged. He had been raised to the ducal sway in the German empire, on account of his near relationship to the Emperor, Henry the Stern, and held under his government the finest provinces which are watered by the Danube. His character has been stained in history, on account of one action of violence and perfidy, which arose out of these very transactions in the Holy Land; and yet the shame of having made Richard a prisoner, when he returned through his dominions, unattended, and in disguise, was not one which flowed from Leopold's natural disposition. He was rather a weak and a vain, than an ambitious or tyrannical prince. His mental powers resembled the qualities of his person. He was tall, strong, and handsome, with a complexion in which red and white was strongly contrasted, and had long flowing locks of fair hair. But there was an awkwardness in his gait, which seemed as if his size was not animated by energy sufficient to put in motion such a mass; and in the same manner, wearing the richest dresses, it always seemed as if they became him not. As a prince, he appeared too little familiar with his own dignity, and being often at a loss how to assert his authority when the occasion demanded it, he frequently thought himself obliged to recover, by acts and expressions of ill-timed violence, the ground which might have been easily and gracefully maintained by a little more presence of mind in the beginning of the controversy.

Not only were these deficiencies visible to others,

but the Archduke himself could not but sometimes entertain a painful consciousness that he was not altogether fit to maintain and assert the high rank which he had acquired; and to this was joined the strong, and sometimes the just suspicion, that others esteemed him lightly accordingly.

When he first joined the Crusade, with a most princely attendance, Leopold had desired much to enjoy the friendship and intimacy of Richard, and had made such advances towards cultivating his regard, as the King of England ought, in policy, to have received and answered. But the Archduke, though not deficient in bravery, was so infinitely inferior to Cœur de Lion in that ardour of mind which wooed danger as a bride, that the King very soon held him in a certain degree of contempt. Richard, also, as a Norman Prince, a people with whom temperance was habitual, despised the inclination of the German for the pleasures of the table, and particularly his liberal indulgence in the use of wine. For these, and other personal reasons, the King of England very soon looked upon the Austrian Prince with feelings of contempt, which he was at no pains to conceal or modify, and which, therefore, were speedily remarked, and returned with deep hatred, by the suspicious Leopold. The discord between them was fanned by the secret and politic arts of Philip of France, one of the most sagacious monarchs of the time, who, dreading the fiery and overbearing character of Richard, considering him as his natural rival, and feeling offended, moreover, at the dictatorial manner in which he, a vassal of France for his continental domains, conducted himself towards his liege lord, endeavoured to strengthen his own party, and weaken that of Richard, by uniting the Crusading princes of inferior degree, in resistance to what he termed the usurping authority of the King of England. Such was the state of politics and opinions entertained by the Archduke of Austria, when Conrade of Montserrat resolved upon employing his jealousy of England as the means of dissolving, or loosening at least, the league of the Crusaders.

The time which he chose for his visit was noon, and the pretence, to present the Archduke with some choice Cyprus wine which had lately fallen into his hands, and discuss its comparative merits with those of Hungary and of the Rhine. An intimation of his purpose was of course answered by a courteous invitation to partake of the Archducal meal, and every effort was used to render it fitting the splendour of a sovereign prince. Yet, the refined taste of the Italian saw more cumbrous profusion, than elegance or splendour, in the display of provisions under which the board groaned.

The Germans, though still possessing the martial and frank character of their ancestors, who subdued the Roman empire, had retained withal no slight tinge of their barbarism. The practices and principles of chivalry were not carried to such a nice pitch amongst them, as amongst the French and English knights, nor were they strict observers of the prescribed rules of society, which among those nations were supposed to express the height of civilization. Sitting at the table of the Archduke, Conrade was at once stunned and amused, with the clang of Teutonic sounds assaulting his ears on all sides, notwithstanding the solemnity of a princely banquet. Their dress seemed equally fantastic to him, many of the Austrian nobles retaining their long beards, and almost all of them wearing short jerkins of various colours, cut, and flourished, and fringed, in a manner not common in Western Europe.

Numbers of dependents, old and young, attended in the pavilion, mingled at times in the conversation, received from their masters the relics of the entertainment, and devoured them as they stood behind the backs of the company. Jesters, dwarfs, and minstrels, were there in unusual numbers, and more noisy and intrusive than they were permitted to be in better regulated society. As they were allowed to share freely in the wine, which flowed round in large quantities, their licensed tumult was the more excessive.

All this while, and in the midst of a clamour and confusion, which would better have become a German tavern during a fair, than the tent of a sovereign prince, the Archduke was waited upon with a minuteness of form and observance, which showed how anxious he was to maintain rigidly the state and character to which his elevation had entitled him. He was served on the knee, and only by pages of noble blood, fed upon plate of silver, and drank his Tokay and Rhenish wines from a cup of gold. His ducal mantle was splendidly adorned with ermine, his coronet might have equalled in value a royal crown, and his feet, cased in velvet shoes, (the length of which, peaks included, might be two feet,) rested upon a footstool of solid silver. But it served partly to intimate the character of the man, that, although desirous to show attention to the Marquis of Montserrat, whom he had courteously placed at his right hand, he gave much more of his attention to his *spruch-sprecher*, that is, his man of conversation, or *sayer of sayings*, who stood behind the Duke's right shoulder.

This personage was well attired, in a cloak and doublet of black velvet, the last of which was decorated with various silver and gold coins, stitched upon it, in memory of the munificent princes who had conferred them, and bearing a short staff, to which also bunches of silver coins were attached by rings, which he jingled by way of attracting attention, when he was about to say any thing which he judged worthy of it. This person's capacity in the household of the Archduke, was somewhat betwixt that of a minstrel and a counsellor; he was by turns a flatterer, a poet, and an orator; and those who desired to be well with the Duke, generally studied to gain the good-will of the *spruch-sprecher*.

Lest too much of this officer's wisdom should become tiresome, the Duke's other shoulder was occupied by his *hoff-narr*, or court jester, called Jonas Schwanker, who made almost as much noise with his fool's cap, bells, and bauble, as did the orator, or man of talk, with his jingling batoon.

These two personages threw out grave and comic nonsense alternately, while the master, laughing or applauding them himself, yet carefully watched the countenance of his noble guest, to discern what impressions so accomplished a cavalier received from this display of Austrian eloquence and wit. It is hard to say whether the man of wisdom or the man of folly contributed most to the amusement of the party, or stood highest in the estimation of their princely master; but the sallies of both seemed excellently well received. Sometimes they became rivals for the conversation, and clanged their flappers in emulation of each other, with a most alarming contention; but, in general, they seemed on such good terms, and so accustomed to support each other's play, that the *spruch-sprecher* often condescended to follow up the jester's witticisms with an explanation, to render them more obvious to the capacity of the audience; so that his wisdom became a sort of commentary on the buffoon's folly. And sometimes, in requital, the *hoff-narr*, with a pithy jest, wound up the conclusion of the orator's tedious harangue.

Whatever his real sentiments might be, Conrade took especial care that his countenance should express nothing but satisfaction with what he heard, and smiled or applauded as zealously, to all appearance, as the Archduke himself, at the solemn folly of the *spruch-sprecher*, and the gibbering wit of the fool. In fact, he watched carefully until the one or other should introduce some topic, favourable to the purpose which was uppermost in his mind.

It was not long ere the King of England was brought on the carpet by the jester, who had been accustomed to consider Dickon of the Broom (which irreverent epithet he substituted for Richard Plantagenet) as a subject of mirth, acceptable and inexhaustible. The orator, indeed, was silent, and it was only when applied to by Conrade, that he observed, "The *genista*, or broom-plant, was an emblem of humility; and it would be well when those who wore it would remember the warning."

The allusion to the illustrious badge of Plantagenet was thus rendered sufficiently manifest, and Jonas Schwanker observed, that they who humbled themselves had been exalted with a vengeance.

"Honour unto whom honour is due," answered the Marquis of Montserrat; "we have all had some part in these marches and battles, and methinks other princes might share a little in the renown which Richard of England engrosses amongst minstrels and *minne-singers*. Has no one of the Joyeuse science here present a song in praise of the royal Archduke of Austria, our princely entertainer?"

Three minstrels emulously stepped forward with voice and harp. Two were silenced with difficulty by the *spruch-sprecher*, who seemed to act as master of the revels, and a hearing was at length procured for the poet preferred, who sung, in high German, stanzas which may be thus translated:—

What brave chief shall head the forces,
Where the red-cross legions gather?
Best of horsemen, best of horses,
Highest head and fairest feather.

Here the orator, jingling his staff, interrupted the bard to intimate to the party, what they might not have inferred from the description, that their royal host was the party indicated, and a full crowned goblet went round to the acclamation—*Hoch lebe der Herzog Leopold!* Another stanza followed.

Ask not Austria why, midst princes,
Still her banner rises highest;
Ask as well the strong-winged eagle,
Why to Heaven he soars the highest.

"The eagle," said the expounder of dark sayings, "is the cognizance of our noble lord the Archduke—of his royal Grace, I would say—and the eagle flies the highest and nearest to the sun of all the feathered creation."

"The lion hath taken a spring above the eagle," said Conrade, carelessly.

The Archduke reddened, and fixed his eyes on the speaker, while the *spruch-sprecher* answered, after a minute's consideration, "The Lord Marquis will pardon me—a lion cannot fly above an eagle, because no lion hath got wings."

"Except the lion of Saint Mark," responded the jester.

"That is the Venetian's banner," said the Duke, "but assuredly, that amphibious race, half nobles, half merchants, will not dare to place their rank in comparison with ours?"

"Nay, it was not of the Venetian lion that I spoke," said the Marquis of Montserrat; "but of the three lions passant of England—formerly, it is said, they were leopards, but now they are become lions at all points, and must take precedence of beast, fish, or fowl, or wo worth the gainstander."

"Mean you seriously, my lord?" said the Austrian, now considerably flushed with wine; "think you that Richard of England asserts any pre-eminence over the free sovereigns who have been his voluntary allies in this Crusade?"

"I know not but from circumstances," answered Conrade; "yonder hangs his banner alone in the midst of our camp, as if he were king and generalissimo of our whole Christian army."

"And do you endure this so patiently, and speak of it so coldly?" said the Archduke.

"Nay, my lord," answered Conrade, "it cannot concern the poor Marquis of Montserrat to contend against an injury, patiently submitted to by such potent princes as Philip of France and Leopold of Austria. What dishonour you are pleased to submit to, cannot be a disgrace to me."

Leopold closed his fist, and struck on the table with violence.

"I have told Philip of this," he said; "I have often told him that it was our duty to protect the inferior princes against the usurpation of this Islander—but he answers me ever with cold respects of their relations together as suzerain and vassal, and that it were impolitic in him to make an open breach at this time and period."

"The world knows that Philip is wise," said Conrade, "and will judge his submission to be policy.—Yours, my lord, you can yourself alone account for; but I doubt not you have deep reasons for submitting to English domination."

"*I submit!*" *said Leopold, indignantly*—"*I*, the Archduke of Austria, so important and vital a limb of the Holy Roman empire—*I* submit myself to this King of half an island—this grandson of a Norman bastard!—No, by Heaven! The camp, and all Christendom, shall see that I know how to right myself, and whether, I yield ground one inch to the English bandog.—Up, my lieges and merry-men, up and follow me! We will—and that without losing one instant place the eagle of Austria, where she shall float as high as ever floated the cognizance of king or kaisar."

With that he started from his seat, and, amidst the tumultuous cheering of his guests and followers, made for the door of the pavilion, and seized his own banner, which stood pitched before it.

"Nay, my lord," said Conrade, affecting to interfere, "it will blemish your wisdom to make an affray in the camp at this hour, and perhaps it is better to submit to the usurpation of England a little longer than to"——

"Not an hour—not a moment longer," vociferated the Duke; and, with the banner in his hand, and followed by his shouting guests and attendants, marched hastily to the central mount, from which the banner of England floated, and laid his hand on the standard-spear, as if to pluck it from the ground.

"My master, my dear master!" said Jonas Schwanker, throwing his arms about the Duke—"take heed—lions have teeth"——

"And eagles have claws!" said the Duke, not relinquishing his hold on the banner-staff, yet hesitating to pull it from the ground.

The speaker of sentences, notwithstanding such was his occupation, had nevertheless some intervals of sound sense. He clashed his staff loudly, and Leopold, as if by habit, turned his head towards his man of counsel.

"The eagle is king among the fowls of the air," said the *spruch-sprecher*, "as is the lion among the beasts of the field—each has his dominion, separated as wide as England and Germany—do, thou, noble eagle, no dishonour to the princely lion, but let your banners remain floating in peace side by side."

Leopold withdrew his hand from the banner-spear, and looked round for Conrade of Montserrat, but he saw him not; for the Marquis, so soon as he saw the mischief afoot, had withdrawn himself from the crowd, taking care, in the first place, to express before several neutral persons his regret, that the Archduke should have chosen the hours after dinner to avenge any wrong of which he might think he had a right to complain. Not seeing his guest, to whom he wished more particularly to have addressed himself, the Archduke said aloud, that, having no wish to breed dissension in the army of the Cross, he did but vindicate his own privileges and right to stand upon an equality with the King of England, without desiring, as he might have done, to advance his banner, which he derived from Emperors, his progenitors, above that of a mere descendant of the Counts of Anjou; and, in the mean time, he commanded a cask of wine to be brought hither and pierced, for regaling the by-standers, who, with tuck of drum and sound of music, quaffed many a carouse round the Austrian standard.

This disorderly scene was not acted without a degree of noise, which alarmed the whole camp.

The critical hour had arrived, at which the physician, according to the rules of his art, had predicted that his royal patient might be awakened with safety, and the sponge had been applied for that purpose; and the leech had not made many observations ere he assured the Baron of Gilsland that the fever had entirely left his sovereign, and that such was the happy strength of his constitution, it would not be even necessary, as in most cases, to give a second dose of the powerful medicine. Richard himself seemed to be of the same opinion, for, sitting up and rubbing his eyes, he demanded of De Vaux what present sum of money was in the royal coffers.

The baron could not exactly inform him of the amount.

"It matters not," said Richard; "be it greater or smaller, bestow it all on this learned leech, who hath, I trust, given me back again to the service of the

Crusade. If it be less than a thousand byzants, let him have jewels to make it up."

"I sell not the wisdom with which Allah has endowed me," answered the Arabian physician; "and be it known to you, great Prince, that the divine medicine, of which you have partaken, would lose its effects in my unworthy hands, did I exchange its virtues either for gold or diamonds."

"The Physician refuseth a gratuity!" said De Vaux to himself. "This is more extraordinary than his being a hundred years old."

"Thomas de Vaux," said Richard, "thou knowest no courage but what belongs to the sword, no bounty and virtue but what are used in chivalry—I tell thee that this Moor, in his independence, might set an example to them who account themselves the flower of knighthood."

"It is reward enough for me," said the Moor, folding his arms on his bosom, and maintaining an attitude at once respectful and dignified, "that so great a King as the Melech Ric* should thus speak of his servant.—But now, let me pray you again to compose yourself on your couch; for though I think there needs no farther repetition of the divine draught, yet injury might ensue from any too early exertion, ere your strength be entirely restored."

"I must obey thee, Hakim," said the King; "yet, believe me, my bosom feels so free from the wasting fire, which for so many days hath scorched it, that I care not how soon I expose it to a brave man's lance.—But hark! what mean these shouts, and that distant music in the camp? Go, Thomas de Vaux, and make inquiry."

"It is the Archduke Leopold," said De Vaux, returning after a minute's absence, "who makes with his pot-companions some procession through the camp."

"The drunken fool!" exclaimed King Richard, "can he not keep his brutal inebriety within the veil of his pavilion, that he must needs show his shame to all Christendom?—What say you, Sir Marquis?" he added, addressing himself to Conrade of Montserrat, who at that moment entered the tent.

'Thus much, honoured Prince," answered the Marquis, "that I delight to see your Majesty so well, and so far recovered; and that is a long speech for any one to make who has partaken of the Duke of Austria's hospitality."

"What! you have been dining with the Teutonic wine-skin," said the monarch; "and what frolic has he found out to cause all this disturbance? Truly, Sir Conrade, I have still held you so good a reveller, that I wonder at your quitting the game."

De Vaux, who had got a little behind the King, now exerted himself, by look and sign, to make the Marquis understand that he should say nothing to Richard of what was passing without. But Conrade understood not, or heeded not, the prohibition.

"What the Archduke does," he said, "is of little consequence to any one, least of all to himself, since he probably knows not what he is acting—yet, to say truth, it is a gambol I should not like to share in, since he is pulling down the banner of England from Saint George's Mount in the centre of the camp yonder, and displaying his own in its stead."

"WHAT say'st thou?" exclaimed the King, in a tone which might have waked the dead.

"Nay," said the Marquis, "let it not chafe your Highness, that a fool should act according to his folly"——

"Speak not to me," said Richard, springing from his couch, and casting on his clothes with a despatch which seemed marvellous—"speak not to me, Lord Marquis!—De Multon, I command thee speak not a word to me—he that breathes but a syllable, is no friend to Richard Plantagenet.—Hakim, be silent, I charge thee!"

All this while the King was hastily clothing himself, and, with the last word, snatched his sword from the pillar of the tent, and without any other weapon, or calling any attendance, he rushed out of *his pavilion. Conrade*, holding up his hands, as if *in astonishment, seemed* willing to enter into conversation with De Vaux, but Sir Thomas pushed rudely past him, and calling to one of the royal equeries, said hastily,—"Fly to Lord Salisbury's quarters, and let him get his men together, and follow me instantly to Saint George's Mount. Tell him the King's fever has left his blood, and settled in his brain."

Imperfectly heard, and still more imperfectly comprehended, by the startled attendant whom De Vaux addressed thus hastily, the equery and his fellow-servants of the royal chamber rushed hastily into the tents of the neighbouring nobility, and quickly spread an alarm, as general as the cause seemed vague, through the whole British forces. The English soldiers, waked in alarm from that noon-day rest which the heat of the climate had taught them to enjoy as a luxury, hastily asked each other the cause of the tumult, and, without waiting an answer, supplied by the force of their own fancy the want of information. Some said the Saracens were in the camp, some that the King's life was attempted, some that he had died of the fever the preceding night, many that he was assassinated by the Duke of Austria. The nobles and officers, at an equal loss with the common men to ascertain the real cause of the disorder, laboured only to get their followers under arms and under authority, lest their rashness should occasion some great misfortune to the Crusading army. The English trumpets sounded loud, shrill, and continuously. The alarm-cry of "Bows and bills—bows and bills!" was heard from quarter to quarter, again and again shouted, and again and again answered by the presence of the ready warriors, and their national invocation, "Saint George for merry England!"

The alarm went through the nearest quarter of the camp, and men of all the various nations assembled, where, perhaps, every people in Christendom had their representatives, flew to arms, and drew together under circumstances of general confusion, of which they knew neither the cause nor the object. It was, however, lucky, amid a scene so threatening, that the Earl of Salisbury, while he hurried after De Vaux's summons, with a few only of the readiest English men-at-arms, directed the rest of the English host to be drawn up and kept under arms, to advance to Richard's succour if necessity should require, but in fit array, and under due command, and not with the tumultuary haste which their own alarm, and zeal for the King's safety, might have dictated.

In the mean while, without regarding for one instant the shouts, the cries, the tumult, which began to thicken around, Richard, with his dress in the last disorder, and his sheathed blade under his arm, pursued his way with the utmost speed, followed only by De Vaux, and one or two household servants, to Saint George's Mount.

He outsped even the alarm which his impetuosity only had excited, and passed the quarter of his own gallant troops of Normandy, Poitou, Gascony, and Anjou, before the disturbance had reached them, although the noise accompanying the German revel had induced many of the soldiery to get on foot to listen. The handful of Scots were also quartered in the vicinity, nor had they been disturbed by the uproar. But the King's person, and his haste, were both remarked by the Knight of the Leopard, who, aware that danger must be afoot, and hastening to share in it, snatched his shield and sword, and united himself to De Vaux, who with some difficulty kept pace with his impatient and fiery master. De Vaux answered a look of curiosity, which the Scottish knight directed towards him, with a shrug of his broad shoulders, and they continued, side by side, to pursue Richard's steps.

The King was soon at the foot of Saint George's Mount, the sides as well as platform of which were now surrounded and crowded, partly by those be longing to the Duke of Austria's retinue, who were celebrating, with shouts of jubilee, the act which they considered as an assertion of national honour; partly by bystanders of different nations, whom dislike to the English, or mere curiosity, had assembled together, to witness the end of these extraordinary proceedings. Through this disorderly troop Richard

* *Richard was thus called by* the Eastern nations.

burst his way, like a goodly ship under full sail, which cleaves her forcible passage through the rolling billows, and heeds not that they unite after her, passage, and roar upon her stern.

The summit of the eminence was a small level space, on which were pitched the rival banners, surrounded still by the Archduke's friends and retinue. In the midst of the circle was Leopold himself, still contemplating with self-satisfaction the deed he had done, and still listening to the shouts of applause which his partisans bestowed with no sparing breath. While he was in this state of self-gratulation, Richard burst into the circle, attended, indeed, only by two men, but in his own headlong energies an irresistible host.

"Who has dared," he said, laying his hands upon the Austrian standard, and speaking in a voice like the sound which precedes an earthquake; "who has dared to place this paltry rag beside the banner of England?"

The Archduke wanted not personal courage, and it was impossible he could hear this question without reply. Yet, so much was he troubled and surprised by the unexpected arrival of Richard, and affected by the general awe inspired by his ardent and unyielding character, that the demand was twice repeated, in a tone which seemed to challenge heaven and earth, ere the Archduke replied, with such firmness as he could command, "It was I, Leopold of Austria."

"Then shall Leopold of Austria," replied Richard, "presently see the rate at which his banner and his pretensions are held by Richard of England."

So saying, he pulled up the standard-spear, splintered it to pieces, threw the banner itself on the ground, and placed his foot upon it.

"Thus," said he, "I trample on the banner of Austria!—Is there a knight among your Teutonic chivalry, dare impeach my deed?"

There was a momentary silence; but there are no braver men than the Germans.

"I!" and "I!" was heard from several knights of the Duke's followers; and he himself added his voice to those which accepted the King of England's defiance.

"Why do we dally thus?" said the Earl Wallenrode, a gigantic warrior from the frontiers of Hungary: "Brethren, and noble gentlemen, this man's foot is on the honour of your country—Let us rescue it from violation, and down with the pride of England!"

So saying, he drew his sword, and struck at the King a blow which might have proved fatal, had not the Scot intercepted and caught it upon his shield.

"I have sworn," said King Richard—and his voice was heard above all the tumult, which now waxed wild and loud—"never to strike one whose shoulder bears the cross; therefore live, Wallenrode—but live to remember Richard of England."

As he spoke, he grasped the tall Hungarian round the waist, and, unmatched in wrestling, as in other military exercises, hurled him backwards with such violence that the mass flew, as if discharged from a military engine, not only through the ring of spectators who witnessed the extraordinary scene, but over the edge of the mount itself, down the steep side of which Wallenrode rolled headlong, until, pitching at length upon his shoulder, he dislocated the bone, and lay like one dead. This almost supernatural display of strength did not encourage either the Duke or any of his followers, to renew a personal contest so inauspiciously commenced. Those who stood farthest back did, indeed, clash their swords, and cry out, "Cut the island mastiff to pieces!" but those who were nearer, veiled, perhaps, their personal fears under an affected regard for order, and cried, for the most part, "Peace! peace! the peace of the Cross—the peace of Holy Church, and our Father the Pope!"

These various cries of the assailants, contradicting each other, showed their irresolution; while Richard, his foot still on the archducal banner, glared round him, with an eye that seemed to seek an enemy, and from which the angry nobles shrunk appalled, as from the threatened grasp of a lion. De Vaux and the Knight of the Leopard kept their places beside him; and though the swords which they held were still sheathed, it was plain that they were prompt to protect Richard's person to the very last, and their size and remarkable strength plainly showed the defence would be a desperate one.

Salisbury and his attendants were also now drawing near, with bills and partisans brandished, and bows already bended.

At this moment, King Philip of France, attended by one or two of his nobles, came on the platform to inquire the cause of the disturbance, and made gestures of surprise at finding the King of England raised from his sick-bed, and confronting their common ally the Duke of Austria, in such a menacing and insulting posture. Richard himself blushed at being discovered by Philip, whose sagacity he respected as much as he disliked his person, in an attitude neither becoming his character as a monarch, nor as a Crusader; and it was observed that he withdrew his foot, as if accidentally, from the dishonoured banner, and exchanged his look of violent emotion for one of affected composure and indifference. Leopold also struggled to attain some degree of calmness, mortified as he was by having been seen by Philip in the act of passively submitting to the insults of the fiery King of England.

Possessed of many of those royal qualities for which he was termed by his subjects the August, Philip might be termed the Ulysses, as Richard was indisputably the Achilles, of the Crusade. The King of France was sagacious, wise, deliberate in council, steady and calm in action, seeing clearly, and steadily pursuing, the measures most for the interest of his kingdom—dignified and royal in his deportment, brave in person, but a politician rather than a warrior. The Crusade would have been no choice of his own, but the spirit was contagious, and the expedition was enforced upon him by the church, and by the unanimous wish of his nobility. In any other situation, or in a milder age, his character might have stood higher than that of the adventurous Cœur de Lion; but in the Crusade, itself an undertaking wholly irrational, sound reason was the quality, of all others, least estimated, and the chivalric valour which both the age and the enterprise demanded, was considered as debased, if mingled with the least touch of discretion. So that the merit of Philip, compared with that of his haughty rival, showed like the clear blue minute flame of a lamp, placed near the glare of a huge blazing torch, which, not possessing half the utility, makes ten times more impression on the eye. Philip felt his inferiority in public opinion, with the pain natural to a high-spirited prince; and it cannot be wondered at if he took such opportunities as offered, for placing his own character in more advantageous contrast with that of his rival. The present seemed one of those occasions, in which prudence and calmness might reasonably expect to triumph over obstinacy and impetuous violence.

"What means this unseemly broil betwixt the sworn brethren of the Cross—the royal Majesty of England and the princely Duke Leopold? How is it possible that those who are the chiefs and pillars of this holy expedition"——

"A truce with thy remonstrance, France," said Richard, enraged inwardly at finding himself placed on a sort of equality with Leopold, yet not knowing how to resent it,—"this duke, or prince, or pillar, if you will, hath been insolent, and I have chastised him—that is all. Here is a coil, forsooth, because of spurning a hound!"

"Majesty of France," said the Duke, "I appeal to you and every sovereign prince against the foul indignity which I have sustained. This King of England hath pulled down my banner—torn and trampled on it."

"Because he had the audacity to plant it beside mine," said Richard.

"My rank as thine equal entitled me," replied the Duke, emboldened by the presence of Philip.

"Assert such equality for thy person," said King Richard, "and, by St. George, I will treat thy person

as I did thy broidered kerchief there, fit but for the meanest use to which kerchief may be put."

"Nay, but patience, brother of England," said Philip, "and I will presently show Austria that he is wrong in this matter.—Do not think, noble Duke," he continued, "that in permitting the standard of England to occupy the highest point in our camp, we, the independent sovereigns of the Crusade, acknowledge any inferiority to the royal Richard. It were inconsistent to think so; since even the oriflamme itself—the great banner of France, to which the royal Richard himself, in respect of his French possessions, is but a vassal—holds for the present an inferior place to the Lions of England. But as sworn brethren of the Cross, military pilgrims, who, laying aside the pomp and pride of this world, are hewing with our swords the way to the Holy Sepulchre, I myself, and the other princes, have renounced to King Richard, from respect to his high renown and great feats of arms, that precedence, which elsewhere, and upon other motives, would not have been yielded. I am satisfied, that when your royal grace of Austria shall have considered this, you will express sorrow for having placed your banner on this spot, and that the royal Majesty of England will then give satisfaction for the insult he has offered."

The *spruch-sprecher* and the jester had both retired to a safe distance when matters seemed coming to blows, but returned when words, their own commodity, seemed again about to become the order of the day.

The man of proverbs was so delighted with Philip's politic speech, that he clashed his batoon at the conclusion, by way of emphasis, and forgot the presence in which he was, so far as to say aloud, that he himself had never said a wiser thing in his life.

"It may be so," whispered Jonas Schwanker, "but we shall be whipt if you speak so loud."

The Duke answered sullenly, that he would refer his quarrel to the General Council of the Crusade—a motion which Philip highly applauded, as qualified to take away a scandal most harmful to Christendom.

Richard, retaining the same careless attitude, listened to Philip until his oratory seemed exhausted, and then said aloud, "I am drowsy—this fever hangs about me still. Brother of France, thou art acquainted with my humour, and that I have at all times but few words to spare—know, therefore, at once, I will submit a matter touching the honour of England, neither to Prince, Pope, nor Council. Here stands my banner—whatsoever pennon shall be reared within three butts' length of it—ay, were it the oriflamme, of which, you were, I think, but now speaking, shall be treated as that dishonoured rag; nor will I yield other satisfaction than that which these poor limbs can render in the lists to any bold challenge—ay, were it against five champions instead of one."

"Now," said the jester, whispering his companion, "that is as complete a piece of folly, as if I myself had said it—but yet, I think, there may be in this matter a greater fool than Richard yet."

"And who may that be?" asked the man of wisdom.

"Philip," said the jester, "or our own Royal Duke, should either accept the challenge—But oh, most sage *spruch-sprecher*, what excellent kings would thou and I have made, since those on whose heads these crowns have fallen, can play the proverb-monger and the fool as completely as ourselves!"

While these worthies plied their offices apart, Philip answered calmly to the almost injurious defiance of Richard,—"I came not hither to awaken fresh quarrels, contrary to the oath we have sworn, and the holy cause in which we have engaged. I part from my brother of England as brothers should part, and the only strife between the Lions of England and the Lilies of France shall be, which shall be carried deepest into the ranks of the infidels."

"It is a bargain, my royal brother," said Richard, stretching out his hand with all the frankness which *belonged to his rash but generous disposition*; "and *soon may we have the opportunity* to try this gallant *and fraternal wager.*"

"Let this noble Duke also partake in the friendship of this happy moment," said Philip; and the Duke approached, half-sullenly, half-willingly to enter into some accommodation.

"I think not of fools, nor of their folly," said Richard, carelessly; and the Archduke, turning his back on him, withdrew from the ground.

Richard looked after him as he retired.

"There is a sort of glowworm courage," he said, "that shows only by night. I must not leave this banner unguarded in darkness—by daylight the look of the Lions will alone defend it. Here, Thomas of Gilsland, I give thee the charge of the standard—watch over the honour of England."

"Her safety is yet more dear to me," said De Vaux, "and the life of Richard is the safety of England—I must have your Highness back to your tent, and that without farther tarriance."

"Thou art a rough and peremptory nurse, De Vaux," said the King, smiling; and then added, addressing Sir Kenneth, "Valiant Scot, I owe thee a boon, and I will pay it richly. There stands the banner of England! Watch it as a novice does his armour on the night before he is dubbed—Stir not from it three spears' length, and defend it with thy body against injury or insult—Sound thy bugle, if thou art assailed by more than three at once. Dost thou undertake the charge?"

"Willingly," said Kenneth; "and will discharge it upon penalty of my head. I will but arm me, and return hither instantly."

The Kings of France and England then took formal leave of each other, hiding under an appearance of courtesy, the grounds of complaint which either had against the other—Richard against Philip, for what he deemed an officious interference betwixt him and Austria, and Philip against Cœur de Lion, for the disrespectful manner in which his mediation had been received. Those whom this disturbance had assembled, now drew off in different directions, leaving the contested mount in the same solitude which had subsisted till interrupted by the Austrian bravado. Men judged of the events of the day according to their partiality; and while the English charged the Austrian with having afforded the first ground of quarrel, those of other nations concurred in casting the greater blame upon the insular haughtiness and assuming character of Richard.

"Thou seest," said the Marquis of Montserrat to the Grand Master of the Templars, "that subtle courses are more effective than violence. I have unloosed the bonds which held together this bunch of sceptres and lances—thou wilt see them shortly fall asunder."

"I would have called thy plan a good one," said the Templar, "had there been but one man of courage among yonder cold-blooded Austrians, to sever the bonds of which you speak, with his sword. A knot that is unloosed may again be fastened, but not so the cord which has been cut to pieces."

CHAPTER XI.

"'Tis woman that seduces all mankind.—GAY.

IN the days of chivalry, a dangerous post, or a perilous adventure, was a reward frequently assigned to military bravery as a compensation for its former trials;—just as, in ascending a precipice, the surmounting one crag only lifts the climber to points yet more dangerous.

It was midnight, and the moon rode clear and high in heaven, when Kenneth of Scotland stood upon his watch on Saint George's Mount, beside the banner of England, a solitary sentinel, to protect the emblem of that nation against the insults which might be meditated among the thousands whom Richard's pride had made his enemies. High thoughts rolled, one after each other, upon the mind of the warrior. It seemed to him as if he had gained some favour in the eyes of the chivalrous monarch, who till now had not seemed to distinguish him among the crowds of brave men whom his renown had assembled under his banner, and Sir Kenneth little reckoned that the

display of royal regard consisted in placing him upon a post so perilous. The devotion of his ambitious and high-placed affection, inflamed his military enthusiasm. Hopeless as that attachment was, in almost any conceivable circumstances, those which had lately occurred had, in some degree, diminished the distance between Edith and himself. He upon whom Richard had conferred the distinction of guarding his banner, was no longer an adventurer of slight note, but placed within the regard of a princess, although he was as far as ever from her level. An unknown and obscure fate could not now be his. If he was surprised and slain on the post which had been assigned him, his death—and he resolved it should be glorious—must deserve the praises, as well as call down the vengeance, of Cœur de Lion, and be followed by the regrets, and even the tears, of the high-born beauties of the English Court. He had now no longer reason to fear that he should die as a fool dieth.

Sir Kenneth had full leisure to enjoy these and similar high-souled thoughts, fostered by that wild spirit of chivalry, which, amid its most extravagant and fantastic flights, was still pure from all selfish alloy—generous, devoted, and perhaps only thus far censurable, that it proposed objects and courses of action inconsistent with the frailties and imperfections of man. All nature around him slept in calm moonshine or in deep shadow. The long rows of tents and pavilions, glimmering or darkening as they lay in the moonlight or in the shade, were still and silent as the streets of a deserted city. Beside the banner-staff lay the large stag-hound already mentioned, the sole companion of Kenneth's watch, on whose vigilance he trusted for early warning of the approach of any hostile footstep. The noble animal seemed to understand the purpose of their watch, for he looked from time to time at the rich folds of the heavy pennon, and, when the cry of the sentinels came from the distant lines and defences of the camp, he answered them with one deep and reiterated bark, as if to affirm that he too was vigilant in his duty. From time to time, also, he lowered his lofty head, and wagged his tail, as his master passed and repassed him in the short turns which he took upon his post; or, when the knight stood silent and abstracted, leaning on his lance, and looking up towards heaven, his faithful attendant ventured sometimes, in the phrase of romance, "to disturb his thoughts," and awaken him from his reverie, by thrusting his large rough snout into the knight's gauntleted hand, to solicit a transitory caress.

Thus passed two hours of the knight's watch without any thing remarkable occurring. At length, and upon a sudden, the gallant stag-hound bayed furiously, and seemed about to dash forward where the shadow lay the darkest, yet waited, as if in the slips, till he should know the pleasure of his master.

"Who goes there?" said Sir Kenneth, aware that there was something creeping forward on the shadowy side of the mount.

"In the name of Merlin and Maugis," answered a hoarse disagreeable voice, "tie up your four-footed demon there, or I come not at you."

"And who art thou, that would approach my post?" said Sir Kenneth, bending his eyes as keenly as he could on some object, which he could just observe at the bottom of the ascent, without being able to distinguish its form. "Beware—I am here on death and life."

"Take up thy long-fanged Sathanas," said the voice, "or I will conjure him with a bolt from my arblast."

At the same time was heard the sound of a spring or check, as when a crossbow is bent.

"Unbend thy arblast, and come into the moonlight," said the Scot, "or, by Saint Andrew, I will pin thee to the earth, be what or whom thou wilt."

As he spoke, he poised his long lance by the middle, and, fixing his eye upon the object which seemed to move, he brandished the weapon, as if meditating to cast it *from his hand—a use of the* weapon *sometimes, though rarely, resorted to, when* a missile was necessary. *But Sir Kenneth was* ashamed of his purpose, and grounded his weapon, when there stepped from the shadow into the moonlight, like an actor entering upon the stage, a stunted decrepit creature, whom, by his fantastic dress and deformity, he recognized, even at some distance, for the male of the two dwarfs whom he had seen in the chapel at Engaddi. Recollecting, at the same moment, the other, and far different, visions of that extraordinary night, he gave his dog a signal, which he instantly understood, and, returning to the standard, laid himself down beside it with a stifled growl.

The little distorted miniature of humanity, assured of his safety from an enemy so formidable, came panting up the ascent, which the shortness of his legs rendered laborious, and, when he arrived on the platform at the top, shifted to his left hand the little crossbow, which was just such a toy as children at that period were permitted to shoot small birds with, and, assuming an attitude of great dignity, gracefully extended his right hand to Sir Kenneth, in an attitude as if he expected he would salute it. But such a result not following, he demanded, in a sharp and angry tone of voice, "Soldier, wherefore renderest thou not to Nectabanus the homage due to his dignity?—Or, is it possible that thou canst have forgotten him?"

"Great Nectabanus," answered the knight, willing to soothe the creature's humour, "that were difficult for any one who has ever looked upon thee. Pardon me, however, that, being a soldier upon my post, with my lance in my hand, I may not give to one of thy puissance the advantage of coming within my guard, or of mastering my weapon. Suffice it, that I reverence thy dignity, and submit myself to thee as humbly as a man-at-arms in my place may."

"It shall suffice," said Nectabanus, "so that you presently attend me to the presence of those who have sent me hither to summon you."

"Great sir," replied the knight, "neither in this can I gratify thee, for my orders are to abide by this banner till daybreak—so I pray you to hold me excused in that matter also."

So saying, he resumed his walk upon the platform; but the dwarf did not suffer him so easily to escape from his importunity.

"Look you," he said, placing himself before Sir Kenneth, so as to interrupt his way, "either obey me, Sir Knight, as in duty bound, or I will lay the command upon thee, in the name of one whose beauty could call down the genii from their sphere, and whose grandeur could command the immortal race when they had descended."

A wild and improbable conjecture arose in the knight's mind, but he repelled it. It was impossible, he thought, that the lady of his love should have sent him such a message by such a messenger—yet his voice trembled as he said, "Go to, Nectabanus. Tell me at once, and as a true man, whether this sublime lady, of whom thou speakest, be other than the houri with whose assistance I beheld thee sweeping the chapel at Engaddi?"

"How! presumptuous knight," replied the dwarf, "thinkst thou the mistress of our own royal affections, the sharer of our greatness, and the partner of our comeliness, would demean herself by laying charge on such a vassal as thou! No, highly as thou art honoured, thou hast not yet deserved the notice of Queen Genevra, the lovely bride of Arthur, from whose high seat even princes seem but pigmies. But look thou here, and as thou knowest or disownest this token, so obey or refuse her commands, who hath deigned to impose them on thee."

So saying, he placed in the knight's hands a ruby ring, which, even in the moonlight, he had no difficulty to recognise as that which usually graced the finger of the high-born lady to whose service he had devoted himself. Could he have doubted the truth of the token, he would have been convinced by the small knot of carnation-coloured riband, which was fastened to the ring. This was his lady's favourite colour, and more than once had he himself, assuming it for that of his own liveries, caused the carnation to triumph over all other hues in the lists and in the battle.

Sir Kenneth was struck nearly mute, by seeing such a token in such hands.

"In the name of all that is sacred, from whom didst thou receive this witness?" said the knight; "bring, if thou canst, thy wavering understanding to a right settlement for a minute or two, and tell me the person by whom thou art sent, and the real purpose of thy message—and take heed what thou say'st, for this is no subject for buffoonery."

"Fond and foolish knight," said the dwarf, "wouldst thou know more of this matter, than that thou art honoured with commands from a princess, delivered to thee by a king?—We list not to parley with thee farther than to command thee, in the name, and by the power of that ring, to follow us to her who is the owner of the ring. Every minute that thou tarriest is a crime against thy allegiance."

"Good Nectabanus—bethink thyself," said the knight,—"Can my lady know where and upon what duty I am this night engaged?—Is she aware that my life—Pshaw, why should I speak of life—but that my honour depends on my guarding this banner till daybreak—and can it be her wish that I should leave it even to pay homage to her?—It is impossible—the princess is pleased to be merry with her servant, in sending him such a message; and I must think so the rather that she hath chosen such a messenger."

"Oh, keep your belief," said Nectabanus, turning round as if to leave the platform; "it is little to me whether you be traitor or true man to this royal lady—so fare thee well."

"Stay, stay—I entreat you stay," said Sir Kenneth; 'answer me but one question—Is the lady who sent thee near to this place?"

"What signifies it?" said the dwarf; "ought fidelity to reckon furlongs, or miles, or leagues—like the poor courier, who is paid for his labour by the distance which he traverses? Nevertheless, thou soul of suspicion, I tell thee, the fair owner of the ring, now sent to so unworthy a vassal, in whom there is neither truth nor courage, is not more distant from this place, than this arblast can send a bolt."

The knight gazed again on the ring, as if to ascertain that there was no possible falsehood in the token. —"Tell me," he said to the dwarf, "is my presence required for any length of time?"

"Time!" answered Nectabanus, in his flighty manner; "what call you time? I see it not—I feel it not—it is but a shadowy name—a succession of breathings measured forth by night by the clank of a bell, by day by a shadow crossing along a dial-stone. Know'st thou not a true knight's time should only be reckoned by the deeds that he performs in behalf of God and his lady?"

"The words of truth, though in the mouth of folly," said the knight. "And doth my lady really summon me to some deed of action, in her name and for her sake?—and may it not be postponed for even the few hours till daybreak?"

"She requires thy presence instantly," said the dwarf, "and without the loss of so much time as would be told by ten grains of the sand-glass—Hearken, thou cold-blooded and suspicious knight, these are her very words—Tell him, that the hand which dropped roses can bestow laurels."

This allusion to their meeting in the chapel of Engaddi, sent a thousand recollections through Sir Kenneth's brain, and convinced him that the message delivered by the dwarf was genuine. The rose-buds, withered as they were, were still treasured under his cuirass, and nearest to his heart. He paused, and could not resolve to forego an opportunity,—the only one which might ever offer, to gain grace in her eyes, whom he had installed as sovereign of his affections. The dwarf, in the mean time, augmented his confusion by insisting either that he must return the ring, or instantly attend him.

"Hold, hold, yet a moment hold," said the knight, and proceeded to mutter to himself—"Am I either the *subject or slave of* King Richard, more than as a free *knight sworn to the service of* the Crusade? And *whom have I come hither* to honour with lance and sword? Our holy cause and my transcendent lady?"

"The ring, the ring!" exclaimed the dwarf, impatiently; "false and slothful knight, return the ring, which thou art unworthy to touch or to look upon."

"A moment, a moment, good Nectabanus," said Sir Kenneth; "disturb not my thoughts.—What if the Saracens were just now to attack our lines? Should I stay here like a sworn vassal of England, watching that her king's pride suffered no humiliation; or should I speed to the breach, and fight for the Cross?—To the breach, assuredly; and next to the cause of God, come the commands of my liege lady.—And yet, Cœur de Lion's behest—my own promise!—Nectabanus, I conjure thee once more to say, are you to conduct me far from hence?"

"But to yonder pavilion; and, since you must needs know," replied Nectabanus, "the moon is glimmering on the gilded ball which crowns its roof, and which is worth a king's ransom."

"I can return in an instant," said the knight, shutting his eyes desperately to all farther consequences. "I can hear from thence the bay of my dog, if any one approaches the standard—I will throw myself at my lady's feet, and pray her leave to return to conclude my watch.—Here, Roswal," (calling his hound, and throwing down his mantle by the side of the standard-spear,) "watch thou here, and let no one approach."

The majestic dog looked in his master's face, as if to be sure that he understood his charge, then sat down beside the mantle, with ears erect and head raised, like a sentinel, understanding perfectly the purpose for which he was stationed there.

"Come now, good Nectabanus," said the knight, "let us hasten to obey the commands thou hast brought."

"Haste he that will," said the dwarf, sullenly; "thou hast not been in haste to obey my summons, nor can I walk fast enough to follow your long strides—you do not walk like a man, but bound like an ostrich in the desert."

There were but two ways of conquering the obstinacy of Nectabanus, who, as he spoke, diminished his walk into a snail pace. For bribes Sir Kenneth had no means—for soothing no time; so in his impatience he snatched the dwarf up from the ground, and bearing him along, notwithstanding his entreaties and his fear, reached nearly to the pavilion pointed out as that of the Queen. In approaching it, however, the Scot observed there was a small guard of soldiers sitting on the ground, who had been concealed from him by the intervening tents. Wondering that the clash of his own armour had not yet attracted their attention, and supposing that his motions might, on the present occasion, require to be conducted with secrecy, he placed the little panting guide upon the ground to recover his breath, and point out what was next to be done. Nectabanus was both frightened and angry; but he had felt himself as completely in the power of the robust knight, as an owl in the claws of an eagle, and therefore cared not to provoke him to any farther display of his strength.

He made no complaints, therefore, of the usage he had received, but turning amongst the labyrinth of tents, he led the knight in silence to the opposite side of the pavilion, which thus screened them from the observation of the warders, who seemed either too negligent or too sleepy to discharge their duty with much accuracy. Arrived there, the dwarf raised the under part of the canvass from the ground, and made signs to Sir Kenneth that he should introduce himself to the inside of the tent, by creeping under it. The knight hesitated—there seemed an indecorum in thus privately introducing himself into a pavilion, pitched, doubtless, for the accommodation of noble ladies; but he recalled to remembrance the assured tokens which the dwarf had exhibited, and concluded that it was not for him to dispute his lady's pleasure.

He stoopt accordingly, crept beneath the canvass enclosure of the tent, and heard the dwarf whisper from without,—"Remain there until I call thee."

CHAPTER XIII.

You talk of Gayety and Innocence!
The moment when the fatal fruit was eaten,
They parted ne'er to meet again; and Malice
Has ever since been playmate to light Gayety,
From the first moment when the smiling infant
Destroys the flower or butterfly he toys with,
To the last chuckle of the dying miser,
Who on his death-bed laughs his last to hear
His wealthy neighbour has become a bankrupt.
Old Play.

SIR KENNETH was left for some minutes alone, and darkness. Here was another interruption, which st prolong his absence from his post, and he began nost to repent the facility with which he had been uced to quit it. But to return without seeing the ly Edith, was now not to be thought of. He had mitted a breach of military discipline, and was ermined at least to prove the reality of the seduc- expectations which had tempted him to do so. an while, his situation was unpleasant. There s no light to show him into what sort of apart- nt he had been led—the Lady Edith was in imme- te attendance on the Queen of England—and the covery of his having introduced himself thus fur- ly into the royal pavilion, might, were it discov- d, lead to much and dangerous suspicion. While gave way to these unpleasant reflections, and an almost to wish that he could achieve his retreat bserved, he heard a noise of female voices, laugh- , whispering, and speaking in an adjoining apart- nt, from which, as the sounds gave him reason to ge, he could only be separated by a canvass parti- . Lamps were burning, as he might perceive by shadowy light which extended itself even to his e of the veil which divided the tent, and he could shades of several figures sitting and moving in the oining apartment. It cannot be termed discourtesy Sir Kenneth, that, situated as he was, he overheard nversation, in which he found himself deeply in- sted.

Call her—call her, for Our Lady's sake," said the e of one of these laughing invisibles. "Nectanus, thou shalt be made ambassador to Prester n's court, to show them how wisely thou canst harge thee of a mission."

he shrill tone of the dwarf was heard, yet so much duced, that Sir Kenneth could not understand what said, except that he spoke something of the means nerriment given to the guard.

But how shall we rid us of the spirit which Nectanus hath raised, my maidens?"

Hear me, royal madam," said another voice; "if sage and princely Nectabanus be not over-jealous is most transcendent bride and empress, let us d her to get us rid of this insolent knight-errant, can be so easily persuaded that high-born dames need the use of his insolent and overweening our."

It were but justice, methinks," replied another, at the Princess Guenever should dismiss, by her rtesy, him, whom her husband's wisdom has been to entice hither."

truck to the heart with shame and resentment at at he had heard, Sir Kenneth was about to attempt escape from the tent at all hazards, when what owed arrested his purpose.

Nay, truly," said the first speaker, "our cousin th must first learn how this vaunted wight hath ducted himself, and we must reserve the power giving her ocular proof that he hath failed in his y. It may be a lesson will do good upon her; for, lit me, Calista, I have sometimes thought she has this northern adventurer sit nearer her heart than dence would sanction."

One of the other voices was then heard to mutter nething of the Lady Edith's prudence and wisdom.

Prudence, wench! was the reply—"It is mere le, and the desire to be thought more rigid than of us. Nay, I will not quit my advantage. You w well, that when she has us at fault, no one , in a civil way, lay your error before you more cisely than can my Lady *Edith*—But here she nes."

figure, as if entering the apartment, cast upon the partition a shade, which glided along slowly until it mixed with those which already clouded it. Despite of the bitter disappointment which he had experienced—despite the insult and injury with which it seemed he had been visited by the malice, or, at best, by the idle humour of Queen Berengaria, (for he already concluded that she who spoke loudest, and in a commanding tone, was the wife of Richard,) the knight felt something so soothing to his feelings in learning that Edith had been no partner to the fraud practised on him, and so interesting to his curiosity in the scene which was about to take place, that, instead of prosecuting his more prudent purpose of an instant retreat, he looked anxiously, on the contrary, for some rent or crevice, by means of which he might be made eye as well as ear-witness to what was to go forward.

"Surely," said he to himself, "the Queen, who hath been pleased for an idle frolic to endanger my reputation, and perhaps my life, cannot complain if I avail myself of the chance which fortune seems willing to afford me, to obtain knowledge of her further intentions."

It seemed, in the mean while, as if Edith were waiting for the commands of the Queen, and as if the other were reluctant to speak, for fear of being unable to command her laughter, and that of her companions; for Sir Kenneth could only distinguish a sound as of suppressed tittering and merriment.

"Your Majesty," said Edith, at last, "seems in a merry mood, though, methinks, the hour of night prompts a sleepy one. I was well disposed bedward, when I had your Majesty's commands to attend you."

"I will not long delay you, cousin, from your repose," said the Queen; "though I fear you will sleep less soundly when I tell you your wager is lost."

"Nay, royal madam," said Edith, "this, surely, is dwelling on a jest which has rather been worn out. I laid no wager, however it was your Majesty's pleasure to suppose, or to insist, that I did so."

"Nay, now, despite our pilgrimage, Satan is strong with you, my gentle cousin, and prompts thee to leasing. Can you deny that you gaged your ruby ring against my golden bracelet, that younder Knight of the Libbard, or how call you him, could not be seduced from his post?"

"Your Majesty is too great for me to gainsay you," replied Edith; "but these ladies can, if they will, bear me witness, that it was your Highness who proposed such a wager, and took the ring from my finger, even while I was declaring that I did not think it maidenly to gage any thing on such a subject."

"Nay, but, my Lady Edith," said another voice, "you must needs grant, under your favour, that you expressed yourself very confident of the valour of that same knight of the Leopold."

"And if I did, minion," said Edith, angrily "is that a good reason why thou shouldst put in thy word to flatter her Majesty's humour? I spoke of that knight but as all men speak who have seen him in the field, and had no more interest in defending than thou in detracting from him. In a camp, what can women speak of save soldiers and deeds of arms?"

"The noble Lady Edith," said a third voice, "hath never forgiven Calista and me, since we told your Majesty that she dropped two rose-buds in the chapel."

"If your Majesty," said Edith, in a tone which Sir Kenneth could judge to be that of respectful remonstrance, "have no other commands for me than to hear the gibes of your waiting-women, I must crave your permission to withdraw."

"Silence, Florise," said the Queen, "and let not our indulgence lead you to forget the difference betwixt yourself and the kinswoman of England.—But you, my dear cousin," she continued, resuming her tone of raillery, "how can you, who are so good-natured, begrudge us poor wretches a few minutes' laughing, when we have had so many days devoted to weeping and gnashing of teeth?"

"Great be your mirth, royal lady," said Edith; "yet would I be content not to smile for the rest of my life, rather than"——

She stopped, apparently out of respect, but Sir Kenneth could hear that she was in

"Forgive me," said Berengaria, a thoughtless but good-humoured princess of the House of Navarre,—"but what is the great offence after all? A young knight has been wiled hither—has stolen—or has *been* stolen—from his post, which no one will disturb in his absence, for the sake of a fair lady; for, to do your champion justice, sweet one, the wisdom of Nectabanus could conjure him hither in no name but yours."

"Gracious Heaven! your Majesty does not say so?" said Edith, in a voice of alarm quite different from the agitation she had previously evinced,—"you cannot say so, consistently with respect for your own honour, and for mine, your husband's kinswoman!—Say you were jesting with me, my royal mistress, and forgive me that I could, even for a moment, think it possible you could be in earnest!"

"The Lady Edith," said the Queen, in a displeased tone of voice, "regrets the ring we have won of her.—We will restore the pledge to you, gentle cousin, only you must not grudge us in turn a little triumph over the wisdom which has been so often spread over us, as a banner over a host."

"A triumph!" exclaimed Edith, indignantly; "a triumph!—the triumph will be with the infidel, when he hears that the Queen of England can make the reputation of her husband's kinswoman the subject of a light frolic."

"You are angry, fair cousin, at losing your favourite ring," said the Queen—"Come, since you grudge to pay your wager, we will renounce our right; it was your name and that pledge brought him hither, and we care not for the bait after the fish is caught."

"Madam," replied Edith, impatiently, "you know well that your Grace could not wish for any thing of mine but it becomes instantly yours. But I would give a bushel of rubies ere ring or name of mine had been used to bring a brave man into a fault, and perhaps to disgrace and punishment."

"O, it is for the safety of our true knight that we fear?" said the Queen. "You rate our power too low, fair cousin, when you speak of a life being lost for a frolic of ours. O, Lady Edith, others have influence on the iron breasts of warriors as well as you—the heart even of a lion is made of flesh, not of stone; and, believe me, I have interest enough with Richard to save this knight, in whose fate Lady Edith is so deeply concerned, from the penalty of disobeying his royal commands."

"For the love of the blessed Cross, most royal lady," said Edith—and Sir Kenneth, with feelings which it were hard to unravel, heard her prostrate herself at the Queen's feet,—"for the love of our blessed Lady, and of every holy saint in the calendar, beware what you do! You know not King Richard—you have been but shortly wedded to him—your breath might as well combat the west wind when it is wildest, as your words persuade my royal kinsman to pardon a military offence. Oh! for God's sake, dismiss this gentleman, if indeed you have lured him hither! I could almost be content to rest with the shame of having invited him, did I know that he was returned again where his duty calls him!"

"Arise, cousin, arise," said Queen Berengaria, "and be assured all will be better than you think. Rise, dear Edith; I am sorry I have played my foolery with a knight in whom you take such deep interest—Nay, wring not thy hands—I will believe thou carest not for him—believe any thing rather than see thee look so wretchedly miserable—I tell thee I will take the blame on myself with King Richard in behalf of thy fair northern friend—thine acquaintance, I would say, since thou own'st him not as a friend.—Nay, look not so reproachfully—We will send Nectabanus to dismiss this Knight of the Standard to his post; and we ourselves will grace him on some future day, to make amends for his wild-goose chase. He is, I warrant, but lying perdue in some neighbouring tent."

"By my crown of lilies, and my sceptre of a specially good water-reed," said Nectabanus, "your Majesty is mistaken—he is nearer at hand than you wot—he lieth ensconced there behind that canvass partition."

"And within hearing of each word we have spoken," exclaimed the Queen, in her turn violently agitated—"Out, monster of folly and

As she uttered these words, Nectaban the pavilion with a yell of such a natur still doubtful whether Berengaria had co buke to words, or added some more pression of her displeasure.

"What can now be done?" said the Q in a whisper of undisguised uneasiness.

"That which must," said Edith must see this gentleman, and place ou mercy."

So saying, she began hastily to un which at one place covered an entrance cation.

"For Heaven's sake, forbear—consi Queen, "my apartment—our dress—t honour!"

But ere she could detail her remonstr tain fell, and there was no division any l the armed knight and the party of ladies. of an Eastern night occasioned the und Berengaria and her household to be rat ple and unstudied than their station, an of a male spectator of rank, required. T remembered, and with a loud shriek apartment where Sir Kenneth was disc in a copartment of the ample pavilion, n separated from that in which they stoo and agitation of the Lady Edith, as wel interest she felt in a hasty explanation w tish knight, perhaps occasioned her f her locks were more dishevelled, and h heedfully covered, than was the wont damsels, in an age which was not, after prudish or scrupulous period of the anc thin loose garment of pink-coloured s principal part of her vestments, with Ori into which she had hastily thrust her fa scarf hurriedly and loosely thrown abo ders. Her head had no other covering of rich and dishevelled locks falling rou side, that half hid a countenance, whi sense of modesty, and of resentment, a and agitating feelings had covered with

But although Edith felt her situation delicacy which is her sex's greatest cha seem that for a moment she placed her ness in comparison with the duty, w thought, she owed to him, who had error and danger on her account. She her scarf more closely over her neck an she hastily laid from her hand a lamp, w much lustre over her figure; but while stood motionless on the same spot in w first discovered, she rather stepped tow tired from him, as she exclaimed, "H post, valiant knight!—you are deceived i ed hither—ask no questions."

"I need ask none," said the knight, one knee, with the reverential devotion the altar, and bending his eyes on the gr looks should increase the lady's embarra

"Have you heard all?" said Edith, "Gracious saints! then wherefore wait y each minute that passes is loaded with d

"I have heard that I am dishonoure have heard it from you," answered Kenn reck I how soon punishment follows t one petition to you, and then I seek, amo of the infidels, whether dishonour may r out with blood."

"Do not so, neither," said the lady. dally not here—all may yet be well, if yo despatch."

"I wait but for your forgiveness," sai still kneeling, "for my presumption in my poor services could have been requi by you."

"I do forgive you—O, I have nothing have been the means of injuring you—B —I will forgive—I will value you—that every brave Crusader—if you will but b

"Receive, first, this precious yet fatal pledge," said the knight, tendering the ring to Edith who now showed gestures of impatience.

"Oh, no, no," she said declining to receive it.—"Keep it—keep it as a mark of my regard—my regret, I would say. O begone, if not for your own sake, for mine!"

Almost recompensed for the loss even of honour, which her voice had denounced to him, by the interest which she seemed to testify in his safety, Sir Kenneth rose from his knee, and casting a momentary glance on Edith, bowed low and seemed about to withdraw. At the same instant, that maidenly bashfulness, which the energy of Edith's feelings had till then triumphed over, became conqueror in its turn, and she hastened from the apartment, extinguishing her lamp as she went, and leaving, in Sir Kenneth's thoughts, both mental and natural gloom behind her.

She must be obeyed, was the first distinct idea which waked him from his reverie, and he hastened to the place by which he had entered the pavilion. To pass under the canvass in the manner he had entered, required time and attention, and he made a readier aperture by slitting the canvass wall with his poniard. When in the free air, he felt rather stupified and overpowered by a conflict of sensations, than able to ascertain what was the real import of the whole. He was obliged to spur himself to action, by recollecting that the commands of the Lady Edith had required haste. Even then, engaged as he was amongst tent-ropes and tents, he was compelled to move with caution until he should regain the path or avenue, aside from which the dwarf had led him, in order to escape the observation of the guards before the Queen's pavilion; and he was obliged also to move slowly, and with precaution, to avoid giving an alarm, either by falling or by the clashing of his armour. A thin cloud had obscured the moon, too, at the very instant of his leaving the tent, and Sir Kenneth had to struggle with this inconvenience at a moment when the dizziness of his head, and the fulness of his heart, scarce left him powers of intelligence sufficient to direct his motions.

But at once sounds came upon his ear, which instantly recalled him to the full energy of his faculties. These proceeded from the Mount of Saint George. He heard first a single fierce, angry, and savage bark, which was immediately followed by a yell of agony. No deer ever bounded with a wilder start at the voice of Roswal, than did Sir Kenneth at what he feared was the death-cry of that noble hound, from whom no ordinary injury could have extracted even the slightest acknowledgment of pain. He surmounted the space which divided him from the avenue, and, having attained it, began to run towards the mount, although loaded with his mail, faster than most men could have accompanied him even if unarmed, relaxed not his pace for the steep sides of the artificial mound, and in a few minutes stood on the platform upon its summit.

The moon broke forth at this moment, and showed him that the standard of England was vanished, that the spear on which it had floated lay broken on the ground, and beside it was his faithful hound, apparently in the agonies of death.

CHAPTER XIV.

—All my long arrear of honour lost,
Heap'd up in youth, and hoarded up for age!
Hath honour's fountain then suck'd up the stream?
He hath—and hooting boys may barefoot pass,
And gather pebbles from the naked ford!—*Don Sebastian.*

After a torrent of afflicting sensations, by which he was at first almost stunned and confounded, Sir Kenneth's first thought was to look for the authors of this violation of the English banner; but in no direction could he see traces of them. His next, which to some persons, but scarce to any who have made intimate acquaintances among the canine race, may appear strange, was to examine the condition of his faithful Roswal, mortally wounded, as it seemed, in discharging the duty which his master had been seduced to abandon. He caressed the dying animal, who faithful to the last, seemed to forget his own pain in the satisfaction he received from his master's presence, and continued wagging his tail and licking his hand, even while by low moanings he expressed that his agony was increased by the attempts which Sir Kenneth made to withdraw from the wound the fragment of the lance, or javelin, with which it had been inflicted; then redoubled his feeble endearments, as if fearing he had offended his master by showing a sense of the pain to which his interference had subjected him. There was something in the display of the dying creature's attachment, which mixed as a bitter ingredient with the sense of disgrace and desolation by which Sir Kenneth was oppressed. His only friend seemed removed from him, just when he had incurred the contempt and hatred of all besides. The knight's strength of mind gave way to a burst of agonized distress, and he groaned and wept aloud.

While he thus indulged his grief, a clear and solemn voice, close beside him, pronounced these words in the sonorous tone of the readers of the mosque, and in the lingua Franca, mutually understood by Christians and Saracens:—

"Adversity is like the period of the former and of the latter rain,—cold, comfortless, unfriendly to men and to animals; yet from that season have their birth the flower and the fruit, the date, the rose, and the pomegranate."

Sir Kenneth of the Leopard turned towards the speaker, and beheld the Arabian physician, who, approaching unheard, had seated himself a little behind him cross-legged, and uttered with gravity, yet not without a tone of sympathy, the moral sentences of consolation with which the Koran and its commentators supplied him; for, in the East, wisdom is held to consist, less in a display of the sage's own inventive talents, than in his ready memory, and happy application of, and reference to, "that which is written."

Ashamed at being surprised in a womanlike expression of sorrow, Sir Kenneth dashed his tears indignantly aside, and again busied himself with his dying favourite.

"The poet hath said," continued the Arab, without noticing the knight's averted looks and sullen deportment—"the ox for the field and the camel for the desert. Were not the hand of the leech fitter than that of the soldier to cure wounds, though less able to inflict them?"

"This patient, Hakim, is beyond thy help," said Sir Kenneth; "and, besides, he is, by thy law an unclean animal."

"Where Allah hath deigned to bestow life, and a sense of pain and pleasure," said the physician, "it were sinful pride should the sage, whom he has enlightened, refuse to prolong existence, or assuage agony. To the sage, the cure of a miserable groom, of a poor dog, and of a conquering monarch, are events of little distinction. Let me examine this wounded animal."

Sir Kenneth acceded in silence, and the physician inspected and handled Roswal's wound with as much care and attention as if he had been a human being. He then took forth a case of instruments, and, by the judicious and skilful application of pincers, withdrew from the wounded shoulder the fragment of the weapon, and stopped with styptics and bandages the effusion of blood which followed; the creature all the while suffering him patiently to perform these kind offices, as if he had been aware of his kind intentions.

"The animal may be cured," said El Hakim, addressing himself to Sir Kenneth, "if you will permit me to carry him to my tent, and treat him with the care which the nobleness of his nature deserves. For know, that thy servant Adonbec is no less skilful in the race and pedigree, and distinctions of good dogs and of noble steeds, than in the diseases which affect the human race."

"Take him with you," said the knight. "I bestow him on you freely if he recovers. I owe thee a reward for attendance on my squire, and have nothing else to

pay it with. For myself,—I will never again wind bugle, or halloo to hound!"

The Arabian made no reply, but gave a signal with a clapping of his hands, which was instantly answered by the appearance of two black slaves. He gave them his orders in Arabic, received the answer, that "to hear was to obey," when, taking the animal in their arms, they removed him without much resistance on his part; for though his eyes turned to his master, he was too weak to struggle.

"Fare thee well, Roswal, then," said Sir Kenneth, — fare thee well, my last and only friend—thou art too noble a possession to be retained by one such as I must in future call myself.—I would," he said, as the slaves retired, "that, dying as he is, I could exchange conditions with that noble animal!"

It is written," answered the Arabian, although the exclamation had not been addressed to him, "that all creatures are fashioned for the service of man; and the master of the earth speaketh folly when he would exchange, in his impatience, his hopes here and to come, for the servile condition of an inferior being."

"A dog who dies in discharging his duty," said the knight, sternly, "is better than a man who survives the desertion of it. Leave me, Hakim; thou hast, on this side of miracle, the most wonderful science which man ever possessed, but the wounds of the spirit are beyond thy power."

"Not if the patient will explain his calamity, and be guided by the physician," said Adonbec el Hakim.

"Know, then," said Sir Kenneth, "since thou art so importunate, that last night the Banner of England was displayed from this mound—I was its appointed guardian—morning is now breaking—there lies the broken banner-spear—the standard itself is lost—and here sit I a living man!"

"How!" said El Hakim, examining him; "thy armour is whole—there is no blood on thy weapons, and report speaks thee one unlikely to return thus from fight.—Thou hast been trained from thy post—ay, trained by the rosy cheek and black eye of one of those houris, to whom you Nazarenes vow rather such service as is due to Allah, than such love as may lawfully be rendered to forms of clay like our own. It has been thus assuredly; for so hath man ever fallen, even since the days of Sultan Adam."

"And if it were so, physician," said Sir Kenneth, sullenly, "what remedy?"

"Knowledge is the parent of power," said El Hakim, "as valour supplies strength.—Listen to me. Man is not as a tree, bound to one spot of earth—nor is he framed to cling to one bare rock, like the scarce animated shell-fish. Thine own Christian writings command thee, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another; and we Moslem also know that Mohammed, the Prophet of Allah, driven forth from the holy city of Mecca, found his refuge and his helpmates at Medina."

"And what does this concern me?" said the Scot.

"Much," answered the physician. "Even the sage flies the tempest which he cannot control. Use thy speed, therefore, and fly from the vengeance of Richard to the shadow of Saladin's victorious banner."

"I might indeed hide my dishonour," said Sir Kenneth, ironically, "in a camp of infidel heathens where the very phrase is unknown. But had I not better, partake more fully in their reproach? Does not thy advice stretch so far as to recommend me to take the turban?—Methinks I want but apostacy to consummate my infamy."

"Blaspheme not, Nazarene," said the physician, sternly; "Saladin makes no converts to the law of the Prophet, save those on whom its precepts shall work conviction. Open thine eyes to the light, and the great Soldan, whose liberality is as boundless as his power, may bestow on thee a kingdom; remain blinded if thou wilt, and, being one whose second life is doomed to misery, Saladin will yet, for this span *of present time, make thee rich and happy. But fear not that thy brows shall be* bound with the turban, *save at thine own free choice*"

"My choice were rather," said the knight, my writhen features should blacken, as they to do, in this evening's setting sun."

"Yet thou art not wise, Nazarene," said El H "to reject this fair offer; for I have power wit din, and can raise thee high in his grace. Le my son—this Crusade, as you call your wild prise, is like a large dromond* parting asunde waves. Thou thyself hast borne terms of tru the Kings and Princes, whose force is here ass to the mighty Soldan, and knew'st not, per the full tenor of thine own errand."

"I knew not, and I care not," said the knig patiently; "what avails it to me that I have late the envoy of princes, when, ere night, I a gibbeted and dishonoured corse?"

"Nay, I speak that it may not be so wit said the physician. "Saladin is courted on al the combined Princes of this league formed him, have made such proposals of compositi peace, as, in other circumstances, it migh become his honour to have granted to them. have made private offers, on their own sepa count, to disjoin their forces from the camp Kings of Frangistan, and even to lend their the defence of the standard of the Prophe Saladin will not be served by such treachery interested defection. The King of kings wi only with the Lion King. Saladin will hol with none but the Melech Ric, and with him treat like a prince, or fight like a champi Richard he will yield such conditions of his erality, as the swords of all Europe could nev pel from him by force or terror. He will p free pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and all the place the Nazarenes list to worship; nay, he will share even his empire with his brother Richa he will allow Christian garrisons in the six st cities of Palestine, and one in Jerusalem its suffer them to be under the immediate comm the officers of Richard, who, he consents, sh the name of King Guardian of Jerusalem farther, strange and incredible as you may t know, Sir Knight—for to your honour I ca mit even that almost incredible secret—kno Saladin will put a sacred seal on this happ betwixt the bravest and noblest of Frangist Asia, by raising to the rank of his royal w Christian damsel, allied in blood to King R and known by the name of the Lady Edith o tagenet."†

"Ha!—say'st thou?" exclaimed Sir Kennet listening with indifference and apathy to the ing part of El Hakim's speech, was touched last communication, as the thrill of a nerve pectedly jarred, will awaken the sensation of even in the torpor of palsy. Then, moderat tone, by dint of much effort, he restrained hi nation, and, veiling it under the appearance temptuous doubt, he prosecuted the converse order to get as much knowledge as possibl plot, as he deemed it, against the honour and ness of her, whom he loved not the less that l sion had ruined, apparently, his fortunes, at on his honour.—"And what Christian," he sai tolerable calmness, "would sanction a union o tural, as that of a Christian maiden with an lieving Saracen?"

"Thou art but an ignorant, bigoted Naz said the Hakim. "Seest thou not how the h medan princes daily intermarry with the noble rene maidens in Spain, without scandal ei Moor or Christian? And the noble Soldan his full confidence in the blood of Richard, pe English maid the freedom which your F manners have assigned to women. He wil her the free exercise of her religion,—seeing t

* The largest sort of vessels then known were ter *monds*, or dromedaries.

† This may appear so extraordinary and improbab position, that it is necessary to say such a one was made. The historians, however, substitute the Queen of Naples, sister of Richard, for the bride, and brother for the bridegroom. They appear to have been of the existence of Edith of Plantagenet.—See Mill's the Crusades, vol. ii. p. 61.

th, it signifies but little to which faith females
cted,—and he will assign her such place and
r all the women of his zenana, that she shall
ery respect his sole and absolute Queen."
it!" said Sir Kenneth, "darest thou think,
, that Richard would give his kinswoman
n-born and virtuous princess—to be, at best,
most concubine in the haram of an misbe-
Know, Hakim, the meanest free Christian
ould scorn, on his child's behalf, such splen-
miny."
a errest," said the Hakim; "Philip of France,
nry of Champagne, and others of Richard's
l allies, have heard the proposal without
and have promised, as far as they may, to
an alliance that may end these wasteful wars;
wise arch-priest of Tyre hath undertaken to
e proposal to Richard, not doubting that he
able to bring the plan to good issue. The
s wisdom hath as yet kept his proposition
om others, such as he of Montserrat, and the
of the Templars, because he knows they seek
by Richard's death or disgrace, not by his
ionour.—Up, therefore, Sir Knight, and to
I will give thee a scroll which shall advance
ily with the Soldan; and deem not that you
ng your country, or her cause, or her religion,
e interest of the two monarchs will speedily
ime. To Saladin thy counsel will be most
ble, since thou canst make him aware of much
ng the marriages of the Christians, the
it of their wives, and other points of their
l usages, which, in the course of such treaty,
concerns him that he should know. The right
the Soldan grasps the treasures of the East,
the fountain of generosity. Or, if thou de-
Saladin, when allied with England, can have
difficulty to obtain from Richard not only
on and restoration to favour, but an honour-
mand in the troops which may be left of the
England's host, to maintain their joint gov-
in Palestine. Up, then, and mount—there
lin path before thee."
im," said the Scottish knight, "thou art a
peace—also, thou hast saved the life of Rich-
England—and, moreover, of my own poor
Strauchan. I have, therefore, heard to an
natter, which, being propounded by another
than thyself, I would have cut short with a
my dagger! Hakim, in return for thy kind-
dvise thee to see that the Saracen, who shall
o Richard a union betwixt the blood of Plan-
and that of his accursed race, do put on a
which is capable to endure such a blow of a
e as that which struck down the gate of
'ertes, he will be otherwise placed beyond the
m of thy skill."
art, then, wilfully determined not to fly to
een host?" said the physician—"Yet, remem-
stayest to certain destruction; and the wri-
thy law, as well as ours, prohibit man from
into the tabernacle of his own life."
forbid!" replied the Scot, crossing him-
ut we are also forbidden to avoid the punish-
hich our crimes have deserved. And, since
re thy thoughts of fidelity, Hakim, it grudges
I have bestowed my good hound on thee,
ld he live, he will have a master ignorant of
"
t that is begrudged, is already recalled," said
n, "only we physicians are sworn not to send
patient uncured. If the dog recover, he is
re yours."
o, Hakim," answered Sir Kenneth; "men
ot of hawk and hound when there is but
of day-breaking betwixt them and death.
e to recollect my sins, and reconcile myself
en."
re thee in thine obstinacy," said the physi-
he mist hides the precipice from those who
ed to fall over it."
thdrew slowly, turning from time to time his
if to observe whether the devoted knight
t recall him either by word or signal. At
last his turbaned figure was lost among the labyrinth of tents which lay extended beneath, whitening in the pale light of the dawning, before which the moon-beam had now faded away.

But although the physician Adonbec's words had not made that impression upon Kenneth which the sage desired, they had inspired the Scot with a motive for desiring life, which, dishonoured as he conceived himself to be, he was before willing to part from as from a sullied vestment no longer becoming his wear. Much that had passed betwixt himself and the hermit, besides what he had observed between the anchorite and Sheerkohf, (or Ilderim,) he now recalled to recollection, and tended to confirm what the Hakim had told him of the secret article of the treaty.

"The reverend impostor!" he exclaimed to himself: "the hoary hypocrite! He spoke of the unbelieving husband converted by the believing wife—and what do I know but that the traitor exhibited to the Saracen, accursed of God, the beauties of Edith Plantagenet, that the hound might judge if the princely Christian lady were fit to be admitted into the haram of a misbeliever? If I had yonder infidel Ilderim, or whatsoever he is called, again in the gripe with which I once held him fast as ever hound held hare, never again should *he* at least come on errand disgraceful to the honour of Christian king, or noble and virtuous maiden. But I—my hours are fast dwindling into minutes—yet, while I have life and breath, something must be done, and speedily."

He paused for a few minutes, threw from him his helmet, then strode down the hill, and took the road to King Richard's pavilion.

CHAPTER XV.

The feather'd songster, chanticleer,
Had wound his bugle-horn,
And told the early villager
The coming of the morn.
King Edward saw the ruddy streaks
Of light eclipse the gray,
And heard the raven's croaking throat
Proclaim the fated day.
"Thou'rt right," he said, "for by the God
That sits enthroned on high,
Charles Bawdwin, and his fellows twain,
This day shall surely die."—CHATTERTON.

On the evening on which Sir Kenneth assumed his post, Richard, after the stormy event which disturbed its tranquillity, had retired to rest in the plenitude of confidence inspired by his unbounded courage, and the superiority which he had displayed in carrying the point he aimed at in presence of the whole Christian host, and its leaders, many of whom he was aware, regarded in their secret souls the disgrace of the Austrian Duke as a triumph over themselves; so that his pride felt gratified, that in prostrating one enemy he had mortified a hundred.

Another monarch would have doubled his guards on the evening after such a scene, and kept at least a part of his troops under arms. But Cœur de Lion dismissed, upon the occasion, even his ordinary watch, and assigned to his soldiers a donative of wine to celebrate his recovery, and to drink to the Banner of Saint George; and his quarter of the camp would have assumed a character totally devoid of vigilance and military preparation, but that Sir Thomas de Vaux, the Earl of Salisbury, and other nobles, took precautions to preserve order and discipline among the revellers.

The physician attended the King from his retiring to bed till midnight was past, and twice administered medicine to him during that period, always previously observing the quarter of heaven occupied by the full moon, whose influences he declared to be most sovereign, or most baleful, to the effect of his drugs. It was three hours after midnight ere El Hakim withdrew from the royal tent, to one which had been pitched for himself and his retinue. In his way thither he visited the tent of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard, in order to see the condition of his first patient in the Christian camp, old Strauchan, as the knight's esquire was named. Inquiring there for Sir Kenneth

himself, El Hakim learned on what duty he was employed, and probably this information led him to Saint George's Mount, where he found him whom he sought in the disastrous circumstances alluded to in the last chapter.

It was about the hour of sunrise, when a slow, armed tread was heard approaching the King's pavilion; and ere De Vaux, who slumbered beside his master's bed as lightly as ever sleep sat upon the eyes of a watch-dog, had time to do more than arise and say, "Who comes?" the Knight of the Leopard entered the tent, with a deep and devoted gloom seated upon his manly features.

"Whence this bold intrusion, Sir Knight?" said De Vaux, sternly, yet in a tone which respected his master's slumbers.

"Hold! De Vaux," said Richard, awaking on the instant; "Sir Kenneth cometh like a good soldier to render an account of his guard—to such the General's tent is ever accessible."—Then rising from his slumbering posture, and leaning on his elbow, he fixed his large bright eye upon the warrior—"Speak, Sir Scot; thou comest to tell me of a vigilant, safe, and honourable watch, dost thou not? The rustling of the folds of the Banner of England were enough to guard it, even without the body of such a knight as men hold thee."

"As men will hold me no more," said Sir Kenneth—"My watch hath neither been vigilant, safe, nor honourable. The Banner of England has been carried off."

"And thou alive to tell it?" said Richard, in a tone of derisive incredulity.—"Away, it cannot be. There is not even a scratch on thy face.—Why dost thou stand thus mute? Speak the truth—it is ill jesting with a king—yet I will forgive thee if thou hast lied."

"Lied! Sir King!" returned the unfortunate knight, with fierce emphasis, and one glance of fire from his eye, bright and transient as the flash from the cold and stony flint. "But this also must be endured.—I have spoken the truth."

"By God, and by Saint George!" said the King, bursting into fury, which, however, he instantly checked—"De Vaux, go view the spot—This fever has disturbed his brain—This cannot be—The man's courage is proof—It *cannot* be! Go speedily—or send, if thou wilt not go."

The King was interrupted by Sir Henry Neville, who came breathless, to say that the banner was gone, and the knight who guarded it overpowered, and most probably murdered, as there was a pool of blood where the banner-spear lay shivered.

"But whom do I see here?" said Neville, his eyes suddenly resting upon Sir Kenneth.

"A traitor," said the King, starting to his feet, and seizing the curtal-axe, which was ever near his bed—"a traitor! whom thou shalt see die a traitor's death."—And he drew back the weapon as in act to strike.

Colourless, but firm as a marble statue, the Scot stood before him, with his bare head uncovered by any protection, his eyes cast down to the earth, his lips scarcely moving, yet muttering probably in prayer. Opposite to him and within due reach for a blow, stood King Richard, his large person wrapt in the folds of his camiscia, or ample gown of linen, except where the violence of his action had flung the covering from his right arm, shoulder, and a part of his breast, leaving to view a specimen of a frame which might have merited his Saxon predecessor's epithet of Ironside. He stood for an instant, prompt to strike—then sinking the head of the weapon towards the ground, he exclaimed, "But there was blood, Neville—there was blood upon the place. Hark thee, Sir Scot—brave thou wert once, for I have seen thee fight—Say thou hast slain two of the thieves in defence of the Standard—say but one—say thou hast struck but a good blow in our behalf, and get thee out of the camp with thy life and thy infamy!"

"You have called me liar my Lord King," replied *Kenneth, firmly; "and therein,* at least, you have *done me wrong—Know, that* there was no blood shed *in defence of the Standard* save that of a poor hound, which, more faithful than his master, defended the charge which he deserted."

"Now, by Saint George!" said Richard, again heaving up his arm—But De Vaux threw himself between the King and the object of his vengeance, and spoke with the blunt truth of his character, "My liege, this must not be—here, nor by your own hand. It is enough of folly for one night and day, to have intrusted your banner to a Scot—said I not they were ever fair and false?"*

"Thou didst, De Vaux; thou wast right, and I confess it," said Richard. "I should have known him better—I should have remembered how the fox William deceived me touching this Crusade."

"My lord," said Sir Kenneth, "William of Scotland never deceived; but circumstances prevented his bringing his forces."

"Peace, shameless!" said the King; "thou sullied the name of a prince, even by speaking it.—And yet, De Vaux, it is strange," he added, "to see the bearing of the man. Coward or traitor he must be, yet he abode the blow of Richard Plantagenet, as our arm had been raised to lay knighthood on his shoulder. Had he shown the slightest sign of fear—had but a joint trembled, or an eyelid quivered, I had shattered his head like a crystal goblet. But I cannot strike where there is neither fear nor resistance."

There was a pause.

"My lord," said Kenneth——

"Ha!" replied Richard, interrupting him, "hast thou found thy speech? Ask grace from Heaven, but none from me, for England is dishonoured through thy fault; and wert thou mine own and only brother, there is no pardon for thy fault."

"I speak not to demand grace of mortal man," said the Scot; "it is in your Grace's pleasure to give or refuse me time for Christian shrift—if man denies it, may God grant me the absolution which I would otherwise ask of his Church! But whether I die on the instant, or half an hour hence, I equally beseech your Grace for one moment's opportunity to speak that to your royal person, which highly concerns your fame as a Christian King."

"Say on," said the King, making no doubt that he was about to hear some confession concerning the loss of the Banner.

"What I have to speak," said Sir Kenneth, "touches the royalty of England, and must be said to no ears but thine own."

"Begone with yourselves, sirs," said the King to Neville and De Vaux.

The first obeyed, the latter would not stir from the King's presence.

"If you said I was in the right," replied De Vaux to his sovereign, "I will be treated as one should be who hath been found to be right—that is, I will have my own will. I leave you not with this false Scot."

"How! De Vaux," said Richard, angrily, and stamping slightly, "darest thou not venture our person with one traitor?"

"It is in vain you frown and stamp, my lord," said De Vaux; "I venture not a sick man with a sound one, a naked man with one armed in proof."

"It matters not," said the Scottish knight, "I seek no excuse to put off time—I will speak in presence of the Lord of Gilsland. He is good lord and true."

"But half an hour since," said De Vaux, with a groan, implying a mixture of sorrow and vexation, "and I had said as much for thee!"

"There is treason around you, King of England," continued Sir Kenneth.

"It may well be as thou say'st," replied Richard, "I have a pregnant example."

"Treason that will injure thee more deeply than the loss of a hundred banners in a pitched field. The—the"—Sir Kenneth hesitated, and at length continued, in a lower tone, "The Lady Edith"——

* Such were the terms in which the English used to speak of their poor northern neighbours, forgetting that their own encroachments upon the independence of Scotland obliged the weaker nation to defend themselves by policy as well as force. The disgrace must be divided between Edward I. and III., who enforced their domination over a free country, and the Scots who were compelled to take compulsory oaths, without the purpose of keeping them.

"Ha!" said the King, drawing himself suddenly into a state of haughty attention, and fixing his eye firmly on the supposed criminal; "What of her?—what of her?—what has she to do with this matter?"

"My lord," said the Scot, "there is a scheme on foot to disgrace your royal lineage, by bestowing the hand of the Lady Edith on the Saracen Soldan, and thereby to purchase a peace most dishonourable to Christendom, by an alliance most shameful to England."

This communication had precisely the contrary effect from that which Sir Kenneth expected. Richard Plantagenet was one of those, who, in Iago's words, would not serve God because it was the devil who bade him; advice or information often affected him less according to its real import, than through the tinge which it took from the supposed character and views of those by whom it was communicated. Unfortunately, the mention of his relative's name renewed his recollection of what he had considered as extreme presumption in the Knight of the Leopard, even when he stood high in the rolls of chivalry, but which, in his present condition, appeared an insult sufficient to drive the fiery monarch into a frenzy of passion.

"Silence," he said, "infamous and audacious! By Heaven, I will have thy tongue torn out with hot pincers, for mentioning the very name of a noble Christian damsel! Know, degenerate traitor, that I was already aware to what height thou hadst dared to raise thine eyes, and endured it, though it were insolence, even when thou hadst cheated us—for thou art all a deceit—into holding thee as of some name and fame. But now, with lips blistered with the confession of thine own dishonour—that thou shouldst *now* dare to name our noble kinswoman as one in whose fate thou hast part or interest! What is it to thee if she marry Saracen or Christian?—what is it to thee, if in a camp where princes turn cowards by day, and robbers by night—where brave knights turn to paltry deserters and traitors—what is it, I say, to thee or any one, if I should please to ally myself to truth, and to valour, in the person of Saladin?"

"Little to me, indeed, to whom all the world will soon be as nothing," answered Sir Kenneth, boldly; "but were I now stretched on the rack, I would tell thee, that what I have said is much to thine own conscience and thine own fame. I tell thee, Sir King, that if thou dost but in thought entertain the purpose of wedding thy kinswoman the Lady Edith"—

"Name her not—and for an instant think not of her!" said the King, again straining the curtal-axe in his gripe, until the muscles started above his brawny arm, like a cordage formed by the ivy around the limb of an oak.

"Not name—not think of her!" answered Sir Kenneth, his spirits, stunned as they were by self-depression, beginning to recover their elasticity from this species of controversy,—"Now, by the Cross, on which I place my hope, her name shall be the last word in my mouth her image the last thought in my mind! Try thy boasted strength on this bare brow, and see if thou canst prevent my purpose."

"He will drive me mad!"—said Richard, who, in his despite, was once more staggered in his purpose by the dauntless determination of the criminal.

Ere Thomas of Gilsland could reply, some bustle was heard without, and the arrival of the Queen was announced from the outer part of the pavilion.

"Detain her—detain her, Neville!" cried the King; "this is no sight for women—Fie, that I have suffered such a paltry traitor to chafe me thus!—Away with him, De Vaux," he whispered, "through the back-entrance of our tent—coop him up close, and answer for his safe custody with your life.—And hark ye—he is presently to die—let him have a ghostly father—we would not kill soul and body.—And stay—hark thee—we will not have him dishonoured—he shall die knightlike, in his belt and spurs; for if his treachery be as black as hell, his boldness may match that of the devil himself."

De Vaux, right glad, if the truth may be guessed, that the scene ended without Richard's descending to the unkingly act of himself slaying an unresisting prisoner, made haste to remove Sir Kenneth by a private issue to a separate tent, where he was disarmed and put in fetters for security. De Vaux looked on with a steady and melancholy attention, while the provost's officers, to whom Sir Kenneth was now committed, took these severe precautions.

When they were ended, he said solemnly to the unhappy criminal—"It is King Richard's pleasure that you die undegraded—without mutilation of your body, or shame to your arms—and that your head be severed from the trunk by the sword of the executioner."

"It is kind," said the knight, in a low and rather submissive tone of voice, as one who received an unexpected favour; "my family will not then hear the worst of the tale—Oh, my father—my father!"

This muttered invocation did not escape the blunt but kindly-natured Englishman, and he brushed the back of his large hand over his rough features, ere he could proceed.

"It is Richard of England's farther pleasure," he said, at length, "that you have speech with a holy man, and I have met on the passage hither with a Carmelite friar, who may fit you for your passage. He waits without, until you are in a frame of mind to receive him."

"Let it be instantly," said the knight, "In this also Richard is kind. I cannot be more fit to see the good father at any time than now; for life and I have taken farewell, as two travellers who have arrived at the crossway, where their roads separate."

"It is well," said De Vaux, slowly and solemnly; "for it irks me somewhat to say that which sums my message. It is King Richard's pleasure that you prepare for instant death."

"God's pleasure and the King's be done," replied the knight, patiently. "I neither contest the justice of the sentence, nor desire delay of the execution."

De Vaux began to leave the tent, but very slowly—paused at the door, and looked back at the Scot, from whose aspect thoughts of the world seemed banished, as if he was composing himself into deep devotion. The feelings of the stout English Baron were in general none of the most acute, and yet, on the present occasion, his sympathy overpowered him in an unusual manner. He came hastily back to the bundle of reeds on which the captive lay, took one of his fettered hands, and said, with as much softness as his rough voice was capable of expressing, "Sir Kenneth, thou art yet young—thou hast a father. My Ralph, whom I left training his little Galloway nag on the banks of the Irthing, may one day attain thy years—and, but for last night, would to God I saw his youth bear such promise as thine!—Can nothing be said or done in thy behalf?"

"Nothing," was the melancholy answer. "I have deserted my charge—the banner intrusted to me is lost—When the headsman and block are prepared, the head and trunk are ready to part company."

"Nay, then, God have mercy!" said De Vaux; "yet would I rather than my best horse I had taken that watch myself. There is mystery in it, young man, as a plain man may deecry, though he cannot see through it.—Cowardice? pshaw! No coward ever fought as I have seen thee do.—Treachery? I cannot think traitors die in their treason so calmly. Thou hast been trained from thy post by some deep guile—some well-devised stratagem—the cry of some distressed maiden has caught thine ear, or the laughful look of some merry one has taken thine eye. Never blush for it, we have all been led aside by such gear. Come, I pray thee, make a clean conscience of it to me, instead of the priest—Richard is merciful when his mood is abated. Hast thou nothing to intrust to me?"

The unfortunate knight turned his face from the kind warrior, and answered—"NOTHING."

And De Vaux, who had exhausted his topics of persuasion, arose and left the tent, with folded arms, and in melancholy deeper than he thought the occasion merited—even angry with himself, to find that so simple a matter as the death of a Scottish man could affect him so nearly.

"Yet," as he said to himself, "though the rough-footed knaves be our enemies in Cumberland, in Palestine one almost considers them as brethren."

CHAPTER XVI.

'Tis not her sense—for sure, in that
There's nothing more than common;
And all her wit is only chat,
Like any other woman.—*Song.*

THE high-born Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, King of Navarre, and the Queen-Consort of the heroic Richard, was accounted one of the most beautiful women of the period. Her form was slight, though exquisitely moulded. She was graced with a complexion not common in her country, a profusion of fair hair, and features so extremely juvenile, as to make her look several years younger than she really was, though in reality she was not above one-and-twenty. Perhaps it was under the consciousness of this extremely juvenile appearance, that she affected, or at least practised, a little childish petulance, and wilfulness of manner, not unbefitting, she might suppose, a youthful bride, whose rank and age gave her a right to have her fantasies indulged and attended to. She was by nature perfectly good-humoured, and if her due share of admiration and homage (in her opinion a very large one) was duly resigned to her, no one could possess better temper, or a more friendly disposition; but then, like all despots, the more power that was voluntarily yielded to her, the more she desired to extend her sway. Sometimes, even when all her ambition was gratified, she chose to be a little out of health, and a little out of spirits; and physicians had to toil their wits to invent names for imaginary maladies, while her ladies racked their imagination for new games, new headgear, and new court-scandal, to pass away those unpleasant hours, during which their own situation was scarce to be greatly envied. There most frequent resource for diverting this malady was some trick, or piece of mischief, practised upon each other; and the good Queen, in the buoyancy of her reviving spirits, was, to speak truth, rather too indifferent whether the frolics thus practised were entirely befitting her own dignity, or whether the pain which those suffered upon whom they were inflicted, was not beyond the proportion of pleasure which she herself derived from them. She was confident in her husband's favour, in her high rank, and in her supposed power to make good whatever such pranks might cost others. In a word, she gambolled with the freedom of a young lioness, who is unconscious of the weight of her own paws when laid on those whom she sports with.

The Queen Berengaria loved her husband passionately, but she feared the loftiness and roughness of his character, and as she felt herself not to be his match in intellect, was not much pleased to see that he would often talk with Edith Plantagenet in preference to herself, simply because he found more amusement in her conversation, a more comprehensive understanding, and a more noble cast of thoughts and sentiments, than his beautiful consort exhibited. Berengaria did not hate Edith on that account, far less meditate her any harm; for, allowing for some selfishness, her character was, on the whole, innocent and generous. But the ladies of her train, sharp-sighted in such matters, had for some time discovered, that a poignant jest at the expense of the Lady Edith was a specific for relieving her Grace of England's low spirits, and the discovery saved their imagination much toil.

There was something ungenerous in this, because the Lady Edith was understood to be an orphan; and though she was called Plantagenet, and the Fair Maid of Anjou, and admitted by Richard to certain privileges only granted to the royal family, and held her place in the circle accordingly, yet few knew, and none acquainted with the Court of England ventured to ask, in what exact degree of relationship she stood to Cœur de Lion. She had come with Eleanor, the celebrated Queen-Mother of England, and joined Richard at Messina, as one of the ladies destined to attend on Berengaria, whose nuptials then approached. Richard treated his kinswoman with much *respectful observance, and the Queen made her her most constant attendant, and, even in despite of the petty jealousy which we have observed, treated her, generally, with suitable respect.*

The ladies of the household had, for a long time, no further advantage over Edith, than might be afforded by an opportunity of censuring a less artfully disposed head attire, or an unbecoming robe; for the lady was judged to be inferior in these mysteries. The silent devotion of the Scottish Knight did not, indeed, pass unnoticed; his liveries, his cognizance, his feats of arms, his mottoes and devices, were nearly watched, and occasionally made the subject of a passing jest. But then came the pilgrimage of the Queen and her ladies to Engaddi, a journey which the Queen had undertaken under a vow for the recovery of her husband's health, and which she had been encouraged to carry into effect by the Archbishop of Tyre for a political purpose. It was then, and in the chapel at that holy place, connected from above with a Carmelite nunnery, from beneath with the cell of the anchorite, that one of the Queen's attendants remarked that secret sign of intelligence which Edith had made to her lover, and failed not instantly to communicate it to her Majesty. The Queen returned from her pilgrimage enriched with this admirable recipe against dullness or ennui, and her train was at the same time augmented by a present of two wretched dwarfs from the dethroned Queen of Jerusalem, as deformed and as crazy (the excellence of that unhappy species) as any queen could have desired. One of Berengaria's idle amusements had been to try the effect of the sudden appearance of such ghastly and fantastic forms on the nerves of the Knight when left alone in the chapel; but the jest had been lost by the composure of the Scot, and the interference of the anchorite. She had now tried another, of which the consequences promised to be more serious.

The ladies again met after Sir Kenneth had retired from the tent; and the Queen, at first little moved by Edith's angry expostulations, only replied to her by upbraiding her prudery, and by indulging her wit at the expense of the garb, nation, and, above all, the poverty, of the Knight of the Leopard, in which she displayed a good deal of playful malice, mingled with some humour, until Edith was compelled to carry her anxiety to her separate apartment. But when, in the morning, a female, whom Edith had intrusted to make inquiry, brought word that the standard was missing, and its champion vanished, she burst into the Queen's apartment, and implored her to rise and proceed to the King's tent without delay, and use her powerful mediation to prevent the evil consequences of her jest.

The Queen, frightened in her turn, cast, as is usual, the blame of her own folly on those around her, and endeavoured to comfort Edith's grief, and appease her displeasure, by a thousand inconsistent arguments. She was sure no harm had chanced—the knight was sleeping, she fancied, after his night-watch. What though, for fear of the King's displeasure, he had deserted with the standard—it was but a piece of silk, and he but a needy adventurer—or, if he was put under warding for a time, she would soon get the King to pardon him—it was but waiting to let Richard's mood pass away.

Thus she continued talking thick and fast, and heaping together all sorts of inconsistencies, with the vain expectation of persuading both Edith and herself that no harm could come of a frolic, which in her heart she now bitterly repented. But while Edith in vain strove to intercept this torrent of idle talk, she caught the eye of one of the ladies who entered the Queen's apartment. There was death in her look of affright and horror, and Edith at the first glance of her countenance, had sunk at once on the earth, had not strong necessity, and her own elevation of character, enabled her to maintain at least external composure.

"Madam," she said to the Queen, "lose not another word in speaking, but save life—if, indeed," she added, her voice choking as she said it, "life may yet be saved."

"It may be—it may," answered the Lady Calista. "I have just heard that he has been brought before the King—it is not yet over—but," she added, bursting into a vehement flood of weeping, in which personal apprehensions had some share—"it will soon—unless some course be taken."

"I will vow a golden candlestick to the Holy Sepulchre—a shrine of silver to our Lady of Engaddi—a pall, worth one hundred bezants, to Saint Thomas of Orthez," said the Queen in extremity.

"Up, up, madam!" said Edith; "call on the saints if you list, but be your own best saint."

"Indeed, madam," said the terrified attendant, "the Lady Edith speaks truth. Up, madam, and let us to King Richard's tent, and beg the poor gentleman's life."

"I will go—I will go instantly," said the Queen, rising and trembling excessively; while her women, in as great confusion as herself, were unable to render her those duties which were indispensable to her ease. Calm, composed, only pale as death, Edith ministered to the Queen with her own hand, and alone supplied the deficiencies of her numerous attendants.

"How you wait, wenches!" said the Queen, not able even then to forget frivolous distinctions. "Suffer ye the Lady Edith to do the duties of your attendance?—Seest thou, Edith, they can do nothing—I shall never be attired in time. We will send for the Archbishop of Tyre, and employ him as a mediator."

"O no, no!" exclaimed Edith—"Go yourself, madam—you have done the evil, do you confer the remedy."

"I will go—I will go," said the Queen; "but if Richard be in his mood, I dare not speak to him—he will kill me!"

"Yet go, gracious madam," said the Lady Calista, who best knew her mistress' temper; "not a lion, in his fury, could look upon such a face and form, and retain so much as an angry thought—far less a love-true knight like the royal Richard, to whom your slightest word would be a command."

"Dost thou think so, Calista?" said the Queen. "Ah, thou little knowest—yet I will go—But see you here—what means this? You have bedizened me in green, a colour he detests. Lo you! let me have a blue robe, and—search for the ruby carcanet, which was part of the King of Cyprus's ransom—it is either in the steel-casket, or somewhere else."

"This, and a man's life at stake!" said Edith, indignantly; "it passes human patience. Remain at your ease, madam—I will go to King Richard—I am a party interested—I will know if the honour of a poor maiden of his blood is to be so far tampered with, that her name shall be abused to train a brave gentleman from his duty, bring him within the compass of death and infamy, and make, at the same time, the glory of England a laughing-stock to the whole Christian army."

At this unexpected burst of passion, Berengaria listened with an almost stupified look of fear and wonder. But as Edith was about to leave the tent, she exclaimed, though faintly, "Stop her—stop her!"

"You must indeed stop, noble lady Edith," said Calista, taking her arm gently; "and you, royal madam, I am sure, will go, and without farther dallying. If the Lady Edith goes alone to the King, he will be dreadfully incensed, nor will it be one life that will stay his fury."

"I will go—I will go," said the Queen, yielding to necessity; and Edith reluctantly halted to wait her movements.

They were now as speedy as she could have desired. The Queen hastily wrapped herself in a large loose mantle, which covered all inaccuracies of the toilet. In this guise, attended by Edith and her women, and preceded and followed by a few officers and men-at-arms, she hastened to the tent of her lionlike husband.

CHAPTER XVII.

Were every hair upon his head a life,
And every life were to be supplicated
By numbers equal to those hairs quadrupled,
Life after life should out like waning stars
Before the daybreak—or as festive lamps,
Which have lent lustre to the midnight revel,
Each after each are quench'd when guests depart!
Old Play.

The entrance of Queen Berengaria into the interior of Richard's pavilion was withstood—in the most respectful and reverential manner indeed—but still withstood, by the chamberlains who watched in the outer tent. She could hear the stern command of the King from within, prohibiting their entrance.

"You see," said the Queen, appealing to Edith, as if she had exhausted all means of intercession in her power—"I knew it—the King will not receive us."

At the same time, they heard Richard speak to some one within,—"Go, speed thine office quickly, sirrah, for in that consists thy mercy—ten bezants if thou deal'st on him at one blow.—And, hark thee, villain, observe if his cheek loses colour, or his eye falters—mark me the smallest twitch of the features, or wink of the eyelid—I love to know how brave souls meet death."

"If he sees my blade waved aloft without shrinking, he is the first ever did so," answered a harsh deep voice, which a sense of unusual awe had softened into a sound much lower than its usual coarse tones.

Edith could remain silent no longer. "If your Grace," she said to the Queen, "make not your own way, I make it for you; or if not for your Majesty, for myself, at least.—Chamberlains, the Queen demands to see King Richard—the wife to speak with her husband."

"Noble lady," said the officer, lowering his wand of office, "it grieves me to gainsay you; but his Majesty is busied on matters of life and death."

"And we seek also to speak with him on matters of life and death," said Edith.—"I will make entrance for your Grace."—And putting aside the chamberlain with one hand, she laid hold on the curtain with the other.

"I dare not gainsay her Majesty's pleasure," said the chamberlain, yielding to the vehemence of the fair petitioner; and, as he gave way, the Queen found herself obliged to enter the apartment of Richard.

The monarch was lying on his couch, and at some distance, as awaiting his farther commands, stood a man whose profession it was not difficult to conjecture. He was clothed in a jerkin of red cloth, which reached scantly below the shoulders, leaving the arms bare from about halfway above the elbow, and, as an upper garment, he wore, when about as at present to betake himself to his dreadful office, a coat or tabard without sleeves, something like that of a herald, made of dressed bull's hide, and stained in the front with many a broad spot and speckle of dull crimson. The jerkin, and the tabard over it, reached the knee, and the nether stocks, or covering of the legs, were of the same leather which composed the tabard. A cap of rough shag served to hide the upper part of a visage, which, like that of a screech-owl, seemed desirous to conceal itself from light—the lower part of the face being obscured by a huge red beard, mingling with shaggy locks of the same colour. What features were seen were stern and misanthropical. The man's figure was short, strongly made, with a neck like a bull, very broad shoulders, arms of great and disproportioned length a huge square trunk, and thick bandy legs. This truculent official leant on a sword, the blade of which was nearly four feet and a half in length, while the handle of twenty inches, surrounded by a ring of lead plummets to counterpoise the weight of such a blade, rose considerably above the man's head, as he rested his arm upon its hilt, waiting for King Richard's farther directions.

On the sudden entrance of the ladies, Richard, who was then lying on his couch, with his face towards the entrance, and resting on his elbow as he spoke to his grisly attendant, flung himself hastily, as if displeased and surprised, to the other side, turning his back to the Queen and the females of her train, and drawing around him the covering of his couch which, by his own choice, or more probably the flattering selection of his chamberlains, consisted of two large lions' skins, dressed in Venice with such admirable skill that they seemed softer than the hide of the deer.

Berengaria, such as we have described her, knew well—what woman knows not?—her own road

victory. After a hurried glance of undisguised and unaffected terror at the ghastly companion of her husband's secret councils, she rushed at once to the side of Richard's couch, dropped on her knees, flung her mantle from her shoulder, showing, as they hung down at their full length, her beautiful golden tresses, and while her countenance seemed like the sun bursting through a cloud yet bearing on its pallid front traces that its splendours have been obscured, she seized upon the right hand of the King, which, as he assumed his wonted posture, had been employed in dragging the covering of his couch, and gradually pulling it to her with a force which was resisted, though but faintly, she possessed herself of that arm, the prop of Christendom, and the dread of Heathenesse, and imprisoning its strength in both her little fairy hands, she bent upon it her brow, and united to it her lips.

"What needs this, Berengaria?" said Richard, his head still averted, but his hand remaining under her control.

"Send away that man—his look kills me!" muttered Berengaria.

"Begone, sirrah," said Richard, still without looking round—'What wait'st thou for? art thou fit to look on these ladies?"

"Your Highness's pleasure touching the head," said the man.

"Out with thee, dog!" answered Richard—"a Christian burial."

The man disappeared, after casting a look upon the beautiful Queen, in her deranged dress and natural loveliness, with a smile of admiration more hideous in its expression than even his usual scowl of cynical hatred against humanity.

"And now, foolish wench, what wishest thou?" said Richard, turning slowly and half reluctantly round to his royal suppliant.

But it was not in nature for any one, far less an admirer of beauty like Richard, to whom it stood only in the second rank to glory, to look without emotion on the countenance and the tremour of a creature so beautiful as Berengaria, or to feel, without sympathy, that her lips, her brow, were on his hand, and that it was wetted by her tears. By degrees, he turned on her his manly countenance, with the softest expression of which his large blue eye, which so often gleamed with insufferable light, was capable. Caressing her fair head, and mingling his large fingers in her beautiful and dishevelled locks, he raised and tenderly kissed the cherub countenance which seemed desirous to hide itself in his hand. The robust form, the broad, noble brow, and majestic looks, the naked arm and shoulder, the lions' skins among which he lay, and the fair fragile feminine creature that kneeled by his side, might have served for a model of Hercules reconciling himself, after a quarrel, to his wife Dejanira.

"And, once more, what seeks the lady of my heart in her knight's pavilion, at this early and unwonted hour?"

"Pardon, my most gracious liege, pardon!" said the Queen, whose fears began again to unfit her for the duty of intercessor.

"Pardon! for what?" asked the King.

"First, for entering your royal presence too boldly and unadvisedly"——

She stopped.

"*Thou* too boldly!—the sun might as well ask pardon, because his rays entered the windows of some wretch's dungeon. But I was busied with work unfit for thee to witness, my gentle one, and I was unwilling, besides, that thou shouldst risk thy precious health where sickness has been so lately rife."

"But thou art now well?" said the Queen, still delaying the communication which she feared to make.

"Well enough to break a lance on the bold crest of that champion who shall refuse to acknowledge thee the fairest dame in Christendom."

"Thou wilt not then refuse me one boon—only one *—only a poor life?"*

He.—proceed" said King Richard, bending his brows

"This unhappy Scottish knight"—murmured the Queen.

"Speak not of him, madam," exclaimed Richard, sternly; "he dies—his doom is fixed."

"Nay, my royal liege and love, 'tis but a silken banner neglected—Berengaria will give thee another broidered with her own hand, and rich as ever dallied with the wind. Every pearl I have shall go to bedeck it, and with every pearl I will drop a tear of thankfulness to my generous knight!"

"Thou know'st not what thou say'st," said the King, interrupting her in anger—"Pearls! can all the pearls of the East atone for a speck upon England's honour—all the tears that ever woman's eye wept wash away a stain on Richard's fame?—Go to, madam, know your place, and your time, and your sphere. At present we have duties in which you cannot be our partner."

"Thou hear'st, Edith," whispered the Queen, "we shall but incense him."

"Be it so," said Edith, stepping forward.—"My lord—I, your poor kinswoman, crave you for justice rather than mercy; and to the cry of justice the ears of a monarch should be open at every time, place, and circumstance."

"Ha! our cousin Edith?" said Richard, rising and sitting upright on the side of his couch, covered with his long camiscia—"She speaks ever king-like, and king-like will I answer her, so she bring no request unworthy herself or me."

The beauty of Edith was of a more intellectual and less voluptuous cast than that of the Queen; but impatience and anxiety had given her countenance a glow which it sometimes wanted, and her mien had a character of energetic dignity that imposed silence for a moment even on Richard himself, who, to judge by his looks, would willingly have interrupted her.

"My lord," she said, "this good knight, whose blood you are about to spill, hath done, in his time, service to Christendom. He hath fallen from his duty, through a snare set for him in mere folly and idleness of spirit. A message sent to him in the name of one who—why should I not speak it?—it was in my own—induced him for an instant to leave his post—And what knight in the Christian camp might not have thus far transgressed at command of a maiden, who, poor howsoever in other qualities, hath yet the blood of Plantagenet in her veins?"

"And you saw him, then, cousin?" replied the King, biting his lips to keep down his passion.

"I did, my liege," said Edith. "It is no time to explain wherefore—I am here neither to exculpate myself nor to blame others."

"And where did you do him such a grace?"

"In the tent of her Majesty the Queen."

"Of our royal consort!" said Richard. "Now by Heaven, by Saint George of England, and every other saint that treads its crystal floor, this is too audacious! I have noticed and overlooked this warrior's insolent admiration of one so far above him, and I grudged him not that one of my blood should shed from her high-born sphere such influence as the sun bestows on the world beneath—But, heaven and earth! that you should have admitted him to an audience by night, in the very tent of our royal consort! and dare to offer this as an excuse for his disobedience and desertion! By my father's soul, Edith, thou shalt rue this thy lifelong in a monastery!"

"My liege," said Edith, "your greatness licenses tyranny. My honour, Lord King, is as little touched as yours, and my Lady the Queen can prove it if she think fit.—But I have already said, I am not here to excuse myself or inculpate others.—I ask you but to extend to one, whose fault was committed under strong temptation, that mercy, which even you yourself, Lord King, must one day supplicate at a higher tribunal, and for faults, perhaps, less venial."

"Can this be Edith Plantagenet?" said the King, bitterly,—"Edith Plantagenet, the wise and the noble?—Or is it some lovesick woman, who cares not for her own fame in comparison of the life of her paramour? Now, by King Henry's soul! little hinders but I order thy minion's skull to be brought from the

gibbet, and fixed as a perpetual ornament by the crucifix in thy cell!"

"And if thou dost send it from the gibbet to be laced for ever in my sight," said Edith, "I will say it is a relic of a good knight, cruelly and unworthily one to death by"—(she checked herself)—"by one, f whom I shall only say, he should have known etter how to reward chivalry. Minion call'st thou im?" she continued, with increasing vehemence,—He was indeed my lover, and a most true one—but ever sought he grace from me by look or word—ontented with such humble observance as men pay the saints—And the good—the valiant—the faithful, must die for this!"

"O, peace, peace, for pity's sake," whispered the Queen, "you do but offend him more!"

"I care not," said Edith; "the spotless virgin fears ot the raging lion! Let him work his will on this worthy knight. Edith, for whom he dies, will know ow to weep his memory—to me no one shall speak nore of politic alliances, to be sanctioned with this oor hand. I could not—I would not—have been his ride living—our degrees were too distant. But death nites the high and the low—I am henceforward the pouse of the grave."

The King was about to answer with much anger, when a Carmelite monk entered the apartment hastily, his head and person muffled in the long mantle nd hood of striped cloth of the coarsest texture, hich distinguished his order, and, flinging himself a his knees before the King, conjured him, by every oly word and sign, to stop the execution.

"Now, by both sword and sceptre!" said Richard, the world are leagued to drive me mad!—fools, woen, and monks, cross me at every step. How comes e to live still?"

"My gracious liege," said the monk, "I entreated the Lord of Gilsland to stay the execution until I ad thrown myself at your royal"——

"And he was wilful enough to grant thy request?" iid the King; "but it is of a piece with his wonted stinacy—And what is it thou hast to say? Speak, the fiend's name!"

"My lord, there is a weighty secret—but it rests nder the seal of confession—I dare not tell or even hisper it—but I swear to thee by my holy order—by e habit which I wear, by the blessed Elias, our under, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality—that this youth ith divulged to me a secret, which, if I might conle it to thee, would utterly turn thee from thy bloody urpose in regard to him."

"Good father," said Richard, "that I reverence the urch, let the arms which I now wear for her sake ear witness. Give me to know this secret, and I ill do what shall seem fitting in the matter. But I n no blind Bayard, to take a leap in the dark under ie stroke of a pair of priestly spurs."

"My lord," said the holy man, throwing back his owl and upper vesture, and discovering under the tter a garment of goat-skin, and from beneath the rmer a visage so wildly wasted by climate, fast, and nance, as to resemble rather the apparition of an nimated skeleton than a human face, "for twenty ars have I macerated this miserable body in the verns of Engaddi, doing penance for a great crime. hink you I, who am dead to the world, would conive a falsehood to endanger my own soul, or that e, bound by the most sacred oaths to the contrary one such as I, who have but one longing wish nnected with earth, to wit, the rebuilding of our hristian Zion—would betray the secrets of the confessional? Both are alike abhorrent to my very ul."

"So," answered the King, "thou art that hermit whom men speak so much? Thou art, I confess, ke enough to those spirits which walk in dry places, at Richard fears no hobgoblins—and thou art he, o, as I bethink me, to whom the Christian princes nt this very criminal to open a communication ith the Soldan, even while I, who ought to have en first consulted, lay on my sick-bed? Thou and ey may content themselves—I will not put my neck o the loop of a Carmelite's girdle—And, for your envoy, he shall die, the rather and the sooner that thou dost entreat for him."

"Now God be gracious to thee, Lord King!" said the hermit, with much emotion; "thou art setting that mischief on foot which thou wilt hereafter wish thou hadst stopt, though it had cost thee a limb. Rash, blinded man, yet forbear!"

"Away, away," cried the King, stamping; "the sun has risen on the dishonour of England, and it is not yet avenged.—Ladies and priest, withdraw, if ye would not hear orders which would displease you; for, by St. George, I swear"—

—"Swear not!" said the voice of one who had just then entered the pavilion.

"Ha! my learned Hakim," said the King; "come, I hope, to tax our generosity."

"I come to request instant speech with you—instant—and touching matters of deep interest."

"First look on my wife, Hakim, and let her know in you the preserver of her husband."

"It is not for me," said the physician, "folding his arms with an air of Oriental modesty and reverence, and bending his eyes on the ground,—"It is not for me to look upon beauty unveiled, and armed in its splendours."

"Retire, then, Berengaria," said the Monarch; "and, Edith, do you retire also;—nay, renew not your importunities! This I give to them, that the execution shall not be till high noon.—Go and be pacified—dearest Berengaria, begone.—Edith," he added, with a glance which struck terror even into the courageous soul of his kinswoman, "go, if you are wise."

The females withdrew, or rather hurried from the tent, rank and ceremony forgotten, much like a flock of wild-fowl huddled together, against whom the falcon has made a recent stoop.

They returned from thence to the Queen's pavilion, to indulge in regrets and recriminations, equally unavailing. Edith was the only one who seemed to disdain these ordinary channels of sorrow. Without a sigh, without a tear, without a word of upbraiding, she attended upon the Queen, whose weak temperament showed her sorrow in violent hysterical ecstasies, and passionate hypochondriacal effusions, in the course of which Edith sedulously, and even affectionately, attended her.

"It is impossible she can have loved this knight," said Florise to Calista, her senior in attendance upon the Queen's person. "We have been mistaken; she is but sorry for his fate, as for a stranger who has come to trouble on her account."

"Hush, hush," answered her more experienced and more observant comrade; "she is of that proud house of Plantagenet, who never own that a hurt grieves them. While they have themselves been bleeding to death, under a mortal wound, they have been known to bind up the scratches sustained by their more faint-hearted comrades.—Florise, we have done frightfully wrong; and, for my own part, I would buy with every jewel I have, that our fatal jest had remained unacted."

CHAPTER XVIII.

> This work desires a planetary intelligence
> Of Jupiter and Sol; and those great spirits
> Are proud, fantastical. It asks great charges
> To entice them from the guiding of their spheres,
> To wait on mortals.—ALBUMAZAR.

THE hermit followed the ladies from the pavilion of Richard, as shadow follows a beam of sunshine when the clouds are driving over the face of the sun. But he turned on the threshold, and held up his hand towards the King in a warning, or almost a menacing posture, as he said,—"Wo to him who rejects the counsel of the Church, and betaketh himself to the foul divan of the infidel! King Richard, I do not yet shake the dust from my feet and depart from thy encampment—the sword falls not—but it hangs but by a hair.—Haughty monarch, we shall meet again."

"Be it so, haughty priest," returned Richard, "prouder in thy goat-skins than princes in purple and fine linen."

The hermit vanished from the tent, and the King continued, addressing the Arabian,—"Do the dervises of the East, wise Hakim, use such familiarity with their princes?"

"The dervise," replied Adonbec, "should be either a sage or a madman; there is no middle course for him who wears the khirkhah,* who watches by night, and fasts by day. Hence, hath he either wisdom enough to bear himself discreetly in the presence of princes, or else, having no reason bestowed on him, he is not responsible for his own actions."

"Methinks our monks have adopted chiefly the latter character," said Richard—"But to the matter.—In what can I pleasure you, my learned physician?"

"Great King," said El Hakim, making his profound Oriental obeisance, "let thy servant speak one word, and yet live. I would remind thee that thou owest—not to me, their humble instrument—but to the Intelligences, whose benefits I dispense to mortals, a life!——"

"And I warrant me thou wouldst have another in requital, ha?" interrupted the King.

"Such is my humble prayer," said the Hakim, "to the great Melech Ric—even the life of this good knight, who is doomed to die, and but for such fault as was committed by the Sultan Adam, surnamed Aboulbeschar, or the father of all men."

"And thy wisdom might remind thee, Hakim, that Adam died for it," said the King, somewhat sternly, and then began to pace the narrow space of his tent, with some emotion, and to talk to himself. "Why, God-a-mercy—I knew what he desired as soon as ever he entered the pavilion!—Here is one poor life justly condemned to extinction, and I, a king and a soldier, who have slain thousands by my command, and scores with my own hand, am to have no power over it, although the honour of my arms, of my house, of my very Queen, hath been attainted by the culprit—By Saint George, it makes me laugh!—By Saint Louis, it reminds me of Blondel's tale of an enchanted castle, where the destined knight was withstood successively in his purpose of entrance by forms and figures the most dissimilar, but all hostile to his undertaking! No sooner one sunk than another appeared!—Wife—Kinswoman—Hermit—Hakim—each appears in the lists as soon as the other is defeated!—Why, this is a single knight fighting against the whole *mêlée* of the tournament—ha! ha! ha!"—And Richard laughed aloud; for he had, in fact, begun to change his mood, his resentment being usually too violent to be of long endurance.

The physician mean while looked on him with a countenance of surprise, not unmingled with contempt; for the Eastern people make no allowance for those mercurial changes in the temper, and consider open laughter, upon almost any account, as derogatory to the dignity of man, and becoming only to women and children. At length, the sage addressed the King, when he saw him more composed.

"A doom of death should not issue from laughing lips.—Let thy servant hope that thou hast granted him this man's life."

"Take the freedom of a thousand captives instead," said Richard; "restore so many of thy countrymen to their tents and families, and I will give the warrant instantly. This man's life can avail thee nothing, and it is forfeited."

"All our lives are forfeited," said the Hakim, putting his hand to his cap. "But the great Creditor is merciful, and exacts not the pledge rigorously nor untimely."

"Thou canst show me," said Richard, "no special interest thou hast to become intercessor betwixt me and the execution of justice, to which I am sworn as a crowned king."

"Thou art sworn to the dealing forth mercy as well as justice," said El Hakim; "but what thou seekest, great King, is the execution of thine own will. And, for the concern I have in this request, know that many a man's life depends upon thy granting this boon."

"Explain thy words," said Richard; "but think not to impose upon me by false pretexts."

"Be it far from thy servant!" said Adonbec. "Know, then, that the medicine to which thou, Sir King, and many one beside, owe their recovery, is a talisman, composed under certain aspects of the heavens, when the divine Intelligences are most propitious. I am but the poor administrator of its virtues. I dip it in a cup of water, observe the fitting hour to administer it to the patient, and the potency of the draught works the cure."

"A most rare medicine," said the King, "and a commodious! and, as it may be carried in the leech's purse, would save the whole caravan of camels which they require to convey drugs and physic-stuff—I marvel there is any other in use."

"It is written," answered the Hakim, with imperturbable gravity, "'abuse not the steed which hath borne thee from the battle.' Know, that such talismans might indeed be framed, but rare has been the number of adepts who have dared to undertake the application of their virtue. Severe restrictions, painful observances, fasts, and penance, are necessary on the part of the sage who uses this mode of cure; and, if, through neglect of these preparations, by his love of ease, or his indulgence of sensual appetite, he omits to cure at least twelve persons within the course of each moon, the virtue of the divine gift departs from the amulet, and both the last patient and the physician will be exposed to speedy misfortune, neither will they survive the year. I require yet one life to make up the appointed number."

"Go out into the camp, good Hakim, where thou wilt find a-many," said the King, "and do not seek to rob my headsman of *his* patients; it is unbecoming a mediciner of thine eminence to interfere with the practice of another.—Besides, I cannot see how delivering a criminal from the death he deserves, should go to make up thy tale of miraculous cures."

"When thou canst show why a drop of cold water should have cured thee, when the most precious drugs failed," said the Hakim, "thou mayst reason on the other mysteries attendant on this matter. For myself, I am inefficient to the great work, having this morning touched an unclean animal. Ask, therefore, no farther questions; it is enough that, by sparing this man's life at my request, you will deliver yourself great King, and thy servant, from a great danger."

"Hark thee, Adonbec," replied the King, "I have no objection that leeches should wrap their words in mist, and pretend to derive knowledge from the stars; but when you bid Richard Plantagenet fear that a danger will fall upon *him* from some idle omen, or omitted ceremonial, you speak to no ignorant Saxon, or doting old woman, who foregoes her purpose because a hare crosses the path, a raven croaks, or a cat sneezes."

"I cannot hinder your doubt of my words," said Adonbec; "but yet, let my Lord the King grant that truth is on the tongue of his servant,—will he think it just to deprive the world, and every wretch who may suffer by the pains which so lately reduced him to that couch, of the benefit of this most virtuous talisman, rather than extend his forgiveness to one poor criminal? Bethink you, Lord King, that though thou canst slay thousands, thou canst not restore one man to health. Kings have the power of Satan to torment, sages that of Allah to heal—beware how thou hinderest the good to humanity, which thou canst not thyself render. Thou canst cut off the head, but not cure the aching tooth."

"This is over insolent," said the King, hardening himself, as the Hakim assumed a more lofty, and almost a commanding tone. "We took thee for our leech, not for our counsellor, or conscience-keeper."

"And is it thus the most renowned Prince of Frangistan repays benefit done to his royal person?" said El Hakim, exchanging the humble and stooping posture, in which he had hitherto solicited the King, for an attitude lofty and commanding. "Know, then," he said, "that through every court of Europe and Asia—to Moslem and Nazarene—to knight and lady—wherever harp is heard and sword worn—wherever honour is loved and infamy detested—a

* *Khirkah, the torn robe.* The habit of the dervises is so called.

every quarter of the world will I denounce thee, Melech Ric, as thankless and ungenerous; and even the lands—if there be any such—that never heard of thy renown, shall yet be acquainted with thy shame!"

"Are these terms to me, vile infidel!" said Richard, striding up to him in fury.—"Art weary of thy life?"

"Strike!" said El Hakim; "thine own deed shall then paint thee more worthless than could my words, though each had a hornet's sting."

Richard turned fiercely from him, folded his arms, traversed the tent as before, and then exclaimed, "Thankless and ungenerous?—as well be termed coward and infidel!—Hakim, thou hast chosen thy boon; and though I had rather thou hadst asked my crown-jewels, yet I may not, kinglike, refuse thee. Take this Scot, therefore, to thy keeping—the provost will deliver him to thee on this warrant."

He hastily traced one or two lines, and gave them to the physician. "Use him as thy bond-slave, to be disposed of as thou wilt—only, let him beware how he comes before the eyes of Richard. Hark thee—thou art wise—he hath been over bold among those on whose fair looks and weak judgments we trust our honour, as you of the East lodge your treasures in caskets of silver wire, as fine and as frail as the web of a gossamer."

"Thy servant understands the words of the King," said the sage, at once resuming the reverent style of address in which he had commenced. "When the rich carpet is soiled, the fool pointeth to the stain—the wise man covers it with his mantle. I have heard my lord's pleasure, and to hear is to obey."

"It is well," said the King; "let him consult his own safety, and never appear in my presence more.—Is there aught else in which I may do thee pleasure?"

"The bounty of the King hath filled my cup to the brim," said the sage; "yea, it hath been abundant as the fountain which sprung up amid the camp of the descendants of Israel, when the rock was stricken by the rod of Moussa Ben Amran."

"Ay, but," said the King, smiling, "it required, as in the desert, a hard blow on the rock, ere it yielded its treasures. I would that I knew something to pleasure thee, which I might yield as freely as the natural fountain sends forth its waters."

"Let me touch that victorious hand," said the sage, "in token, that if Adonbec el Hakim should hereafter demand a boon of Richard of England, he may do so, yet plead his command."

"Thou hast hand and glove upon it, man," replied Richard; "only, if thou couldst consistently make up thy tale of patients without craving me to deliver from punishment those who have deserved it, I would more willingly discharge my debt in some other form."

"May thy days be multiplied!"—answered the Hakim, and withdrew from the apartment after the usual deep obeisance.

King Richard gazed after him as he departed, like one but half-satisfied with what had passed.

"Strange pertinacity," he said, "in this Hakim, and a wonderful chance to interfere between that audacious Scot and the chastisement he has merited so richly. Yet, let him live! there is one brave man the more in the world.—And now for the Austrian.—Ho, is the Baron of Gilsland there without?"

Sir Thomas de Vaux thus summoned, his bulky form speedily darkened the opening of the pavilion, while behind him glided as a spectre, unannounced, yet unopposed, the savage form of the hermit of Engaddi, wrapped in his goat-skin mantle.

Richard, without noticing his presence, called in a loud tone to the Baron, "Sir Thomas de Vaux, of Lanercost and Gilsland, take trumpet and herald, and go instantly to the tent of him whom they call Archduke of Austria, and see that it be when the press of his knights and vassals is greatest around him,—as is likely at this hour, for the German boar breakfasts ere he hears mass,—enter his presence with as little reverence as thou mayst, and impeach *him, on the part of Richard of England*, that he hath *this night, by his own hand, or that of others*, stolen from its staff the Banner of England. Wherefore, say to him our pleasure, that, within an hour from the time of my speaking, he restore the said banner with all reverence—he himself and his principal barons waiting the whilst with heads uncovered, and without their robes of honour.—And that, moreover, he pitch beside it, on the one hand, his own Banner of Austria reversed, as that which hath been dishonoured by theft and felony—and on the other, a lance, bearing the bloody head of him who was his nearest counsellor, or assistant, in this base injury—And say, that such our behests being punctually discharged, we will, for the sake of our vow, and the weal of the Holy Land, forgive his other forfeits."

"And how if the Duke of Austria deny all accession to this act of wrong and of felony?" said Thomas de Vaux.

"Tell him," replied the King, "we will prove it upon his body—ay, were he backed with his two bravest champions. Knightlike will we prove it, on foot or on horse, in the desert or in the field, time, place, and arms, all at his own choice."

"Bethink you of the peace of God and the Church, my liege lord," said the Baron of Gilsland, "among those princes engaged in this holy Crusade."

"Bethink you how to execute my commands, my liege vassal," answered Richard, impatiently. "Methinks men expect to turn our purpose by their breath, as boys blow feathers to and fro—Peace of the Church!—who, I prithee, minds it? The peace of the church, among Crusaders, implies war with the Saracens, with whom the princes have made truce, and the one ends with the other. And, besides, see you not how every prince of them is seeking his own several ends?—I will seek mine also—and that is honour. For honour I came hither, and if I may not win it upon the Saracens, at least I will not loose a jot from any respect to this paltry Duke, though he were bulwarked and buttressed by every prince in the Crusade."

De Vaux turned to obey the King's mandate, shrugging his shoulders at the same time, the bluntness of his nature being unable to conceal that its tenor went against his judgment. But the hermit of Engaddi stepped forward, and assumed the air of one charged with higher commands than those of a mere earthly potentate. Indeed, his dress of shaggy skins, his uncombed and untrimmed hair and beard, his lean, wild, and contorted features, and the almost insane fire which gleamed from under his bushy eyebrows, made him approach nearly to our idea of some seer of Scripture, who, charged with high mission to the sinful Kings of Judah or Israel, descended from the rocks and caverns in which he dwelt in abstracted solitude, to abash earthly tyrants in the midst of their pride, by discharging on them the blighting denunciations of Divine Majesty, even as the cloud discharges the lightnings with which it is fraught, on the pinnacles and towers of castles and palaces. In the midst of his most wayward mood, Richard respected the church and its ministers, and though offended at the intrusion of the hermit into his tent, he greeted him with respect; at the same time, however, making a sign to Sir Thomas de Vaux to hasten on his message.

But the hermit prohibited the Baron, by gesture, look, and word, to stir a yard on such an errand; and, holding up his bare arm, from which the goat-skin mantle fell back in the violence of his action, he waved it aloft, meager with famine, and wealed with the blows of the discipline.

"In the name of God, and of the most holy Father, the vicegerent of the Christian Church upon earth, I prohibit this most profane, blood-thirsty, and brutal defiance, betwixt two Christian princes, whose shoulders are signed with the blessed mark under which they swore brotherhood. Wo to him by whom it is broken!—Richard of England, recall the most unhallowed message thou hast given to that baron—Danger and Death are nigh thee!—the dagger is glancing at thy very throat!"——

"Danger and Death are playmates to Richard," answered the monarch, proudly; "and he hath braved too many swords to fear a dagger."

"Danger and Death are near" replied

and, sinking his voice to a hollow, unearthly tone, he added, "And after death the judgment!"

"Good and holy father," said Richard, "I reverence thy person and thy sanctity"——

"Reverence not me!" interrupted the hermit; "reverence sooner the vilest insect that crawls by the shores of the Dead Sea, and feeds upon its accursed slime. But reverence Him whose commands I speak—Reverence Him whose sepulchre you have vowed to rescue—Revere the oath of concord which you have sworn, and break not the silver cord of union and fidelity with which you have bound yourself to your princely confederates."

"Good Father," said the King, "you of the church seem to me to presume somewhat, if a layman may say so much, upon the dignity of your holy character. Without challenging your right to take charge of our conscience, methinks you might leave us the charge of our own honour."

"Presume!" repeated the hermit—"is it for me to presume, royal Richard, who am but the bell obeying the hand of the sexton—but the senseless and worthless trumpet, carrying the command of him who sounds it?—See, on my knees I throw myself before thee, imploring thee to have mercy on Christendom, on England, and on thyself!"

"Rise, rise," said Richard, compelling him to stand up; "it beseems not that knees, which are so frequently bended to the Deity, should press the ground in honour of man. What danger awaits us, reverend father? and when stood the power of England so low, that the noisy bluster of this new-made Duke's displeasure should alarm her, or her monarch?"

"I have looked forth from my mountain turret upon the starry host of heaven, as each in his midnight circuit uttered wisdom to another, and knowledge to the few who can understand their voice. There sits an enemy in thy House of Life, Lord King, malign at once to thy fame, and thy prosperity—an emanation of Saturn, menacing thee with instant and bloody peril and which, but thou yield thy proud will to the rule of thy duty, will presently crush thee, even in thy pride."

"Away, away—this is heathen science," said the King. "Christians practise it not—wise men believe it not.—Old man, thou dotest."

"I dote not, Richard," answered the hermit—"I am not so happy. I know my condition, and that some portion of reason is yet permitted me, not for my own use, but that of the Church, and the advancement of the Cross. I am the blind man who holds a torch to others, though it yields no light to himself. Ask me touching what concerns the weal of Christendom, and of this Crusade, and I will speak with thee as the wisest counsellor on whose tongue persuasion ever sat. Speak to me of my own wretched being, and my words shall be those of the maniac outcast which I am."

"I would not break the bands of unity asunder among the Princes of the Crusade," said Richard, with a mitigated tone and manner; "but what atonement can they render me for the injustice and insult which I have sustained?"

"Even of that I am prepared and commissioned to speak by the Council, which, meeting hastily at the summons of Philip of France, have taken measures for that effect."

"Strange," replied Richard, "that others should treat of what is due to the wounded Majesty of England!"

"They are willing to anticipate your demands, if it be possible," answered the hermit. "In a body, they consent that the Banner of England be replaced on Saint George's Mount, and they lay under ban and condemnation the audacious criminal, or criminals, by whom it was outraged, and will announce a princely reward to any who shall denounce the delinquent's guilt, and give his flesh to the wolves and ravens."

"And Austria," said Richard—"upon whom rest *such strong presumptions* that he was the author of *the deed?*"

"*To prevent discord in the host*," replied the hermit, "*Austria will clear himself* of the suspicion, by submitting to whatsoever ordeal the Patriarch of Jerusalem shall impose."

"Will he clear himself by the trial by combat?" said King Richard.

"His oath prohibits it," said the hermit; "and, moreover, the Council of the Princes"——

"Will neither authorize battle against the Saracens," interrupted Richard, "nor against any one else. But it is enough, father—thou hast shown me the folly of proceeding as I designed in this matter. You shall sooner light your torch in a puddle of rain, than bring a spark out of a cold-blooded coward. There is no honour to be gained on Austria, and so let him pass.—I will have him perjure himself, however; I will insist on the ordeal.—How I shall laugh to hear his clumsy fingers hiss, as he grasps the red-hot globe of iron!—Ay, or his huge mouth riven, and his gullet swelling to suffocation, as he endeavours to swallow the consecrated bread!"

"Peace, Richard," said the hermit—"Oh, peace, for shame if not for charity! Who shall praise or honour princes, who insult and calumniate each other? Alas! that a creature so noble as thou art—so accomplished in princely thoughts and princely daring—so fitted to honour Christendom by thy actions, and, in thy calmer mood, to rule her by thy wisdom, should yet have the brute and wild fury of the lion, mingled with the dignity and courage of that king of the forest!"

He remained an instant musing with his eyes fixed on the ground, and then proceeded—"But Heaven, that knows our imperfect nature, accepts of our imperfect obedience, and hath delayed, though not averted, the bloody end of thy daring life. The destroying angel hath stood still, as of old by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and the blade is drawn in his hand, by which, at no distant date, Richard, the lion-hearted, shall be as low as the meanest peasant."

"Must it then be so soon?"—said Richard. "Yet, even so be it. May my course be bright, if it be but brief!"

"Alas! noble King," said the solitary, and it seemed as if a tear (unwonted guest) were gathering in his dry and glazened eye—"short and melancholy, marked with mortification, and calamity, and captivity, is the span that divides thee from the grave which yawns for thee—a grave in which thou shalt be laid without lineage to succeed thee—without the tears of a people, exhausted by thy ceaseless wars, to lament thee—without having extended the knowledge of thy subjects—without having done aught to enlarge their happiness."

"But not without renown, monk—not without the tears of the lady of my love! These consolations, which thou canst neither know nor estimate, await upon Richard to his grave."

"*Do* I not know—*can* I not estimate, the value of minstrel's praise, and of lady's love!" retorted the hermit, in a tone, which for a moment seemed to emulate the enthusiasm of Richard himself. "King of England," he continued, extending his emaciated arm, "the blood which boils in thy blue veins is not more noble than that which stagnates in mine. Few and cold as the drops are, they still are of the blood of the royal Lusignan—of the heroic and sainted Godfrey. I am—that is, I was when in the world—Albert Mortemar"——

"Whose deeds," said Richard, "have so often filled Fame's trumpet! Is it so—can it be so?—Could such a light as thine fall from the horizon of chivalry, and yet men be uncertain where its embers had alighted?"

"Seek a fallen star," said the hermit, "and thou shalt only light on some foul jelly, which, in shooting through the horizon, has assumed for a moment an appearance of splendour. Richard, if I thought that rending the bloody veil from my horrible fate could make thy proud heart stoop to the discipline of the church, I could find in my heart to tell thee a tale, which I have hitherto kept gnawing at my vitals in concealment, like the self-devoted youth of Heathenesse.—Listen, then, Richard, and may the grief and despair, which cannot avail this wretched

remnant of what was once a man, be powerful as an example to so noble, yet so wild a being as thou art! Yes—I will—I *will* tear open the long-hidden wounds, although in thy very presence they should bleed to death!"

King Richard, upon whom the history of Alberick of Mortemar had made a deep impression in his early years, when Minstrels were regaling his father's halls with legends of the Holy Land, listened with respect to the outlines of a tale, which, darkly and imperfectly sketched, indicated sufficiently the cause of the partial insanity of this singular and most unhappy being.

"I need not," he said, "tell thee, that I was noble in birth, high in fortune, strong in arms, wise in council. All these I was; but while the noblest ladies in Palestine strove which should wind garlands for my helmet, my love was fixed—unalterably and devotedly fixed—on a maiden of low degree. Her father, an ancient soldier of the Cross, saw our passion, and knowing the difference betwixt us, saw no other refuge for his daughter's honour than to place her within the shadow of the cloister. I returned from a distant expedition, loaded with spoils and honour, to find my happiness was destroyed for ever! I, too, sought the cloister, and Satan, who had marked me for his own, breathed into my heart a vapour of spiritual pride, which could only have had its source in his own infernal regions. I had risen as high in the church as before in the state—I was, forsooth, the wise, the self-sufficient, the impeccable!—I was the counsellor of councils—I was the director of prelates—how should I stumble—wherefore should I fear temptation?—Alas! I became confessor to a sisterhood, and amongst that sisterhood I found the long-loved—the long-lost. Spare me farther confession!—A fallen nun, whose guilt was avenged by self-murder, sleeps soundly in the vaults of Engaddi, while, above her very grave, gibbers, moans, and roars a creature, to whom but so much reason is left as may suffice to render him completely sensible to his fate!"

"Unhappy man!" said Richard, "I wonder no longer, at thy misery. How didst thou escape the doom, which the canons denounce against thy offence?"

"Ask one who is yet in the gall of worldly bitterness," said the hermit, "and he will speak of a life spared for personal respects, and from consideration to high birth. But, Richard, *I* tell thee, that Providence hath preserved me, to lift me on high as a light and beacon, whose ashes, when this earthly fuel is burnt out, must yet be flung into Tophet.—Withered and shrunk as this poor form is, it is yet animated with two spirits—one active, shrewd, and piercing, to advocate the cause of the Church of Jerusalem—one mean, abject, and despairing, fluctuating between madness and misery, to mourn over my own wretchedness, and to guard holy relics, on which it would be most sinful for me even to cast my eye. Pity me not!—it is but sin to pity the loss of such an abject—pity me not, but profit by my example. Thou standest on the highest, and, therefore, on the most dangerous pinnacle, occupied by any Christian prince. Thou art proud of heart, loose of life, bloody of hand. Put from thee the sins which are to thee as daughters—though they be dear to the sinful Adam, expel these adopted furies from thy breast—thy pride, thy luxury, thy blood-thirstiness!"

"He raves," said Richard, turning from the solitary to De Vaux, as one who felt some pain from a sarcasm which yet he could not resent—then turned him calmly, and somewhat scornfully, to the anchoret, as he replied—"Thou hast found a fair bevy of daughters, reverend father, to one who hath been but few months married; but since I must put them from my roof, it were but like a father to provide them with suitable matches. Wherefore, I will part with my pride to the noble Canons of the Church—my luxury, as thou call'st it, to the Monks of the rule—and my blood-thirstiness to the Knights of the Temple."

"O, heart *of steel, and hand of iron*," said the *anchoret—"upon whom example*, as well as advice, is alike thrown away!—Yet shalt thou be spared for a season, in case it so be thou shouldst turn and do that which is acceptable in the sight of Heaven.—For me, I must return to my place.—Kyrie Eleison!—I am he through whom the rays of heavenly grace dart like those of the sun through a burning glass, concentrating them on other objects until they kindle and blaze, while the glass itself remains cold and uninfluenced.—Kyrie Eleison!—the poor must be called, for the rich have refused the banquet—Kyrie Eleison!"

So saying, he burst from the tent, uttering loud cries.

"A mad priest!"—said Richard, from whose mind the frantic exclamations of the hermit had partly obliterated the impression produced by the detail of his personal history and misfortunes. "After him, De Vaux, and see he comes to no harm; for, Crusaders as we are, a juggler hath more reverence amongst our varlets than a priest or a saint, and they may, perchance, put some scorn upon him."

The knight obeyed, and Richard presently gave way to the thoughts which the wild prophecy of the monk had inspired.—"To die early—without lineage—without lamentation?—a heavy sentence, and well that it is not passed by a more competent judge. Yet the Saracens, who are accomplished in mystical knowledge, will often maintain, that He, in whose eyes the wisdom of the sage is but as folly, inspires wisdom and prophecy into the seeming folly of the madman. Yonder hermit is said to read the stars too, an art generally practised in these lands, where the heavenly host was of yore the object of idolatry. I would I had asked him touching the loss of my banner; for not the blessed Tishbite, the founder of his order, could seem more wildly wrapt out of himself, or speak with a tongue more resembling that of a prophet.—How now, De Vaux, what news of the mad priest?"

"Mad priest, call you him, my lord?" answered De Vaux. "Methinks he resembles more the blessed Baptist himself, just issued from the wilderness. He has placed himself on one of the military engines, and from thence he preaches to the soldiers, as never man preached since the time of Peter the Hermit. The camp, alarmed by his cries, crowd around him in thousands; and breaking off every now and then from the main thread of his discourse, he addresses the several nations, each in their own language, and presses upon each the arguments best qualified to urge them to perseverance in the delivery of Palestine."

"By this light, a noble hermit!" said King Richard. "But what else could come from the blood of Godfrey? *He* despair of safety, because he hath in former days lived *par amours?* I will have the Pope send him an ample remission, and I would not less willingly be intercessor had his *belle amie* been an abbess."

As he spoke, the Archbishop of Tyre craved audience, for the purpose of requesting Richard's attendance, should his health permit, on a secret conclave of the chiefs of the Crusade, and to explain to him the military and political incidents which had occurred during his illness.

CHAPTER XIX.

Must we then sheathe our still victorious sword;
Turn back our forward step, which ever trode
O'er foemen's necks the onward path of glory;
Unclasp the mail, which with a solemn vow,
In God's own house, we hung upon our shoulders;
That vow as unaccomplish'd as the promise
Which village nurses make to still their children,
And after think no more of?——

The Crusade, a Tragedy.

THE Archbishop of Tyre was an emissary well chosen to communicate to Richard tidings, which from another voice the lion-hearted King would not have brooked to hear, without the most unbounded explosions of resentment. Even this sagacious and reverend prelate found difficulty in inducing him to listen to news, which destroyed all his hopes of gaining back the Holy Sepulchre by force of arms, and

acquiring the renown, which the universal all-hail of Christendom was ready to confer upon him, as the Champion of the Cross.

But, by the Archbishop's report, it appeared that Saladin was assembling all the force of his hundred tribes, and that the monarchs of Europe, already disgusted from various motives with the expedition, which had proved so hazardous, and was daily growing more so, had resolved to abandon their purpose. In this they were countenanced by the example of Philip of France, who, with many protestations of regard, and assurances that he would first see his brother of England in safety, declared his intention to return to Europe. His great vassal, the Earl of Champagne, had adopted the same resolution; and it could not excite surprise, that Leopold of Austria, affronted as he had been by Richard, was glad to embrace an opportunity of deserting a cause, in which his haughty opponent was to be considered as chief. Others announced the same purpose; so that it was plain that the King of England was to be left, if he chose to remain, supported only by such volunteers as might, under such depressing circumstances, join themselves to the English army; and by the doubtful aid of Conrade of Montserrat, and the military orders of the Temple, and of Saint John, who, though they were sworn to wage battle against the Saracens, were at least equally jealous of any European monarch achieving the conquest of Palestine, where, with short-sighted and selfish policy, they proposed to establish independent dominions of their own.

It needed not many arguments to show Richard the truth of his situation; and, indeed, after his first burst of passion, he sat him calmly down, and with gloomy looks, head depressed, and arms folded on his bosom, listened to the Archbishop's reasoning on the impossibility of his carrying on the Crusade when deserted by his companions. Nay, he forbore interruption, even when the prelate ventured, in measured terms, to hint that Richard's own impetuosity had been one main cause of disgusting the princes with the expedition.

"*Confiteor*"—answered Richard, with a dejected look, and something of a melancholy smile; "I confess, reverend father, that I ought on some accounts to sing *culpa mea*. But is it not hard that my frailties of temper should be visited with such a penance, that, for a burst or two of natural passion, I should be doomed to see fade before me ungathered such a rich harvest of glory to God, and honour to chivalry?—But it shall *not* fade.—By the soul of the Conqueror, I will plant the Cross on the towers of Jerusalem, or it shall be planted over Richard's grave!"

"Thou mayest do it," said the Prelate, "yet not another drop of Christian blood be shed in the quarrel."

"Ah, you speak of compromise, Lord Prelate—but the blood of the infidel hounds must also cease to flow," said Richard.

"There will be glory enough," replied the Archbishop, "in having extorted from Saladin, by force of arms, and by the respect inspired by your fame, such conditions, as at once restore the Holy Sepulchre, open the Holy Land to pilgrims, secure their safety by strong fortresses, and, stronger than all, assure the safety of the Holy City, by conferring on Richard the title of King Guardian of Jerusalem."

"How!" said Richard, his eyes sparkling with unusual light—"I—I—I the King Guardian of the Holy City! Victory itself, but that it *is* victory, could not gain more—scarce so much, when won with unwilling and disunited forces.—But Saladin still proposes to retain his interest in the Holy Land?"

"As a joint sovereign, the sworn ally," replied the Prelate, "of the mighty Richard—his relative—if it may be permitted—by marriage."

"By marriage!" said Richard, surprised, yet less so than the Prelate had expected. "Ha!—Ay—Edith Plantagenet. Did I dream this?—or did some one tell me? My head is still weak from this fever, and has been agitated.—Was it the Scot, or the Hakim, *or yonder holy hermit*, that hinted such a wild bargain?"

"*The hermit of Engaddi*, most likely," said the Archbishop; "for he hath toiled much in this matter; and since the discontent of the princes has become apparent, and a separation of their forces unavoidable, he hath had many consultations, both with Christian and Pagan, for arranging such a specification, as may give to Christendom, at least in part, the objects of this holy warfare."

"My kinswoman to an infidel—Ha!" exclaimed Richard, as his eyes began to sparkle.

The Prelate hastened to avert his wrath.

"The Pope's consent must doubtless be first attained, and the holy hermit, who is well known at Rome, will treat with the holy Father."

"How?—without our consent first given?" said the King.

"Surely no," said the Bishop, in a quieting and insinuating tone of voice; "only with and under your especial sanction."

"My sanction to marry my kinswoman to an infidel?" said Richard; yet he spoke rather in a tone of doubt than as distinctly reprobating the measure proposed. "Could I have dreamed of such a composition when I leaped upon the Syrian shore from the prow of my galley, even as a lion springs on his prey!—And now—But proceed—I will hear with patience."

Equally delighted and surprised to find his task so much easier than he had apprehended, the Archbishop hastened to pour forth before Richard the instances of such alliances in Spain—not without countenance from the Holy See—the incalculable advantages which all Christendom would derive from the union of Richard and Saladin, by a bond so sacred; and, above all, he spoke with great vehemence and unction on the probability that Saladin would, in case of the proposed alliance, exchange his false faith for the true one.

"Hath the Soldan shown any disposition to become Christian?" said Richard; "if so, the king lives not on earth to whom I would grant the hand of a kinswoman, ay, or sister, sooner than to my noble Saladin—ay, though the one came to lay crown and sceptre at her feet, and the other had nothing to offer but his good sword and better heart!"

"Saladin hath heard our Christian teachers," said the Bishop, somewhat evasively,—"my unworthy self—and others—and as he listens with patience, and replies with calmness, it can hardly be but that he be snatched as a brand from the burning. *Magna est veritas, et prevalebit!* Moreover, the hermit of Engaddi, few of whose words have fallen fruitless to the ground, is possessed fully with the belief that there is a calling of the Saracens and the other heathen approaching, to which this marriage shall be matter of induction. He readeth the course of the stars; and dwelling, with maceration of the flesh, in those divine places which the saints have trodden of old, the spirit of Elijah the Tishbite, the founder of his blessed order, hath been with him as it was with the prophet Elisha, the son of Shaphat, when he spread his mantle over him."

King Richard listened to the Prelate's reasoning, with a downcast brow and a troubled look.

"I cannot tell," he said, "how it is with me; but methinks these cold counsels of the Princes of Christendom have infected me too with a lethargy of spirit. The time hath been, that, had a layman proposed such alliance to me, I had struck him to earth—if a churchman, I had spit at him as a renegade and priest of Baal—yet now this counsel sounds not so strange in mine ear; for why should I not seek for brotherhood and alliance with a Saracen, brave, just, generous,—who loves and honours a worthy foe, as if he were a friend,—whilst the Princes of Christendom shrink from the side of their allies, and forsake the cause of Heaven and good knighthood?—But I will possess my patience, and will not think of them. Only one attempt will I make to keep this gallant brotherhood together, if it be possible; and if I fail, Lord Archbishop, we will speak together of thy counsel, which, as now, I neither accept nor altogether reject. Wend we to the Council, my lord—the hour calls us. Thou say'st Richard is hasty and proud—thou shalt see him humble himself like the lowly broom-plant, from which he derives his surname."

With the assistance of those of his privy chamber, the King then hastily robed himself in a doublet and mantle of a dark and uniform colour; and without any mark of regal dignity, excepting a ring of gold upon his head, he hastened with the Archbishop of Tyre, to attend the Council, which waited but his presence to commence its sitting.

The pavilion of the Council was an ample tent, having before it the large Banner of the Cross displayed, and another, on which was portrayed a female kneeling, with dishevelled hair and disordered dress, meant to represent the desolate and distressed Church of Jerusalem, and bearing the motto, *Afflictæ sponsæ ne obliviscaris*. Warders, carefully selected, kept every one at a distance from the neighbourhood of the tent, lest the debates, which were sometimes of loud and stormy character, should reach other ears than those they were designed for.

Here, therefore, the Princes of the Crusade were assembled, awaiting Richard's arrival; and even the brief delay which was thus interposed, was turned to the disadvantage by his enemies; various instances being circulated of his pride, and undue assumption of superiority, of which even the necessity of the present short pause was quoted as an instance. Men strove to fortify each other in their evil opinion of the King of England, and vindicated the offence which each had taken, by putting the most severe construction upon circumstances the most trifling; and all this, perhaps, because they were conscious of an instinctive reverence for the heroic monarch, which it would require more than ordinary efforts to overcome.

They had settled, accordingly, that they should receive him on his entrance with slight notice, and no more respect than was exactly necessary to keep within the bounds of cold ceremonial. But when they beheld that noble form, that princely countenance, somewhat pale from his late illness—the eye which had been called by minstrels the bright star of battle and victory—when his feats, almost surpassing human strength and valour, rushed on their recollection, the Council of Princes simultaneously arose—even the jealous King of France, and the sullen and offended Duke of Austria, arose with one consent, and the assembled princes burst forth with one voice into the acclamation, "God save King Richard of England!—Long life to the valiant Lion's-heart!"

With a countenance frank and open as the summer sun when it rises, Richard distributed his thanks around, and congratulated himself on being once more among his royal brethren of the Crusades.

"Some brief words he desired to say," such was his address to the assembly, "though on a subject so worthy as himself, even at the risk of delaying for a few minutes their consultations for the weal of Christendom, and the advancement of their holy enterprise."

The assembled princes resumed their seats, and there was a profound silence.

"This day," continued the King of England, "is a high festival of the Church; and well becomes it Christian men, at such a tide, to reconcile themselves with their brethren, and confess their faults to each other. Noble princes, and fathers of this holy expedition, Richard is a soldier—his hand is ever readier than his tongue—and his tongue is but too much used to the rough language of his trade. But do not, for Plantagenet's hasty speeches and ill-considered actions, forsake the noble cause of the redemption of predestined—do not throw away earthly renown and eternal salvation, to be won here if ever they can be won by man, because the act of a soldier may have been hasty, and his speech as hard as the iron which it has worn from childhood. Is Richard in default to any of you, Richard will make compensation both in word and action.—Noble brother of France, have I been so unlucky as to offend you?"

"The Majesty of France has no atonement to seek from that of England," answered Philip, with kingly dignity, accepting, at the same time, the offered hand of Richard; "and whatever opinion I may adopt concerning the prosecution of this enterprise, will depend on reasons arising out of the state of my own kingdom, certainly on no jealousy or disgust at my royal and most valorous brother."

"Austria," said Richard, walking up to the Archduke, with a mixture of frankness and dignity, while Leopold arose from his seat, as if involuntarily, and with the action of an automaton, whose motions depended upon some external impulse,—"Austria thinks he hath reason to be offended with England; England, that he hath cause to complain of Austria. Let them exchange forgiveness, that the peace of Europe, and the concord of this host, may remain unbroken. We are now joint supporters of a more glorious banner than ever blazed before an earthly prince, even the Banner of Salvation—let not, therefore, strife be betwixt us, for the symbol of our more worldly dignities; but let Leopold restore the pennon of England, if he has it in his power, and Richard will say, though from no motive save his love for Holy Church, that he repents him of the hasty mood in which he did insult the standard of Austria."

The Archduke stood still, sullen and discontented, with his eyes fixed on the floor, and his countenance lowering with smothered displeasure, which awe, mingled with awkwardness, prevented his giving vent to in words.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem hastened to break the embarrassing silence, and to bear witness for the Archduke of Austria, that he had exculpated himself, by a solemn oath, from all knowledge, direct or indirect, of the aggression done to the Banner of England.

"Then we have done the noble Archduke the greater wrong," said Richard; "and craving his pardon for imputing to him an outrage so cowardly, we extend our hand to him in token of renewed peace and amity.—But how is this? Austria refuses our uncovered hand, as he formerly refused our mailed glove? What! are we neither to be his mate in peace, nor his antagonist in war? Well, let it be so. We will take the slight esteem in which he holds us, as a penance for aught which we may have done against him in heat of blood, and will therefore hold the account between us cleared."

So saying, he turned from the Archduke with an air rather of dignity than scorn, leaving the Austrian apparently as much relieved by the removal of his eye, as is a sullen and truant school-boy when the glance of his severe pedagogue is withdrawn.

"Noble Earl of Champagne—Princely Marquis of Montserrat—Valiant Grand Master of the Templars—I am here a penitent in the confessional—Do any of you bring a charge, or claim amends from me?"

"I know not on what we could ground any," said the smooth-tongued Conrade, "unless it were that the King of England carries off from his poor brothers of the war all the fame which they might have hoped to gain in the expedition."

"My charge, if I am called on to make one," said the Master of the Templars, "is graver and deeper than that of the Marquis of Montserrat. It may be thought ill to beseem a military monk such as I to raise his voice where so many noble princes remain silent; but it concerns our whole host, and not least this noble King of England, that he should hear from some one to his face those charges, which there are enow to bring against him in his absence. We laud and honour the courage and high achievements of the King of England, but we feel aggrieved that he should, on all occasions, seize and maintain a precedence and superiority over us, which it becomes not independent princes to submit to. Much we might yield of our free will to his bravery, his zeal, his wealth, and his power; but he who snatches all, as matter of right, and leaves nothing to grant out of courtesy and favour, degrades us from allies into retainers and vassals, and sullies in the eyes of our soldiers and subjects, the lustre of our authority, which is no longer independently exercised. Since the royal Richard has asked the truth from us, he must neither be surprised nor angry when he hears one, to whom worldly pomp is prohibited, and secular authority is nothing, saving so far as it advances the prosperity of God's temple, and the prostration of the lion which goeth about seeking whom he may devour—whom he

hears, I say, such a one as I tell him the truth in reply to his question; which truth, even while I speak it, is, I know, confirmed by the heart of every one who hears me however respect may stifle their voices."

Richard coloured very highly while the Grand Master was making this direct and unvarnished attack upon his conduct, and the murmur of assent which followed it showed plainly, that almost all who were present acquiesced in the justice of the accusation. Incensed, and at the same time mortified, he yet foresaw that to give way to his headlong resentment, would be to give the cold and wary accuser the advantage over him which it was the Templar's principal object to obtain. He, therefore, with a strong effort, remained silent till he had repeated a pater noster, being the course which his confessor had enjoined him to pursue, when anger was likely to obtain dominion over him. The King then spoke with composure, though not without an imbittered tone, especially at the outset.

"And is it even so? And are our brethren at such pains to note the infirmities of our natural temper, and the rough precipitance of our zeal, which may sometimes have urged us to issue commands when there was little time to hold council? I could not have thought that offences, casual and unpremeditated like mine, could find such deep root in the hearts of my allies in this most holy cause, that for my sake they should withdraw their hand from the plough when the furrow was near the end; for my sake turn aside from the direct path to Jerusalem, which their swords have opened. I vainly thought that my small services might have outweighed my rash errors—that if it were remembered that I pressed to the van in an assault, it would not be forgotten that I was ever the last in the retreat—that, if I elevated my banner upon conquered fields of battle, it was all the advantage that I sought, while others were dividing the spoil. I may have called the conquered city by my name, but it was to others that I yielded the dominion. If I have been headstrong in urging bold counsels, I have not, methinks, spared my own blood or my people's, in carrying them into as bold execution—or if I have, in the hurry of march or battle, assumed a command over the soldiers of others, such have been ever treated as my own, when my wealth purchased the provisions and medicines which their own sovereigns could not procure.—But it shames me to remind you of what all but myself seem to have forgotten.—Let us rather look forward to our future measures; and believe me, brethren," he continued, his face kindling with eagerness, "you shall not find the pride, or the wrath, or the ambition of Richard, a stumbling-block of offence in the path to which religion and glory summon you, as with the trumpet of an archangel. Oh, no, no! never would I survive the thought, that my frailties and infirmities had been the means to sever this goodly fellowship of assembled princes. I would cut off my left hand with my right, could my doing so attest my sincerity. I will yield up voluntarily, all right to command in the host, even mine own liege subjects. They shall be led by such sovereigns as you may nominate, and their King, ever but too apt to exchange the leader's batoon for the adventurer's lance, will serve under the banner of Beau-Seant among the Templars—ay, or under that of Austria, if Austria will name a brave man to lead his forces. Or, if ye are yourselves a-weary of this war, and feel your armour chafe your tender bodies, leave but with Richard some ten or fifteen thousand of your soldiers to work out the accomplishment of your vow, and when Zion is won," he exclaimed, waving his hand aloft, as if displaying the standard of the Cross over Jerusalem—"when Zion is won, we will write upon her gates, not the name of Richard Plantagenet, but of those generous Princes who intrusted him with the means of conquest!"

The rough eloquence and determined expression of the military monarch, at once roused the drooping spirits of the Crusaders, reanimated their devotion, and, fixing their attention on the principal object of the expedition, made most of them who were present blush for having been moved by such petty subjects of complaint as had before engrossed them. Eye caught fire from eye, voice lent courage to voice. They resumed, as with one accord, the war-cry with which the sermon of Peter the Hermit was echoed back, and shouted aloud, "Lead us on, gallant Lion's-heart—none so worthy to lead where brave men follow. Lead us on—to Jerusalem—to Jerusalem! It is the will of God—it is the will of God! Blessed is he who shall lend an arm to its fulfilment!"

The shout, so suddenly and generally raised, was heard beyond the ring of sentinels who guarded the pavilion of Council, and spread among the soldiers of the host, who, inactive and dispirited by disease and climate, had begun, like their leaders, to droop in resolution; but the reappearance of Richard in renewed vigour, and the well-known shout which echoed from the assembly of the princes, at once rekindled their enthusiasm, and thousands and tens of thousands answered with the same shout of "Zion, Zion!—War, war!—instant battle with the infidels! It is the will of God—it is the will of God!"

The acclamations from without increased in their turn the enthusiasm which prevailed within the pavilion. Those who did not actually catch the flame, were afraid, at least for the time, to seem colder than others. There was no more speech except of a proud advance towards Jerusalem upon the expiry of the truce, and the measures to be taken in the mean time for supplying and recruiting the army. The council broke up, all apparently filled with the same enthusiastic purpose,—which, however, soon faded in the bosom of most, and never had an existence in that of others.

Of the latter class were the Marquis Conrade and the Grand Master of the Templars, who retired together to their quarters ill at ease, and malecontent with the events of the day.

"I ever told it to thee," said the latter, with the cold sardonic expression peculiar to him, "that Richard would burst through the flimsy wiles you spread for him, as would a lion through a spider's web. Thou seest he has but to speak, and his breath agitates these fickle fools as easily as the whirlwind catcheth scattered straws, and sweeps them together, or disperses them at its pleasure."

"When the blast has passed away," said Conrade, "the straws, which it made dance to its pipe, will settle to earth again."

"But know'st thou not besides," said the Templar, "that it seems, if this new purpose of conquest shall be abandoned and pass away, and each mighty prince shall again be left to such guidance as his own scanty brain can supply, Richard may yet probably become King of Jerusalem by compact, and establish those terms of treaty with the Soldan, which thou thyself thought'st him so likely to spurn at?"

"Now, by Mahound and Termagaunt, for Christian oaths are out of fashion," said Conrade, "say'st thou the proud King of England would unite his blood with a heathen Soldan?—My policy threw in that ingredient to make the whole treaty an abomination to him.—As bad for us that he become our master by an agreement, as by victory."

"Thy policy hath ill calculated Richard's digestion," answered the Templar; "I know his mind by a whisper from the Archbishop.—And then thy masterstroke respecting yonder banner—it has passed off with no more respect than two cubits of embroidered silk merited. Marquis Conrade, thy wit begins to halt—I will trust thy fine-spun measures no longer, but will try my own. Know'st thou not the people whom the Saracens call Charegites?"

"Surely," answered the Marquis; "they are desperate and besotted enthusiasts, who devote their lives to the advancement of religion—somewhat like Templars—only they are never known to pause in the race of their calling."

"Jest not," answered the scowling monk; "know, that one of these men has set down, in his bloody vow, the name of the Island Emperor yonder, to be hewn down as the chief enemy of the Moslem faith."

"A most judicious paynim," said Conrade. "May Mahomet send him his paradise for a reward!"

"He was taken in the camp by one of our spies

in private examination, frankly avowed his fixed determined purpose to me;" said the Grand ter.

Now the Heavens pardon them who prevented the ose of this most judicious Charegite!" answered rade.

He is my prisoner," added the Templar, "and se- ed from speech with others, as thou mayst sup- —but prisons have been broken"———

Chains left unlocked, and captives have escaped" swered the Marquis. "It is an ancient saying, ure dungeon but the grave."

When loose he resumes his quest"—continued the ary priest, "for it is the nature of this sort of hound never to quit the slot of the prey he has scented."

Say no more of it," said the Marquis; "I see policy—it is dreadful, but the emergency is im- nt."

only told thee of it," said the Templar, "that mayst keep thyself on thy guard, for the uproar be dreadful, and there is no knowing on whom English may vent their rage—Ay, and there is her risk—my page knows the counsels of this egite," he continued; "and moreover, he is a ish, self-willed fool, whom I would I were rid of, thwarts me by presuming to see with his own not mine. But our holy Order gives me power it a remedy to such inconvenience. Or stay— Saracen may find a good dagger in his cell, and rrant you he uses it as he breaks forth, which be of a surety so soon as the page enters with his "

It will give the affair a colour," said Conrade; d yet"———

Yet and *but*," said the Templar, "are words for —wise men neither hesitate nor retract—they lve and they execute."

CHAPTER XX.

When beauty leads the lion in her toils,
Such are her charms, he dare not raise his mane,
Far less expand the terror of his fangs.
So great Alcides made his club a distaff,
And spun to please fair Omphale.—*Anonymous.*

CHARD, the unsuspicious object of the dark treach- letailed in the closing part of the last chapter, ng effected, for the present at least, the trium- nt union of the Crusading princes, in a resolution rosecute the war with vigour, had it next at heart stablish tranquillity in his own family; and now he could judge more temperately, to inquire dis- ly into the circumstances leading to the loss of his ner, and the nature and the extent of the connex- betwixt his kinswoman Edith, and the banished nturer from Scotland.

ccordingly, the Queen and her household were tled with a visit from Sir Thomas de Vaux, re- ting the present attendance of the Lady Calista Montfaucon, the Queen's principal bower-woman, King Richard.

What am I to say, madam?" said the trembling ndant to the Queen. "He will slay us all."

Nay, fear not, madam," said De Vaux. "His esty hath spared the life of the Scottish knight, was the chief offender, and bestowed him upon Moorish physician—he will not be severe upon a though faulty."

Devise some cunning tale, wench," said Beren- a. "My husband hath too little time to make iry into the truth."

Tell the tale as it really happened," said Edith, t I tell it for thee."

With humble permission of her Majesty," said De ix, "I would say Lady Edith adviseth well; for ough King Richard is pleased to believe what it ses your Grace to tell him, yet I doubt his having same deference for the Lady Calista, and in this cial matter."

The Lord of Gilsland is right," said the Lady Ca- , much agitated at the thoughts of the investiga- which was to take place; "and, besides, if I had *ence of mind enough to forge a plausible story,*

beshrew me if I think I should have the courage to tell it."

In this candid humour, the Lady Calista was conducted by De Vaux to the King, and made, as she had proposed, a full confession of the decoy by which the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard had been induced to desert his post; exculpating the Lady Edith, who, she was aware, would not fail to exculpate herself, and laying the full burden on the Queen, her mistress, whose share of the frolic, she well knew, would appear the most venial in the eyes of Cœur de Lion. In truth, Richard was a fond—almost an uxorious husband. The first burst of his wrath had long since passed away, and he was not disposed severely to censure what could not now be amended. The wily Lady Calista, accustomed from her earliest childhood to fathom the intrigues of a court, and watch the indications of a sovereign's will, hastened back to the Queen with the speed of a lapwing, charged with the King's commands that she should expect a speedy visit from him; to which the bower-lady added a commentary founded on her own observation, tending to show that Richard meant just to preserve so much severity as might bring his royal consort to repent of her frolic, and then to extend to her and all concerned, his gracious pardon.

"Sits the wind in that corner, wench?" said the Queen, much relieved by this intelligence; "believe me, that, great commander as he is, Richard will find it hard to circumvent us in this matter; and that, as the Pyrenean shepherds are wont to say in my native Navarre, many a one comes for wool, and goes back shorn."

Having possessed herself of all the information which Calista could communicate, the royal Berengaria arrayed herself in her most becoming dress, and awaited with confidence the arrival of the heroic Richard.

He arrived, and found himself in the situation of a prince entering an offending province, in the confidence that his business will only be to inflict rebuke, and receive submission, when he unexpectedly finds it in a state of complete defiance and insurrection. Berengaria well knew the power of her charms, and the extent of Richard's affection, and felt assured that she could make her own terms good, now that the first tremendous explosion of his anger had expended itself without mischief. Far from listening to the King's intended rebuke, as what the levity of her conduct had justly deserved, she extenuated, nay defended, as a harmless frolic, that which she was accused of. She denied, indeed, with many a pretty form of negation, that she had directed Nectabanus absolutely to entice the knight farther than the brink of the Mount on which he kept watch—and indeed this was so far true, that she had not designed Sir Kenneth to be introduced into her tent,—and then, eloquent in urging her own defence, the Queen was far more so in pressing upon Richard the charge of unkindness, in refusing her so poor a boon as the life of an unfortunate knight, who, by her thoughtless prank, had been brought within the danger of martial law. She wept and sobbed while she enlarged on her husband's obduracy on this score, as a rigour which had threatened to make her unhappy for life, whenever she should reflect that she had given, unthinkingly, the remote cause for such a tragedy. The vision of the slaughtered victim would have haunted her dreams—nay, for aught she knew, since such things often happened, his actual spectre might have stood by her waking couch. To all this misery of the mind was she exposed by the severity of one, who, while he pretended to dote upon her slightest glance, would not forego one act of poor revenge, though the issue was to render her miserable.

All this flow of female eloquence was accompanied with the usual arguments of tears and sighs, and uttered with such tone and action, as seemed to show that the Queen's resentment arose neither from pride nor sullenness, but from feelings hurt at finding her consequence with her husband less than she had expected to possess.

The good King Richard was considerably embarrassed. He tried in vain to reason with one, whose

very jealousy of his affection rendered her incapable of listening to argument, nor could he bring himself to use the restraint of lawful authority to a creature so beautiful in the midst of her unreasonable displeasure. He was, therefore, reduced to the defensive, endeavoured gently to chide her suspicions, and soothe her displeasure, and recalled to her mind that she need not look back upon the past with recollections either of remorse or supernatural fear, since Sir Kenneth was alive and well, and had been bestowed by him upon the great Arabian physician, who, doubtless, of all men, knew best how to keep him living. But this seemed the unkindest cut of all, and the Queen's sorrow was renewed at the idea of a Saracen—a mediciner—obtaining a boon, for which, with bare head, and on bended knee, she had petitioned her husband in vain. At this new charge, Richard's patience began rather to give way, and he said, in a serious tone of voice, "Berengaria, the physician saved my life. If it is of value in your eyes, you will not grudge him a higher recompense than the only one I could prevail on him to accept."

The Queen was satisfied she had urged her coquettish displeasure to the verge of safety.

"My Richard," she said, "why brought you not that sage to me, that England's Queen might show how she esteemed him, who could save from extinction the lamp of chivalry, the glory of England, and the light of poor Berengaria's life and hope?"

In a word, the matrimonial dispute was ended; but, that some penalty might be paid to justice, both King and Queen accorded in laying the whole blame on the agent Nectabanus, who (the Queen being by this time well weary of the poor dwarf's humour) was, with his royal consort Guenevra, sentenced to be banished from the Court; and the unlucky dwarf only escaped a supplementary whipping, from the Queen's assurances that he had already sustained personal chastisement. It was decreed farther, that as an envoy was shortly to be despatched to Saladin, acquainting him with the resolution of the Council to resume hostilities so soon as the truce was ended, and as Richard proposed to send a valuable present to the Soldan, in acknowledgment of the high benefit he had derived from the services of El Hakim, the two unhappy creatures should be added to it as curiosities, which, from their extremely grotesque appearance, and the shattered state of their intellect, were gifts that might well pass between sovereign and sovereign.

Richard had that day yet another female encounter to sustain; but he advanced to it with comparative indifference, for Edith, though beautiful, and highly esteemed by her royal relative—nay, although she had from his unjust suspicions actually sustained the injury of which Berengaria only affected to complain, still was neither Richard's wife nor mistress, and he feared her reproaches less, although founded in reason, than those of the Queen, though unjust and fantastical. Having requested to speak with her apart, he was ushered into her apartment, adjoining that of the Queen, whose two female Coptish slaves remained on their knees in the most remote corner during the interview. A thin black veil extended its ample folds over the tall and graceful form of the high-born maiden, and she wore not upon her person any female ornament of what kind soever. She arose and made a low reverence when Richard entered, resumed her seat at his command, and, when he sat down beside her, waited, without uttering a syllable, until he should communicate his pleasure.

Richard, whose custom it was to be familiar with Edith, as their relationship authorized, felt this reception chilling, and opened the conversation with some embarrassment.

"Our fair cousin," he at length said, "is angry with us; and we own that strong circumstances have induced us, without cause, to suspect her of conduct alien to what we have ever known in her course of life. But while we walk in this misty valley of humanity, men will mistake shadows for substances. Can my fair cousin not forgive her somewhat vehement kinsman, Richard?"

"Who can refuse forgiveness to *Richard*," answered Edith, "provided Richard can obtain pardon of the *King?*"

"Come, my kinswoman," replied Cœur de Lion, "this is all too solemn. By Our Lady, such a melancholy countenance, and this ample sable veil, might make men think thou wert a new-made widow, or had lost a betrothed lover, at least. Cheer up—thou hast heard doubtless that there is no real cause for wo—why then keep up the form of mourning?"

"For the departed honour of Plantagenet—for the glory which hath left my father's house."

Richard frowned. "Departed honour! glory which hath left our house!"—he repeated, angrily; "but my cousin Edith is privileged. I have judged her too hastily, she has therefore a right to deem of me too harshly. But tell me at least in what *I* have faulted."

"Plantagenet," said Edith, "should have either pardoned an offence, or punished it. It misbecomes him to assign free men, Christians, and brave knights, to the fetters of the infidels. It becomes him not to compromise and barter, or to grant life under the forfeiture of liberty. To have doomed the unfortunate to death might have been severity, but had a show of justice; to condemn him to slavery and exile, was barefaced tyranny."

"I see, my fair cousin," said Richard, "you are of those pretty ones who think an absent lover as bad as none, or as a dead one. Be patient; half a score of light horsemen may yet follow and redeem the error, if thy gallant have in keeping any secret which might render his death more convenient than his banishment."

"Peace with thy scurrile jests!" answered Edith, colouring deeply—"Think rather, that for the indulgence of thy mood thou hast lopped from this great enterprise one goodly limb, deprived the Cross of one of its most brave supporters, and placed a servant of the true God in the hands of the heathen; hast given, too, to minds as suspicious as thou hast shown thine own in this matter, some right to say, that Richard Cœur de Lion banished the bravest soldier in his camp, lest his name in battle might match his own."

"I—I!" exclaimed Richard, now indeed greatly moved—"am I one to be jealous of renown?—I would he were here to profess such an equality! I would waive my rank and my crown, and meet him, manlike, in the lists, that it might appear whether Richard Plantagenet had room to fear or to envy the prowess of mortal man. Come, Edith, thou think'st not as thou say'st. Let not anger or grief for the absence of thy lover, make thee unjust to thy kinsman, who, notwithstanding all thy fetchiness, values thy good report as high as that of any one living."

"The absence of my lover?" said the Lady Edith. "But yes—he may be well termed my lover, who hath paid so dear for the title. Unworthy as I might be of such homage, I was to him like a light, leading him forward in the noble path of chivalry; but that I forgot my rank, or that he presumed beyond his, is false, were a king to speak it."

"My fair cousin," said Richard, "do not put words in my mouth which I have not spoken. I said not you had graced this man beyond the favour which a good knight may earn, even from a princess, whatever be his native condition. But, by Our Lady, I know something of this love-gear—it begins with mute respect and distant reverence; but when opportunities occur, familiarity increases, and so—But it skills not talking with one who thinks herself wiser than all the world."

"My kinsman's councils I willingly listen to, when they are such," said Edith, "as convey no insult to my rank and character."

"Kings, my fair cousin, do not council, but rather command," said Richard.

"Soldans do indeed command," said Edith, "but it is because they have slaves to govern."

"Come, you might learn to lay aside this scorn of Soldanrie, when you hold so high of a Scot," said the King. "I hold Saladin to be truer to his word than

William of Scotland, who must needs be called a forsooth—he hath foully faulted towards me, in ; to send the auxiliary aid he promised. Let me e, Edith, thou mayst live to prefer a true Turk lse Scot."

—never!" answered Edith—"not should Richimself embrace the false religion, which he d the seas to expel from Palestine."

ou wilt have the last word," said Richard, "and halt have it. Even think of me what thou wilt, Edith. I shall not forget that we are near and ousins."

saying, he took his leave in fair fashion, but very atisfied with the result of his visit.

as the fourth day after Sir Kenneth had been sed from the camp; and King Richard sat in vilion, enjoying an evening breeze from the which, with unusual coolness on her wings, d breathed from merry England for the refreshof her adventurous monarch, as he was graducovering the full strength which was necessary y on his gigantic projects. There was no one im, De Vaux having been sent to Ascalon to up reinforcements and supplies of military mu, and most of his other attendants being occun different departments, all preparing for the ning of hostilities, and for a grand preparatory of the army of the Crusaders, which was to lace the next day. The King sat, listening to sy hum among the soldiery, the clatter from the where horse-shoes were preparing, and from its of the armourers, who were repairing harthe voice of the soldiers too, as they passed and ed, was loud and cheerful, carrying with its very n assurance of high and excited courage, and ien of approaching victory. While Richard's ank in these sounds with delight, and while he l himself to the visions of conquest and of glory they suggested, an equery told him that a mes- from Saladin waited without.

limit him instantly," said the King, "and with nour, Josceline."

English knight accordingly introduced a perpparently of no higher rank than a Nubian whose appearance was nevertheless highly ing. He was of superb stature and nobly formed, s commanding features, although almost jet- showed nothing of negro descent. He wore his coal-black locks a milk-white turban, and is shoulders a short mantle of the same colour, n front and at the sleeves, under which appeared let of dressed leopard's skin reaching within a readth of the knee. The rest of his muscular both legs and arms, were bare, excepting that d sandals on his feet, and wore a collar and ets of silver. A straight broadsword, with a of boxwood, and a sheath covered with snakewas suspended from his waist. In his right he held a short javelin, with a broad, bright, ead, of a span in length, and in his left he led, ash of twisted silk and gold, a large and noble ound."

messenger prostrated himself, at the same artially uncovering his shoulders, in sign of hu ion, and having touched the earth with his fore- rose so far as to rest on one knee, while he de- l to the King a silken napkin, enclosing another h of gold, within which was a letter from Sala- the original Arabic, with a translation into an-English, which may be modernized thus:— ladin, King of Kings, to Melech Ric, the Lion gland. Whereas, we are informed by thy last ge, that thou hast chosen war rather than and our enmity rather than our friendship, we nt thee as one blinded in this matter, and trust y to convince thee of thine error, by the help of vincible forces of the thousand tribes, when mmed, the Prophet of God and Allah, the God Prophet, shall judge the controversy betwixt us. nat remains, we make noble account of thee, the gifts which thou hast sent us, and of the warfs, singular in their deformity as Ysop, and il as the lute of Isaack. And in requital of okens from the treasure-house of thy bounty, behold we have sent thee a Nubian slave, named Zohauk, of whom judge not by his complexion, according to the foolish ones of the earth, in respect the dark-rinded fruit hath the most exquisite flavour. Know that he is strong to execute the will of his master, as Rustan of Zablestan; also he is wise to give counsel when thou shalt learn to hold communication with him, for the Lord of Speech hath been stricken with silence betwixt the ivory walls of his palace. We commend him to thy care, hoping the hour may not be distant when he may render thee good service. And herewith we bid thee farewell; trusting that our most holy Prophet may yet call thee to a sight of the truth, failing which illumination, our desire is, for the speedy restoration of thy royal health, that Allah may judge between thee and us in a plain field of battle."

And the missive was sanctioned by the signature and seal of the Soldan

Richard surveyed the Nubian in silence as he stood before him, his looks bent upon the ground, his arms folded on his bosom, with the appearance of a black marble statue of the most exquisite workmanship, waiting life from the touch of a Prometheus. The King of England, who, as it was emphatically said of his successor Henry the Eighth, loved to look upon A MAN, was well pleased with the thewes, sinews, and symmetry of him whom he now surveyed, and questioned him in the lingua Franca, "Art thou a pagan?"

The slave shook his head, and raising his finger to his brow, crossed himself in token of his Christianity, then resumed his posture of motionless humility.

"A Nubian Christian, doubtless," said Richard, "and mutilated of the organ of speech by these heathen dogs?"

The mute again slowly shook his head, in token of negative, pointed with his forefinger to Heaven, and then laid it upon his own lips.

"I understand thee," said Richard; "thou dost suffer under the infliction of God, not by the cruelty of man. Canst thou clean an armour and belt, and buckle it in time of need?"

The mute nodded, and stepping towards the coat of mail, which hung with the shield and helmet of the chivalrous monarch, upon the pillar of the tent, he handled it with such nicety of address, as sufficiently to show that he fully understood the business of the armour-bearer.

"Thou art an apt, and wilt doubtless be a useful knave—thou shalt wait in my chamber, and on my person" said the King, "to show how much I value the gift of the royal Soldan. If thou hast no tongue, it follows thou canst carry no tales, neither provoke me to be sudden by any unfit reply."

The Nubian again prostrated himself till his brow touched the earth, then stood erect, at some paces distant, as waiting for his new master's commands.

"Nay, thou shalt commence thy office presently," said Richard, "for I see a speck of rust darkening on that shield; and when I shake it in the face of Saladin, it should be bright and unsullied as the Soldan's honour and mine own."

A horn was winded without, and presently Sir Henry Neville entered with a packet of despatches.—"From England, my lord," he said as he delivered it.

"From England—our own England!" repeated Richard, in a tone of melancholy enthusiasm—"Alas! they little think how hard their Sovereign has been beset by sickness and sorrow—faint friends and forward enemies." Then opening the despatches, he said, hastily, "Ha!" this comes from no peaceful land—they too have their feuds.—Neville, begone—I must peruse these tidings alone, and at leisure."

Neville withdrew accordingly, and Richard was soon absorbed in the melancholy details which had been conveyed to him from England, concerning the factions that were tearing to pieces his native dominions—the disunion of his brothers, John and Geoffrey, and the quarrels of both with the High Justiciary Longchamp, Bishop of Ely,—the oppressions practised by the nobles upon the peasantry, and rebellion of the latter against their masters, which had produced ever

where scenes of discord, and in some instances the effusion of blood. Details of incidents mortifying to his pride, and derogatory from his authority, were intermingled with the earnest advice of his wisest and most attached counsellors, that he should presently return to England, as his presence offered the only hope of saving the kingdom from all the horrors of civil discord, of which France and Scotland were likely to avail themselves. Filled with the most painful anxiety, Richard read, and again read, the ill-omened letters, compared the intelligence which some of them contained with the same facts as differently stated in others, and soon became totally insensible to whatever was passing around him, although seated, for the sake of coolness, close to the entrance of his tent, and having the curtains withdrawn, so that he could see and be seen by the guards and others who were stationed without.

Deeper in the shadow of the pavilion, and busied with the task his new master had imposed, sat the Nubian slave, with his back rather turned towards the King. He had finished adjusting and cleaning the hauberk and brigandine, and was now busily employed on a broad pavesse, or buckler, of unusual size, and covered with steel-plating, which Richard often used in reconnoitring, or actually storming, fortified places, as a more effectual protection against missile weapons, than the narrow triangular shield used on horseback. This pavesse bore neither the royal lions of England, nor any other device, to attract the observation of the defenders of the walls against which it was advanced; the care, therefore, of the armourer was addressed to causing its surface to shine as bright as crystal, in which he seemed to be peculiarly successful. Beyond the Nubian, and scarce visible from without, lay the large dog, which might be termed his brother slave, and which, as if he felt awed by being transferred to a royal owner, was couched close to the side of the mute, with head and ears on the ground, and his limbs and tail drawn close around and under him.

While the Monarch and his new attendant were thus occupied, another actor crept upon the scene, and mingled among the group of English yeomen, about a score of whom, respecting the unusually pensive posture and close occupation of their sovereign, were, contrary to their wont, keeping a silent guard in front of his tent. It was not, however, more vigilant than usual. Some were playing at games of hazard with small pebbles, others spoke together in whispers of the approaching day of battle, and several lay asleep, their bulky limbs folded in their green mantles.

Amid these careless warders glided the puny form of a little old Turk, poorly dressed like a marabout or santon of the desert, a sort of enthusiasts, who sometimes ventured into the camp of the Crusaders, though treated always with contumely, and often with violence. Indeed, the luxury and profligate indulgence of the Christian leaders had occasioned a motley concourse in their tents, of musicians, courtezans, Jewish merchants, Copts, Turks, and all the varied refuse of the Eastern nations; so that the caftan and turban, though to drive both from the Holy Land was the professed object of the expedition, were nevertheless neither an uncommon nor an alarming sight in the camp of the Crusaders. When, however, the little insignificant figure we have described approached so nigh as to receive some interruption from the warders, he dashed his dusky green turban from his head, showed that his beard and eyebrows were shaved like those of a professed buffoon, and that the expression of his fantastic and writhen features, as well as of his little black eyes, which glittered like jet, was that of a crazed imagination.

"Dance, marabout," cried the soldiers, acquainted with the manners of these wandering enthusiasts—"dance, or we will scourge thee with our bowstrings, till thou spin as never top did under schoolboy's lash."—Thus shouted the reckless warders, as much delighted at having a subject to tease, as a child when *he catches a butterfly, or a schoolboy* upon discovering *a bird's nest.*

The marabout, as if happy to do their behests, *bounded from the earth, and* spun his giddy round before them with singular agility, which, when contrasted with his slight and wasted figure, and diminutive appearance, made him resemble a withered leaf twirled round and around at the pleasure of the winter's breeze. His single lock of hair streamed upwards from his bald and shaven head, as if some genie upheld him by it; and indeed it seemed as if supernatural art were necessary to the execution of the wild whirling dance, in which scarce the tiptoe of the performer was seen to touch the ground. Amid the vagaries of his performance, he flew here and there, from one spot to another, still approaching, however, though almost imperceptibly, to the entrance of the royal tent; so that, when at length he sunk exhausted on the earth, after two or three bounds still higher than those which he had yet executed, he was not above thirty yards from the King's person.

"Give him water," said one yeoman; "they always crave a drink after their merry-go-round."

"Aha, water, say'st thou, Long Allen?"—exclaimed another archer, with a most scornful emphasis on the despised element; "how wouldst like such beverage thyself, after such a morrice dancing?"

"The devil a water-drop he gets here," said a third. "We will teach the light-footed old infidel to be a good Christian, and drink wine of Cyprus."

"Ay, ay," said a fourth; "and in case he be restive fetch thou Dick Hunter's horn, that he drenches his mare withal."

A circle was instantly formed around the prostrate and exhausted dervise, and while one tall yeoman raised his feeble form from the ground, another presented to him a huge flagon of wine. Incapable of speech, the old man shook his head, and waved away from him with his hand the liquor forbidden by the Prophet; but his tormentors were not thus to be appeased.

"The horn, the horn!" exclaimed one. "Little difference between a Turk and a Turkish horse, and we will use him conforming."

"By Saint George, you will choke him!" said Long Allen; "and, besides, it is a sin to throw away upon a heathen dog as much wine as would serve a good Christian for a treble night-cap."

"Thou know'st not the nature of these Turks and pagans, Long Allen," replied Henry Woodstall; "I tell thee, man, that this flagon of Cyprus will set his brains a-spinning, just in the opposite direction that they went whirling in the dancing, and so bring him, as it were, to himself again.—Choke? he will no more choke on it than Ben's black bitch on the pound of butter."

"And for grudging it," said Tomalin Blacklees, "why shouldst thou grudge the poor paynim-devil a drop of drink on earth, since thou know'st he is no to have a drop to cool the tip of his tongue through a long eternity?"

"That were hard laws, look ye," said Long Allen, "only for being a Turk, as his father was before him. Had he been Christian turned heathen, I grant you the hottest corner had been good winter quarters for him."

"Hold thy peace, Long Allen," said Henry Woodstall; "I tell thee that tongue of thine is not the shortest limb about thee, and I prophecy that it will bring thee into disgrace with Father Francis, as once about the black-eyed Syrian wench.—But here comes the horn.—Be active a bit, man, wilt thou, and just force open his teeth with the haft of thy dudgeon-dagger."

"Hold, hold—he is conformable," said Tomalin "see, see, he signs for the goblet—give him room boys. *Oop sey es*, quoth the Dutchman—down it goes like lamb's-wool! Nay, they are true topers when once they begin—your Turk never coughs in his cup, or stints in his liquoring."

In fact, the dervise, or whatever he was, drank, or at least seemed to drink, the large flagon to the very bottom at a single pull; and when he took it from his lips, after the whole contents were exhausted, only uttered, with a deep sigh, the words Allah kerim, or God is merciful. There was a laugh among the yeomen who witnessed this pottle-deep potation, as

obstreperous, as to rouse and disturb the King, who, raising his finger, said, angrily, "How, knaves, no respect, no observance?"

All were at once hushed into silence, well acquainted with the temper of Richard, which at some times admitted of much military familiarity, and at others exacted the most precise respect, although the latter humour was of much more rare occurrence. Hastening to a more reverent distance from the royal person, they attempted to drag along with them the marabout, who, exhausted apparently by previous fatigue, or overpowered by the potent draught he had just swallowed, resisted being moved from the spot, both with struggles and groans.

"Leave him still, ye fools," whispered Long Allen to his mates; "by Saint Christopher, you will make our Dickon go beside himself, and we shall have his dagger presently fly at our cotards. Leave him alone, in less than a minute he will sleep like a dormouse."

At the same moment, the Monarch darted another impatient glance to the spot, and all retreated in haste, leaving the dervise on the ground, unable, as it seemed, to stir a single limb or joint of his body. In a moment afterward, all was as still and quiet as it had been before the intrusion.

CHAPTER XXI.

——and wither'd Murder,
Alarm'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost.—*Macbeth.*

For the space of a quarter of an hour, or longer, after the incident related, all remained perfectly quiet in the front of the royal habitation. The King read, and mused in the entrance of his pavilion—behind, and with his back turned to the same entrance, the Nubian slave still burnished the ample pavesse—in front of all, at a hundred paces distant, the yeomen of the guard stood, sat, or lay extended on the grass, attentive to their own sports, but pursuing them in silence, while on the esplanade betwixt them and the front of the tent, lay, scarcely to be distinguished from a bundle of rags, the senseless form of the marabout.

But the Nubian had the advantage of a mirror, from the brilliant reflection which the surface of the highly polished shield now afforded, by means of which he beheld, to his alarm and surprise, that the marabout raised his head gently from the ground, so as to survey all around him, moving with a well-adjusted precaution, which seemed entirely inconsistent with a state of ebriety. He couched his head instantly, as if satisfied he was unobserved, and began, with the slightest possible appearance of voluntary effort, to drag himself, as if by chance, ever nearer and nearer to the King, but stopping, and remaining fixed at intervals, like the spider, which, moving towards her object, collapses into apparent lifelessness, when she thinks she is the subject of observation. This species of movement appeared suspicious to the Ethiopian, who, on his part, prepared himself, as quietly as possible, to interfere, the instant that interference should seem to be necessary.

The marabout mean while glided on gradually and imperceptibly, serpent-like, or rather snail-like, till he was about ten yards' distance from Richard's person, when, starting on his feet, he sprung forward with the bound of a tiger, stood at the King's back in less than an instant, and brandished aloft the cangiar, or poniard, which he had hidden in his sleeve. Not the presence of his whole army could have saved their heroic Monarch—but the motions of the Nubian had been as well calculated as those of the enthusiast, and ere the latter could strike, the former caught his uplifted arm. Turning his fanatical wrath upon what thus unexpectedly interposed betwixt him and his object, the Charegite, for such was the seeming marabout, dealt the Nubian a blow with the dagger, which, however, only grazed his arm, while the far superior strength of the Ethiopian easily dashed him to the ground. Aware of what had passed, Richard had now arisen, and with little more of surprise, anger, or interest of any kind in his countenance, than an ordinary man would show in brushing off and crushing an intrusive wasp, caught up the stool on which he had been sitting, and exclaiming only, "Ha, dog!" dashed almost to pieces the skull of the assassin, who uttered twice, once in a loud, and once in a broken tone, the words "Allah ackbar!"—God is victorious—and expired at the King's feet.

"Ye are careful warders," said Richard to his archers, in a tone of scornful reproach, as, aroused by the bustle of what had passed, in terror and tumult they now rushed into his tent;—"watchful sentinels ye are, to leave me to do such hangman's work with my own hand.—Be silent all of you, and cease your senseless clamour! saw ye never a dead Turk before?—Here—cast that carrion out of the camp, strike the head from the trunk, and stick it on a lance, taking care to turn the face to Mecca, that he may the easier tell the foul impostor, on whose inspiration he came hither, how he has sped on his errand.—For thee, my swart and silent friend," he added, turning to the Ethiopian—"But how's this?—thou art wounded—and with a poisoned weapon, I warrant me, for by force of stab so weak an animal as that could scarce hope to do more than raze the lion's hide.—Suck the poison from his wound one of you—the venom is harmless on the lips, though fatal when it mingles with the blood."

The yeomen looked on each other confusedly and with hesitation, the apprehension of so strange a danger prevailing with those who feared no other.

"How now, sirrahs," continued the King, "are you dainty-lipped, or do you fear death, that you dally thus?"

"Not the death of a man," said Long Allen, to whom the King looked as he spoke; "but methinks I would not die like a poisoned rat for the sake of a black chattel there, that is bought and sold in a market like a Martlemas ox."

"His Grace speaks to men of sucking poison," muttered another yeoman, "as if he said, Go to swallow a goosebery!"

"Nay," said Richard, "I never bade man do that which I would not do myself."

And, without farther ceremony, and in spite of the general expostulations of those around, and the respectful opposition of the Nubian himself, the King of England applied his lips to the wound of the black slave, treating with ridicule all remonstrances, and overpowering all resistance. He had no sooner intermitted his singular occupation, than the Nubian started from him, and, casting a scarf over his arm, intimated by gestures, as firm in purpose as they were respectful in manner, his determination not to permit the Monarch to renew so degrading an employment. Long Allen also interposed, saying, that if it were necessary to prevent the King engaging again in a treatment of this kind, his own lips, tongue, and teeth, were at the service of the negro, (as he called the Ethiopian,) and that he would eat him up bodily, rather than King Richard's mouth should again approach him.

Neville, who entered with other officers, added his remonstrances.

"Nay, nay, make not a needless halloo about a hart that the hounds have lost, or a danger when it is over," said the King—"the wound will be a trifle, for the blood is scarce drawn—an angry cat had dealt a deeper scratch—and for me, I have but to take a drachm of orvietan by way of precaution, though it is needless."

Thus spoke Richard, a little ashamed, perhaps, of his own condescension, though sanctioned both by humanity and gratitude. But when Neville continued to make remonstrances on the peril to his royal person, the King imposed silence on him.

"Peace, I prithee—make no more of it—I did it but to show these ignorant prejudiced knaves how they might help each other when these cowardly caitiffs come against us with sarbacanes and poisoned shafts.—But," he added, "take thee this Nubian to thy quarters, Neville—I have changed my mind touching

him—let him be well cared for—But, hark in thine ear—see that he escapes thee not—there is more in him than seems. Let him have all liberty, so that he leave not the camp.—And you, ye beef-devouring, wine swilling English mastiffs, get ye to your guard again, and be sure you keep it more warily. Think not you are now in your own land of fair play, where men speak before they strike, and shake hands ere they cut throats. Danger in our land walks openly, and with his blade drawn, and defies the foe whom he means to assault; but here, he challenges you with a silk glove instead of a steel-gauntlet, cuts your throat with the feather of a turtle-dove, stabs you with the tongue of a priest's brooch, or throttles you with the lace of my lady's bodice. Go to—keep your eyes open and your mouths shut—drink less and look sharper about you; or I will place your huge stomachs on such short allowance, as would pinch the stomach of a patient Scottishman."

The yeomen, abashed and mortified, withdrew to their post, and Neville was beginning to remonstrate with his master upon the risk of passing over thus slightly their negligence upon their duty, and the propriety of an example in a case so peculiarly aggravated as the permitting one so suspicious as the marabout to approach within dagger's length of his person, when Richard interrupted him with "Speak not of it, Neville—wouldst thou have me avenge a petty risk to myself more severely than the loss of England's banner? It has been stolen—stolen by a thief, or delivered up by a traitor, and no blood has been shed for it.—My sable friend, thou art an expounder of mysteries, saith the illustrious Soldan—now would I give thee thine own weight in gold, if, by raising one still blacker than thyself, or by what other means thou wilt, thou couldst show me the thief who did mine honour that wrong. What say'st thou? ha."

The mute seemed desirous to speak, but uttered only that imperfect sound proper to his melancholy condition, then folded his arms, looked on the King with an eye of intelligence, and nodded in answer to his question.

"How!" said Richard, with joyful impatience. "Wilt thou undertake to make discovery in this matter?"

The Nubian slave repeated the same motion.

"But how shall we understand each other?" said the King.—"Canst thou write, good fellow?"

The slave again nodded in assent.

"Give him writing-tools," said the King. "They were readier in my father's tent than mine—but they be somewhere about, if this scorching climate have not dried up the ink.—Why, this fellow is a jewel—a black diamond, Neville."

"So please you, my liege," said Neville, "if I might speak my poor mind, it were ill dealing in this ware. This man must be a wizard, and wizards deal with the Enemy, who hath most interest to sow tares among the wheat, and bring dissension into our councils, and"——

"Peace, Neville," said Richard. "Halloo to your northern hound when he is close on the haunch of the deer, and hope to recall him, but seek not to stop Plantagenet when he hath hope to retrieve his honour."

The slave, who during this discussion had been writing, in which art he seemed skilful, now arose, and pressing what he had written to his brow, prostrated himself as usual, ere he delivered it into the King's hands. The scroll was in French, although their intercourse had hitherto been conducted by Richard in the lingua Franca.

"To Richard, the conquering and invincible King of England, this from the humblest of his slaves. Mysterious are the sealed caskets of Heaven, but wisdom may devise means to open the lock. Were your slave stationed where the leaders of the Christian host were made to pass before him in order, doubt nothing, that if he who did the injury whereof my King complains shall be among the number, he *may be made manifest in* his iniquity, though it be *hidden under seven veils.*"

"*Now, by Saint George!*" said King Richard, "*thou hast spoken most opportunely.*—Neville, thou know'st, that when we muster our troops to-morrow, the princes have agreed, that to expiate the affront offered to England in the theft of her Banner, the leaders should pass our new standard as it floats on Saint George's Mount, and salute it with formal regard. Believe me, the secret traitor will not dare to absent himself from an expurgation so solemn, lest his very absence should be matter of suspicion. There will we place our sable man of counsel, and, if his art can detect the villain, leave me to deal with him."

"My liege," said Neville, with the frankness of an English baron, "beware what work you begin. Here is the concord of our holy league unexpectedly renewed—will you, upon such suspicion as a negre slave can instil, tear open wounds so lately closed—or will you use the solemn procession, adopted for the reparation of your honour, and establishment of unanimity amongst the discording princes, as the means of again finding out new cause of offence, or reviving ancient quarrels? It were scarce too strong to say, this were a breach of the declaration your Grace made to the assembled Council of the Crusade."

"Neville," said the King, sternly interrupting him, "thy zeal makes thee presumptuous and unmannerly. Never did I promise to abstain from taking whatever means were most promising, to discover the infamous author of the attack on my honour. Ere I had done so, I would have renounced my kingdom—my life. All my declarations were under this necessary and absolute qualification;—only, if Austria had stepped forth and owned the injury like a man, I proffered, for the sake of Christendom, to have forgiven *him.*"

"But," continued the baron, anxiously, "what hope that this juggling slave of Saladin will not palter with your Grace?"

"Peace, Neville," said the King; "thou think'st thyself mighty wise, and art but a fool. Mind thou my charge touching this fellow—there is more in him than thy Westmoreland wit can fathom.—And thou, swart and silent, prepare to perform the feat thou hast promised, and, by the word of a King, thou shalt choose thine own recompense.—Lo, he writes again."

The mute accordingly wrote and delivered to the King, with the same form as before, another slip of paper, containing these words.—"The will of the King is the law to his slave—nor doth it become him to ask guerdon for discharge of his devoir."

"*Guerdon* and *devoir!*" said the King interrupting himself as he read, and speaking to Neville in the English tongue with some emphasis on the words,—"These Eastern people will profit by the Crusaders—they are acquiring the language of chivalry!—And see, Neville, how discomposed that fellow looks—were it not for his colour he would blush. I should not think it strange if he understood what I say—they are perilous linguists."

"The poor slave cannot endure your Grace's eye," said Neville; "it is nothing more."

"Well, but," continued the King, striking the paper with his finger, as he proceeded, "this bold scroll proceeds to say, that our trusty mute is charged with a message from Saladin to the Lady Edith Plantagenet, and craves means and opportunity to deliver it. What think'st thou of a request so modest—ha, Neville?"

"I cannot say," said Neville, "how such freedom may relish with your Grace; but the lease of the messenger's neck would be a short one, who should carry such a request to the Soldan on the part of your Majesty."

"Nay, I thank Heaven that I covet none of his sunburnt beauties," said Richard; "and for punishing this fellow for discharging his master's errand, and that when he has just saved my life—methinks it were something too summary. I'll tell thee, Neville, a secret—for, although our sable and mute minister be present, he cannot, thou know'st, tell it over again, even if he should chance to understand us—I tell thee, that, for this fortnight past, I have been under a strange spell, and I would I were disenchanted. There has no sooner any one done me good service but to you, he cancels his interest in me by some deep

injury; and, on the other hand, he who hath deserved death at my hands for some treachery or some insult, is sure to be the very person, of all others, who confers upon me some obligation that overbalances his demerits, and renders respite of his sentence a debt due from my honour. Thus, thou seest, I am deprived of the best part of my royal function, since I can neither punish men nor reward them. Until the influence of this disqualifying planet be passed away, I will say nothing concerning the request of this our liable attendant, save that it is an unusually bold one, and that his best chance of finding grace in our eyes will be, to endeavour to make the discovery which he proposes to achieve in our behalf. Mean while, Neville, do thou look well to him, and let him be honourably cared for.—And hark thee once more," he said, in a low whisper, "seek out yonder hermit of Engaddi, and bring him to me forthwith, be he saint or savage, madman or sane. Let me see him privately."

Neville retired from the royal tent, signing to the Nubian to follow him, and much surprised at what he had seen and heard, and especially at the unusual demeanour of the King. In general, no task was so easy as to discover Richard's immediate course of sentiment and feeling, though it might, in some cases, be difficult to calculate its duration; for no weathercock obeyed the changing wind more readily, than the King his gusts of passion. But, on the present occasion, his manner seemed unusually constrained and mysterious, nor was it easy to guess whether displeasure or kindness predominated in his conduct towards his new dependant, or in the looks with which, from time to time, he regarded him. The ready service which the King had rendered to counteract the bad effects of the Nubian's wound, might seem to balance the obligation conferred on him by the slave, when he intercepted the blow of the assassin; but it seemed, as a much longer account remained to be arranged between them, that the Monarch was doubtful whether the settlement might leave him, upon the whole, debtor or creditor, and that, therefore, he assumed, in the mean time, a neutral demeanour, which might suit with either character. As for the Nubian, by whatever means he had acquired the art of writing the European languages, the King remained convinced that the English tongue at least was unknown to him, since, having watched him closely during the last part of the interview, he conceived it impossible for any one understanding a conversation, of which he was himself the subject, to have so completely avoided the appearance of taking an interest in it.

CHAPTER XXII.

Who's there?—Approach—'tis kindly done—
My learned physician and a friend.
SIR EUSTACE GREY.

Our narrative retrogrades to a period shortly previous to the incidents last mentioned, when, as the reader must remember, the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard, bestowed upon the Arabian physician by King Richard, rather as a slave than in any other capacity, was exiled from the camp of the Crusaders, in whose ranks he had so often and so brilliantly distinguished himself. He followed his new master, for so we must now term the Hakim, to the Moorish tents which contained his retinue and his property, with the stupified feelings of one, who, fallen from the summit of a precipice, and escaping unexpectedly with life, is just able to drag himself from the fatal spot, but without the power of estimating the extent of the damage which he has sustained. Arrived at he tent, he threw himself, without speech of any kind, upon a couch of dressed buffalo's hide, which was pointed out to him by his conductor, and, hiding his face betwixt his hands, groaned heavily, as if his heart were on the point of bursting. The physician heard him, as he was giving orders to his numerous domestics to prepare for their departure the next *morning before daybreak, and, moved with compassion, interrupted his occupation, to sit down, cross-*legged, by the side of his couch, and administer comfort according to the Oriental manner.

"My friend," he said, "be of good comfort;—for what sayeth the poet—it is better that a man should be the servant of a kind master, than the slave of his own wild passions. Again, be of good courage; because, whereas Yssouf Ben Yngoube was sold to a King by his brethren, even to Pharaoh King of Egypt, thy king hath, on the other hand, bestowed thee on one who will be to thee as a brother."

Sir Kenneth made an effort to thank the Hakim, but his heart was too full, and the indistinct sounds which accompanied his abortive attempts to reply, induced the kind physician to desist from his premature endeavours at consolation. He left his new domestic, or guest, in quiet, to indulge his sorrows, and having commanded all the necessary preparations for their departure on the morning, sat down upon the carpet of the tent, and indulged himself in a moderate repast. After he had thus refreshed himself, similar viands were offered to the Scottish Knight; but though the slaves let him understand that the next day would be far advanced ere they would halt for the purpose of refreshment, Sir Kenneth could not overcome the disgust which he felt against swallowing any nourishment, and could be prevailed upon to taste nothing, saving a draught of cold water.

He was awake, long after his Arab host had performed his usual devotions, and betaken himself to his repose, nor had sleep visited him at the hour of midnight, when a movement took place among the domestics, which, though attended with no speech, and very little noise, made him aware they were loading the camels and preparing for departure. In the course of these preparations, the last person who was disturbed, excepting the physician himself, was the Knight of Scotland, whom, about three in the morning, a sort of major-domo, or master of the household, acquainted that he must arise. He did so, without farther answer, and followed him into the moonlight, where stood the camels, most of which were already loaded, and one only remained kneeling until its burden should be completed.

A little apart from the camels stood a number of horses ready bridled and saddled, and the Hakim himself, coming forth, mounted on one of them with as much agility as the grave decorum of his character permitted, and directed another, which he pointed out, to be led towards Sir Kenneth. An English officer was in attendance, to escort them through the camp of the Crusaders, and to ensure their leaving it in safety, and all was ready for their departure. The pavilion which they had left, was, in the mean while, struck with singular despatch, and the tent-poles and coverings composed the burden of the last camel—when the physician, pronouncing solemnly the verse of the Koran, "God be our guide, and Mahommed our protector, in the desert as in the watered field," the whole cavalcade was instantly in motion.

In traversing the camp, they were challenged by the various sentinels who maintained guard there, and suffered to proceed in silence, or with a muttered curse upon their prophet, as they passed the post of some more zealous Crusader. At length, the last barriers were left behind them, and the party formed themselves for the march with military precaution. Two or three horsemen advanced in front as a vanguard; one or two remained a bow-shot in the rear; and, wherever the ground admitted, others were detached to keep an outlook on the flanks. In this manner they proceeded onward, while Sir Kenneth, looking back on the moonlight camp, might now indeed seem banished, deprived at once of honour and of liberty, from the glimmering banners under which he had hoped to gain additional renown, and the tented dwellings of chivalry, of Christianity, and—of Edith Plantagenet.

The Hakim, who rode by his side, observed, in his usual tone of sententious consolation—"It is unwise to look back when the journey lieth forward;" and as he spoke, the horse of the knight made such a perilous stumble, as threatened to add a practical moral to the tale.

The knight was compelled by this hint to give more

attention to the management of his steed, which more than once required the assistance and support of the check-bridle, although, in other respects, nothing could be more easy at once, and active, than the ambling pace at which the animal (which was a mare) proceeded.

"The conditions of that horse," observed the sententious physician, "are like those of human fortune; seeing that amidst his most swift and easy pace, the rider must guard himself against a fall, and that it is when prosperity is at the highest, that our prudence should be awake and vigilant, to prevent misfortune."

The overloaded appetite loathes even the honeycomb, and it is scarce a wonder that the knight, mortified and harassed with misfortunes and abasement, became something impatient of hearing his misery made, at every turn, the ground of proverbs and apothegms, however just and apposite.

"Methinks," he said, rather pevishly, "I wanted no additional illustration of the instability of fortune—though I would thank thee, Sir Hakim, for thy choice of a steed for me, would the jade but stumble so effectually as at once to break my neck and her own."

"My brother," answered the Arab sage, with imperturbable gravity, "thou speakest as one of the foolish. Thou say'st in thy heart, that the sage should have given one as his guest, the younger and better horse, and reserved the old one for himself; but know, that the defects of the older steed may be compensated by the energies of the young rider, whereas the violence of the young horse requires to be moderated by the cold temper of the older."

So spoke the sage; but neither to this observation did Sir Kenneth return any answer which could lead to a continuance of their conversation, and the physician, wearied, perhaps, of administering comfort to one who would not be comforted, signed to one of his retinue.

"Hassan," he said, "hast thou nothing wherewith to beguile the way?"

Hassan, story-teller and poet by profession, spurred up, upon this summons, to exercise his calling.—"Lord of the palace of life," he said, addressing the physician, "thou, before whom the angel Azrael spreadeth his wings for flight—thou, wiser than Solimaun Ben Daoud, upon whose signet was inscribed the REAL NAME which controls the spirits of the elements—forbid it Heaven, that while thou travellest upon the track of benevolence, bearing healing and hope wherever thou comest, thine own course should be saddened for lack of the tale and of the song. Behold, while thy servant is at thy side, he will pour forth the treasures of his memory, as the fountain sendeth her stream beside the pathway, for the refreshment of him that walketh thereon."

After this exordium, Hassan uplifted his voice, and began a tale of love and magic, intermixed with feats of warlike achievement, and ornamented with abundant quotations from the Persian poets, with whose compositions the orator seemed familiar. The retinue of the physician, such excepted as were necessarily detained in attendance on the camels, thronged up to the narrator, and pressed as close as deference for their master permitted, to enjoy the delight which the inhabitants of the East have ever derived from this species of exhibition.

At another time, notwithstanding his imperfect knowledge of the language, Sir Kenneth might have been interested in the recitation, which, though dictated by a more extravagant imagination, and expressed in more inflated and metaphorical language, bore yet a strong resemblance to the romances of chivalry, then so fashionable in Europe. But as matters stood with him, he was scarcely even sensible that a man in the centre of the cavalcade recited and sung, in a low tone, for nearly two hours, modulating his voice to the various moods of passion introduced into the tale, and receiving, in return, now low murmurs of *applause, now muttered expressions of wonder, now sighs and tears, and sometimes*, what it was far more *difficult to extract from such an audience*, a tribute of *smiles, and even laughter.*

During the recitation, the attention of the exile however abstracted by his own deep sorrow, was occasionally awakened by the low wail of a dog, secured in a wicker enclosure suspended on one of the camels, which, as an experienced woodsman, he had no hesitation in recognising to be that of his own faithful hound; and from the plaintive tone of the animal, he had no doubt that he was sensible of his master's vicinity, and, in his way, invoking his assistance for liberty and rescue.

"Alas! poor Roswal," he said, "thou callest for aid and sympathy upon one in stricter bondage than thou thyself art. I will not seem to heed thee, or return thy affection, since it would serve but to load our parting with yet more bitterness."

Thus passed the hours of night, and the space of dim hazy dawn, which forms the twilight of a Syrian morning. But when the very first line of the sun's disk began to rise above the level horizon, and when the very first level ray shot glimmering in dew along the surface of the desert, which the travellers had now attained, the sonorous voice of Sir Hakim himself overpowered and cut short the narrative of the tale-teller, while he caused to resound along the sands the solemn summons, which the muezzins thunder at morning from the minaret of every mosque.

"To prayer—to prayer! God is the one God—To prayer—to prayer! Mahommed is the prophet of God.—To prayer—to prayer! Time is flying from you.—To prayer—to prayer! Judgment is drawing nigh to you."

In an instant each Moslem cast himself from his horse, turned his face towards Mecca, and performed with sand an imitation of those ablutions, which were elsewhere required to be made with water, while each individual, in brief but fervent ejaculations, recommended himself to the care, and his sins to the forgiveness, of God and the Prophet.

Even Sir Kenneth, whose reason at once and prejudices were offended by seeing his companions in that which he considered as an act of idolatry, could not help respecting the sincerity of their misguided zeal, and being stimulated by their fervour to apply supplications to Heaven in a purer form, wondering mean while, what new-born feelings could teach him to accompany in prayer, though with varied invocation, those very Saracens, whose heathenish worship he had conceived a crime dishonourable to the land in which high miracles had been wrought, and where the daystar of redemption had arisen.

The act of devotion, however, though rendered in such strange society, burst purely from his natural feelings of religious duty, and had its usual effect in composing the spirits, which had been long harassed by so rapid a succession of calamities. The sincere and earnest approach of the Christian to the throne of the Almighty, teaches the best lesson of patience under affliction; since wherefore should we mock the Deity with supplications, when we insult him by murmuring under his decrees? or how, while our prayers have in every word admitted the vanity and nothingness of the things of time in comparison to those of eternity, should we hope to deceive the Searcher of Hearts, by permitting the world and worldly passions to reassume the reins even immediately after a solemn address to Heaven? But Sir Kenneth was not of these. He felt himself comforted and strengthened, and better prepared to execute or submit to whatever his destiny might call upon him to do or to suffer.

Mean while, the party of Saracens regained their saddles, and continued their route, and the tale-teller, Hassan, resumed the thread of his narrative; but it was no longer to the same attentive audience. A horseman, who had ascended some high ground on the right hand of the little column, had returned on a speedy gallop to El Hakim, and communicated with him. Four or five more cavaliers had then been despatched, and the little band, which might consist of about twenty or thirty persons, began to follow them with their eyes, as men from whose gestures, and advance or retreat, they were to augur good or evil. Hassan, finding his audience inattentive, or being himself attracted by the dubious appearances on the flank, stinted in his song, and the march became

silent, save when a camel-driver called out to his patient charge, or some anxious follower of the Hakim communicated with his next neighbour in a hurried and low whisper.

This suspense continued until they had rounded a ridge, composed of hillocks of sand, which concealed from their main body the object that had created this alarm among their scouts. Sir Kenneth could now see at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, which his experienced eye recognised for a party of cavalry, much superior to their own in numbers, and, from the thick and frequent flashes which flung back the level beams of the rising sun, it was plain that these were Europeans in their complete panoply.

The anxious looks which the horsemen of El Hakim now cast upon their leader, seemed to indicate deep apprehension; while he, with gravity as undisturbed as when he called his followers to prayer, detached two of his best-mounted cavaliers, with instructions to approach as closely as prudence permitted to these travellers of the desert, and observe more minutely their numbers, their character, and, if possible, their purpose. The approach of danger, or what was feared as such, was like a stimulating draught to one in apathy, and recalled Sir Kenneth to himself and his situation.

"What fear you from these Christian horsemen, for such they seem?" he said to the Hakim.

"Fear!" said El Hakim, repeating the word disdainfully—"The sage fears nothing but Heaven—but ever expects from wicked men the worst which they can do."

"They are Christians," said Sir Kenneth, "and it is the time of truce—why should you fear a breach of faith?"

"They are the priestly soldiers of the Temple," answered El Hakim, "whose vow limits them to know neither truth nor faith with the worshippers of Islam. May the prophet blight them, both root, branch, and twig!—Their peace is war, and their faith is falsehood. Other invaders of Palestine have their times and moods of courtesy. The lion Richard will spare when he has conquered—The eagle Philip will close his wing when he has stricken a prey—even the Austrian bear will sleep when he is gorged; but this horde of ever-hungry wolves know neither pause nor satiety in their rapine.—Seest thou not that they are detaching a party from their main body, and that they take an eastern direction? Yon are their pages and squires, whom they train up in their accursed mysteries, and whom, as lighter mounted, they send to cut us off from our watering-place. But they will be disappointed: *I* know the war of the desert yet better than they."

He spoke a few words to his principal officer, and his whole demeanour and countenance was at once changed from the solemn repose of an Eastern sage, accustomed more to contemplation than to action, into the prompt and proud expression of a gallant soldier, whose energies are roused by the near approach of a danger, which he at once foresees and despises.

To Sir Kenneth's eyes the approaching crisis had a different aspect, and when Adonbec said to him, "Thou must tarry close by my side," he answered solemnly in the negative.

"Yonder," he said, "are my comrades in arms—the men in whose society I have vowed to fight or fall—on their banner gleams the sign of our most blessed redemption—I cannot fly from the Cross in company with the Crescent."

"Fool!" said the Hakim; "their first action would be to do thee to death, were it only to conceal their breach of the truce."

"Of that I must take my chance," replied Sir Kenneth; "but I wear not the bonds of the infidels an instant longer than I can cast them from me."

"Then will I compel thee to follow me," said El Hakim.

"Compel!" answered Sir Kenneth, angrily. "Wert thou not my benefactor, or one who has showed will to be such, and were it not that it is to thy confidence I owe the freedom of these hands, which thou mightst *have loaded with fetters*, I would show thee that, unarmed as I am, compulsion would be no easy task."

"Enough, enough," replied the Arabian physician, "we lose time even when it is becoming precious."

So saying, he threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who instantly dispersed themselves on the face of the desert, in as many different directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued; for, at the same instant, the Hakim seized the rein of his steed, and putting his own to its mettle, both sprung forth at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable, had he been desirous, to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them—they seemed to devour the desert before them—miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed unabated, and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race. The motion, too, as easy as it was swift, seemed more like flying through the air than riding on the earth, and was attended with no unpleasant sensation, save the awe naturally felt by one who is moving at such astonishing speed, and the difficulty of breathing occasioned by their passing through the air so rapidly.

It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakim at length relaxed his speed, and, slackening the pace of the horses into a hand gallop, began, in a voice as composed and even as if he had been walking for the last hour, a descant upon the excellence of his coursers to the Scot, who, breathless, half blind, half deaf, and altogether giddy, from the rapidity of this singular ride, hardly comprehended the words which flowed so freely from his companion.

"These horses," he said, "are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught excepting the Borak of the prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices, and with a small portion of dried sheep's flesh. Kings have given provinces to possess them, and their age is active as their youth. Thou, Nazarene, art the first, save a true believer, that ever had beneath his loins one of this noble race, a gift of the prophet himself to the blessed Ali, his kinsman and lieutenant, well called the Lion of God. Time lays his touch so lightly on these generous steeds, that the mare on which thou now sittest has seen five times five years pass over her, yet retains her pristine speed and vigour, only that in the career the support of a bridle, managed by a hand more experienced than thine, hath now become necessary. May the prophet be blessed, who hath bestowed on the true believers the means of advance and retreat, which causeth their iron-clothed enemies to be worn out with their own ponderous weight! How the horses of yonder dog Templars must have snorted and blown, when they had toiled fetlock-deep in the desert for one-twentieth part of the space which these brave steeds have left behind them, without one thick pant, or a drop of moisture upon their sleek and velvet coats!"

The Scottish knight, who had now begun to recover his breath and powers of attention, could not help acknowledging in his heart the advantage possessed by these Eastern warriors in a race of animals, alike proper for advance or retreat, and so admirably adapted to the level and sandy deserts of Arabia and Syria. But he did not choose to augment the pride of the Moslem by acquiescing in his proud claim of superiority, and therefore suffered the conversation to drop, and, looking around him, could now, at the more moderate pace at which they moved distinguish that he was in a country not unknown to him.

The blighted borders and sullen waters of the Dead Sea, the ragged and precipitous chain of mountains arising on the left, the two or three palms clustered together, forming the single green speck on the bosom

of the waste wilderness,—objects which, once seen, were scarcely to be forgotten,—showed to Sir Kenneth that they were approaching the fountain called the Diamond of the Desert, which had been the scene of his interview on a former occasion with the Saracen Emir Sheerkohf, or Ilderim. In a few minutes, they checked their horses beside the spring, and the Hakim invited Sir Kenneth to descend from horseback, and repose himself as in a place of safety. They unbridled their steeds, El Hakim observing that farther care of them was unnecessary, since they would be speedily joined by some of the best-mounted among his slaves, who would do what farther was needful.

"Mean time," he said, spreading some food on the grass, "eat and drink, and be not discouraged. Fortune may raise up or abase the ordinary mortal, but the sage and the soldier should have minds beyond her control."

The Scottish knight endeavoured to testify his thanks by showing himself docile; but though he strove to eat out of complaisance, the singular contrast between his present situation, and that which he had occupied on the same spot, when the envoy of princes, and the victor in combat, came like a cloud over his mind, and fasting, lassitude, and fatigue oppressed his bodily powers. El Hakim examined his hurried pulse, his red and inflamed eye, his heated hand, and his shortened respiration.

"The mind," he said, "grows wise by watching, but her sister the body, of coarser materials, needs the support of repose. Thou must sleep; and that thou mayest do so to refreshment, thou must take a draught mingled with this elixir."

He drew from his bosom a small crystal vial, cased in silver filigree-work, and dropped into a little golden drinking-cup a small portion of a dark-coloured fluid.

"This," he said, "is one of those productions which Allah hath sent on earth for a blessing, though man's weakness and wickedness have sometimes converted it into a curse. It is powerful as the wine-cup of the Nazarene to drop the curtain on the sleepless eye, and to relieve the burden of the overloaded bosom; but when applied to the purposes of indulgence and debauchery, it rends the nerves, destroys the strength, weakens the intellect, and undermines life. But fear not thou to use its virtues in the time of need, for the wise man warms him by the same firebrand with which the madman burneth the tent."*

"I have seen too much of thy skill, sage Hakim," said Sir Kenneth, "to debate thine best;" and swallowed the narcotic, mingled as it was with some water from the spring, then wrapped him in the haick, or Arab cloak, which had been fastened to his saddle-pommel, and, according to the directions of the physician, stretched himself at ease in the shade to await the promised repose. Sleep came not at first, but in her stead a train of pleasing yet not rousing or awakening sensations. A state ensued, in which, still conscious of his own identity and his own condition, the knight felt enabled to consider them not only without alarm and sorrow, but as composedly as he might have viewed the story of his misfortunes acted upon a stage, or rather as disembodied spirit might regard the transactions of its past existence. From this state of repose, amounting almost to apathy respecting the past, his thoughts were carried forward to the future, which, in spite of all that existed to overcloud the prospect, glittered with such hues, as under much happier auspices his unstimulated imagination had not been able to produce, even in its most exalted state. Liberty, fame, successful love, appeared to be the certain, and not very distant prospect, of the enslaved exile, the dishonoured knight, even of the despairing lover, who had placed his hopes of happiness so far beyond the prospect of chance, in her wildest possibilities, serving to countenance his wishes. Gradually as the intellectual *night became* overclouded, these gay visions became *obscure, like the dying hues* of sunset, until they were at last lost in total oblivion; and Sir Kenneth lay extended at the feet of El Hakim, to all appearance, but for his deep respiration, as inanimate a corpse, as if life had actually departed.

* *Some preparation of opium seems to be intimated.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mid these wild scenes Enchantment waves her hand,
To change the face of the mysterious land;
Till the bewildering scenes around us seem
The vain productions of a feverish dream.

Astolphe, a Romance.

WHEN the Knight of the Leopard awoke from his long and profound repose, he found himself in circumstances so different from those in which he had lain down to sleep, that he doubted whether he was not still dreaming, or whether the scene had not been changed by magic. Instead of the damp grass, he lay on a couch of more than Oriental luxury, and some kind hand had, during his repose, stripped him of the cassock of chamois which he wore under his armour, and substituted a night dress of the finest linen, and a loose gown of silk. He had been canopied only by the palm-trees of the desert, but now he lay beneath a silken pavilion, which blazed with the richest colours of the Chinese loom, while a slight curtain of gauze, displayed around his couch, was calculated to protect his repose from the insects, to which he had, ever since his arrival in these climates, been a constant and passive prey. He looked around, as if to convince himself that he was actually awake, and all that fell beneath his eye partook of the splendour of his dormitory. A portable bath of cedar, lined with silver, was ready for use, and steamed with the odours which had been used in preparing it. On a small stand of ebony beside the couch, stood a silver vase, containing sherbet of the most exquisite quality, cold as snow, and which the thirst that followed the use of the strong narcotic rendered peculiarly delicious. Still farther to dispel the dregs of intoxication which it had left behind, the knight resolved to use the bath, and experienced in doing so a delightful refreshment. Having dried himself with napkins of the Indian wool, he would willingly have resumed his own coarse garments, that he might go forth to see whether the world was as much changed without as within the place of his repose. These, however, were nowhere to be seen, but in their place he found a Saracen dress of rich materials, with sabre and poniard, and all befitting an emir of distinction. He was able to suggest no motive to himself for this exuberance of care, excepting a suspicion that these attentions were intended to shake him in his religious profession; as indeed it was well known that the high esteem of the European knowledge and courage, made the Soldan unbounded in his gifts to those, who, having become his prisoners, had been induced to take the turban. Sir Kenneth, therefore, crossing himself devoutly, resolved to set all such snares at defiance; and that he might do so the more firmly, conscientiously determined to avail himself as moderately as possible of the attentions and luxuries thus liberally heaped upon him. Still, however, he felt his head oppressed and sleepy, and aware, too, that his undress was not fit for appearing abroad, he reclined upon the couch, and was again locked in the arms of slumber.

But this time his rest was not unbroken; for he was awakened by the voice of the physician at the door of the tent, inquiring after his health, and whether he had rested sufficiently.—"May I enter your tent?" he concluded, "for the curtain is drawn before the entrance."

"The master," replied Sir Kenneth, determined to show that he was not surprised into forgetfulness of his own condition, "need demand no permission to enter the tent of the slave."

"But if I come not as a master?" said El Hakim, still without entering.

"The physician," answered the knight, "hath free access to the bedside of his patient."

"Neither come I now as a physician," replied El Hakim; "and therefore I still request permission, ere I come under the covering of thy tent."

ever comes as a friend," said Sir Kenneth, ich thou hast hitherto shown thyself to me, ıation of the friend is ever open to him."

ɔnce again," said the Eastern sage, after the stical manner of his countrymen," "suppos- I come not as a friend?"

e as thou wilt," said the Scottish knight, at impatient of this circumlocution,—"be ou wilt—thou knowest well it is neither in r nor my inclination to refuse thee entrance."

ne, then," said El Hakim, "as your ancient a fair and a generous one."

tered as he spoke; and when he stood before ide of Sir Kenneth, the voice continued to of Adonbec the Arabian physician, but the ess, and features, were those of Ilderim of n, called Sheurkohf. Sir Kenneth gazed n, as if he expected the vision to depart, like ıg created by his imagination.

ı it so surprise thee," said Ilderim, "and thou ɔved warrior, to see that a soldier knows at of the art of healing?—I say to thee, Na- hat an accomplished cavalier should know tress his steed as well as how to ride him; forge his sword upon the stithy, as well as ıse it in battle; how to burnish his arms, as ow to wear them; and, above all, how to inds as well as how to inflict them."

spoke, the Christian knight repeatedly shut and while they remained closed, the idea of im, with his long flowing dark robes, high ıp, and grave gestures, was present to his ion; but so soon as he opened them, the and richly-gemmed turban, the light hauberk rings entwisted with silver, which glanced y as it obeyed every inflection of the body, res freed from their formal expression, less and no longer shadowed by the mass of r limited to a well-trimmed beard), announced ɜr and not the sage.

hou still so much surprised," said the Emir, st thou walked in the world with such little ice, as to wonder that men are not always y seem?—Thou thyself—art thou what thou ?"

by Saint Andrew!" exclaimed the knight; the whole Christian camp I seem a traitor, now myself to be a true, though an erring

ı so I judged thee," said Ilderim, "and as aten salt together, I deemed myself bound to ıee from death and contumely.—But where- ou still on your couch, since the sun is high eavens? or are the vestments which my camels have afforded unworthy of your ?"

unworthy, surely, but unfitting for it," replied ɔt; "give me the dress of a slave, noble Il- ıd I will don it with pleasure; but I cannot wear the habit of the free Eastern warrior, turban of the Moslem."

rene," answered the Emir, "thy nation so ıtertain suspicion, that it may well render es suspected. Have I not told thee that desires no converts saving those whom the ɔhet shall dispose to submit themselves to his dence and bribery are alike alien to his plan ding the true faith. Hearken to me, my bro- hen the blind man was miraculously restored the scales dropped from his eyes at the Di- sauru—think'st thou that any earthly leech ve removed them? No. Such mediciner ive tormented the patient with his instru- perhaps soothed him with his balsams and but dark as he was must the darkened man ained; and it is even so with the blindness ıderstanding. If there be those among the who, for the sake of worldly lucre, have as- ıe turban of the prophet, and followed the Islam, with their own consciences be the Themselves sought out the bait—it was not hem by the Soldan. And when they shall be sentenced, as *hypocrites*, to the lowest *ll, below Christian and Jew*, magician and idolater, and condemned to eat the fruit of the tree Yacoum, which is the heads of demons—to themselves, not to the Soldan, shall their guilt and their punish- ment be attributed. Wherefore wear, without doubt or scruple, the vesture prepared for you, since, if you proceed to the camp of Saladin, your own native dress will expose you to troublesome observation, and per- haps to insult."

"*If* I go to the camp of Saladin?" said Sir Ken- neth, repeating the words of the Emir; "Alas! am I a free agent, and rather must I *not* go wherever your pleasure carries me?"

"Thine own will may guide thine own motions," said the Emir, "as freely as the wind which moveth the dust of the desert in what direction it chooseth. The noble enemy who met, and well nigh mastered my sword, cannot become my slave like him who has crouched beneath it. If wealth and power would tempt thee to join our people, I could ensure thy pos- sessing them; but the man who refused the favours of the Soldan, when the axe was at his head, will not, I fear, now accept them, when I tell him he has his free choice."

"Complete your generosity, noble Emir," said Sir Kenneth, "by forbearing to show me a mode of re- quital, which conscience forbids me to comply with. Permit me rather to express, as bound in courtesy, my gratitude for this most chivalrous bounty, this undeserved generosity."

"Say not undeserved," replied the Emir Ilderim; "was it not through thy conversation, and thy ac- count of the beauties which grace the court of the Melec Ric, that I ventured me thither in disguise, and thereby procured a sight the most blessed that I have ever enjoyed—that I ever shall enjoy, until the glories of Paradise beam on my eyes?"

"I understand you not," said Sir Kenneth, colour- ing alternately, and turning pale, as one who felt that the conversation was taking a tone of the most pain- ful delicacy.

"Not understand me!" exclaimed the Emir. "If the sight I saw in the tent of King Richard escaped thine observation, I will account it duller than the edge of a buffoon's wooden falchion. 'True, thou wert under sentence of death at the time; but, in my case, had my head been dropping from the trunk, the last strained glances of my eyeballs had distinguished with delight such a vision of loveliness, and the head would have rolled itself towards the incomparable houris, to kiss with its quivering lips the hem of their vestments.—Yonder royalty of England, who for her superior loveliness deserves to be Queen of the uni- verse—what tenderness in her blue eye—what lustre in her tresses of dishevelled gold!—By the tomb of the prophet, I scarce think that the houri who shall present to me the diamond cup of immortality, will deserve so warm a caress!"

"Saracen," said Sir Kenneth, sternly, "thou speakest of the wife of Richard of England, of whom men think not and speak not as a woman to be won, but as a Queen to be revered."

"I cry you mercy," said the Saracen. "I had for- gotten your superstitious veneration for the sex, which you consider rather to be wondered at and worshipped, than wooed and possessed. I warrant, since thou exactest such profound respect to yonder tender piece of frailty, whose every motion, step, and look, be- speaks her very woman, less than absolute adoration must not be yielded to her of the dark tresses, and nobly speaking eye. *She*, indeed, I will allow, hath in her noble port and majestic mien something at once pure and firm—yet even she, when pressed by oppor- tunity and a forward lover, would, I warrant thee, thank him in her heart, rather for treating her as a mortal than as a goddess."

"Respect the kinswoman of Cœur de Lion!" said Sir Kenneth, in a tone of unrepressed anger.

"Respect her!" answered the Emir, in scorn—"by the Caaba, and if I do, it shall be rather as the bride of Saladin."

"The infidel Soldan is unworthy to salute even a spot that has been pressed by the foot of Edith Plan tagenet!" exclaimed the Christian, springing from his couch

"Ha! what said the Giaour?" exclaimed the Emir, laying his hand on his poniard hilt, while his forehead glowed like glancing copper, and the muscles of his lips and cheeks wrought till each curl of his beard seemed to twist and screw itself, as if alive with instinctive wrath. But the Scottish knight, who had stood the lion-anger of Richard, was unappalled at the tiger-like mood of the chafed Saracen.

"What I have said," continued Sir Kenneth, with folded arms and dauntless look, "I would, were my hands loose, maintain on foot or horseback against all mortals; and would hold it not the most memorable deed of my life to support it with my good broadsword against a score of these sickles and bodkins," pointing at the curved sabre and small poniard of the Emir.

The Saracen recovered his composure as the Christian spoke, so far as to withdraw his hand from his weapon, as if the motion had been without meaning; but still continued in deep ire.

"By the sword of the prophet," he said, "which is the key both of Heaven and Hell, he little values his own life, brother, who uses the language thou dost! Believe me, that were thine hands loose, as thou term'st it, one single true believer would find them so much to do, that thou wouldst soon wish them fettered again in manacles of iron."

"Sooner would I wish them hown off by the shoulder blades!" replied Sir Kenneth.

"Well. Thy hands are bound at present," said the Saracen, in a more amicable tone, "bound by thine own gentle sense of courtesy, nor have I any present purpose of setting them at liberty. We have proved each other's strength and courage ere now, and we may again meet in a fair field;—and shame befall him who shall be the first to part from his foeman! But now we are friends, and I look for aid from thee, rather than hard terms or defiances."

"We *are* friends," repeated the knight; and there was a pause, during which the fiery Saracen paced the tent, like the lion, who, after violent irritation, is said to take that method of cooling the distemperature of his blood, ere he stretches himself to repose in his den. The colder European remained unaltered in posture and aspect; yet he, doubtless, was also engaged in subduing the angry feelings which had been so unexpectedly awakened.

"Let us reason of this calmly," said the Saracen; "I am a physician, as thou know'st, and it is written, that he who would have his wound cured, must not shrink when the leech probes and tents it. Secst thou, I am about to lay my finger on the sore. Thou lovest this kinswoman of the Melech Ric—Unfold the veil that shrouds thy thoughts—or unfold it not if thou wilt, for mine eyes see through its coverings."

"I *loved* her," answered Sir Kenneth, after a pause, "as a man loves Heaven's grace, and sued for her favour like a sinner for Heaven's pardon."

"And you love her no longer?" said the Saracen.

"Alas," answered Sir Kenneth, "I am no longer worthy to love her.—I pray thee cease this discourse—thy words are poniards to me."

"Pardon me but a moment," continued Ilderim. "When thou, a poor and obscure soldier, didst so boldly and so highly fix thine affection, tell me, hadst thou good hope of its issue?"

"Love exists not without hope," replied the knight; "but mine was as nearly allied to despair, as that of the sailor swimming for his life, who, as he surmounts billow after billow, catches by intervals some gleam of the distant beacon, which shows him there is land in sight, though his sinking heart and wearied limbs assure him that he shall never reach it."

"And now," said Ilderim, "these hopes are sunk—that solitary light is quenched for ever?"

"For ever," answered Sir Kenneth, in the tone of an echo from the bosom of a ruined sepulchre.

"Methinks," said the Saracen, "if all thou lackest were some such distant meteoric glimpse of happiness as thou hadst formerly, thy beacon-light might *be rekindled, thy hope* flashed up from the ocean in *which it has sunk, and* thou thyself, good knight, re*stored to the exercise* and amusement of nourishing *thy fantastic passion* upon a diet as unsubstantial as moonlight; for, if thou stood'st to-morrow fair in reputation as ever thou wert, she whom thou lovest will not be less the daughter of princes, and the elected bride of Saladin."

"I would it so stood," said the Scot, "and if I did not"——

He stopt short, like a man who is afraid of boasting, under circumstances which did not permit his being put to the test. The Saracen smiled as he concluded the sentence.

"Thou wouldst challenge the Soldan to single combat?" said he.

"And if I did," said Sir Kenneth, haughtily, "Saladin's would neither be the first nor the best turban that I have couched lance at."

"Ay, but methinks the Soldan might regard it as too unequal a mode of periling the chance of a royal bride, and the event of a great war," said the Emir.

"He may be met with in the front of battle," said the knight, his eyes gleaming with the ideas which such a thought inspired.

"He has been ever found there," said Ilderim; "nor is it his wont to turn his horse's head from any brave encounter.—But it was not of the Soldan that I meant to speak. In a word, if it will content thee to be placed in such reputation as may be attained by detection of the thief who stole the Banner of England, I can put thee in a fair way of achieving this task—That is, if thou wilt be governed; for what says Lokman, If the child would walk, the nurse must lead him—if the ignorant would understand, the wise must instruct."

"And thou art wise, Ilderim," said the Scot, "wise though a Saracen, and generous though an infidel. I have witnessed that thou art both. Take, then, the guidance of this matter; and so thou ask nothing of me contrary to my loyalty and my Christian faith, I will obey thee punctually. Do what thou hast said, and take my life when it is accomplished."

"Listen thou to me, then," said the Saracen. "Thy noble hound is now recovered, by the blessing of that divine medicine which healeth man and beast, and by his sagacity shall those who assailed him be discovered."

"Ha!" said the knight,—"methinks I comprehend thee—I was dull not to think of this!"

"But tell me," added the Emir, "hast thou any followers or retainers in the camp by whom the animal may be known?"

"I dismissed," said Sir Kenneth, "my old attendant, thy patient, with a varlet that waited on him, at the time when I expected to suffer death, giving him letters for my friends in Scotland—there are none other to whom the dog is familiar. But then my own person is well known—my very speech will betray me, in a camp where I have played no mean part for many months."

"Both he and thou shall be disguised, so as to escape even close examination.—I tell thee," said the Saracen, "that not thy brother in arms—not thy brother in blood—shall discover thee, if thou be guided by my counsels. Thou hast seen me do matters more difficult—he that can call the dying from the darkness of the shadow of death, can easily cast a mist before the eyes of the living. But mark me—there is still the condition annexed to this service, that thou deliver a letter of Saladin to the niece of the Melech Ric, whose name is as difficult to our Eastern tongue and lips, as her beauty is delightful to our eyes."

Sir Kenneth paused before he answered, and the Saracen observing his hesitation, demanded of him, "if he feared to undertake this message?"

"Not if there were death in the execution," said Sir Kenneth; "I do but pause to consider whether it consists with my honour to bear the letter of the Soldan, or with that of the Lady Edith to receive it from a heathen prince."

"By the head of Mohammed, and by the honour of a soldier—by the tomb at Mecca, and by the soul of my father," said the Emir, "I swear to thee that the letter is written in all honour and respect. The song of the nightingale will sooner blight the rose-bower she loves, than will the words of the

ldan offend the ears of the lovely kinswoman of gland."

"Then," said the knight, "I will bear the Soldan's ter faithfully, as if I were his born vassal;—under- nding that beyond this simple act of service, ich I will render with fidelity, from me of all men can least expect mediation or advice in this his ange love-suit."

"Saladin is noble," answered the Emir, "and will t spur a generous horse to a leap which he cannot lieve.—Come with me to my tent," he added, "and u shalt be presently equipped with a disguise as searchable as midnight; so thou may'st walk the np of the Nazarenes as if thou hadst on thy finger signet of Giaougi."*

CHAPTER XXIV.

A grain of dust
Soiling our cup, will make our sense reject
Fastidiously the draught which we did thirst for;
A rusted nail, placed near the faithful compass,
Will sway it from the truth, and wreck the argosy.
Even this small cause of anger and disgust
Will break the bonds of amity 'mongst princes,
And wreck their noblest purposes.—*The Crusade.*

HE reader can now have little doubt who the iopian slave really was, with what purpose he had ght Richard's camp, and wherefore and with what o he now stood close to the person of that mo- ch, as, surrounded by his valiant peers of England l Normandy, Cœur de Lion stood on the summit Saint George's Mount, with the Banner of England his side, borne by the most goodly person in the y, being his own natural brother, William with Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, the offspring of nry the Second's amour with the celebrated Rosa- nd of Woodstock.

'rom several expressions in the King's conversa- with Neville on the preceding day, the Nubian s left in anxious doubt whether his disguise had been penetrated, especially as that the King seem- to be aware in what manner the agency of the ; was expected to discover the thief who stole the ner, although the circumstance of such an ani- l's having been wounded on the occasion, had n scarce mentioned in Richard's presence. Nev- eless, as the King continued to treat him in no er manner than his exterior required, the Nubian ained uncertain whether he was or was not dis- ered, and determined not to throw his disguise le voluntarily.

Mean while, the powers of the various Crusading ices, arrayed under their royal and princely lead- , swept in long order around the base of the little und; and as those of each different country pass- by, their commanders advanced a step or two up hill, and made a signal of courtesy to Richard and Standard of England, "in sign of regard and ity," as the protocol of the ceremony heedfully pressed it, "not of subjection or vassalage." The ritual dignitaries, who in those days veiled not ir bonnets to created being, bestowed on the King l his symbol of command their blessing instead of dering obeisance.

Thus the long files marched on, and, diminished as y were by so many causes, appeared still an "iron st, to whom the conquest of Palestine might seem easy task. The soldiers, inspired by the con- ousness of united strength, sat erect in their steel ldles, while it seemed that the trumpets sounded re cheerfully shrill, and the steeds, refreshed by t and provender, chafed on the bit, and trode the und more proudly. On they passed, troop after op, banners waving, spears glancing, plumes dan- g, in long perspective—a host composed of differ- nations, complexions, languages, arms, and ap- rances, but all fired, for the time, with the holy romantic purpose of rescuing the distressed daugh- of Zion from her thraldom, and redeeming the red earth, which more than mortal had trodden, m the yoke of the unbelieving Pagan. And it ist be owned, *that if, in other circumstances, the cies of courtesy rendered to the King* of England by so many warriors from whom he claimed no natural allegiance, had in it something that might have been thought humiliating, yet the nature and cause of the war was so fitted to his pre-eminently chivalrous character, and renowned feats in arms, that claims, which might elsewhere have been urged, were there forgotten; and the brave did willing homage to the bravest, in an expedition where the most undaunted and energetic courage was necessary to success.

The good King was seated on horseback about half way up the Mount, a morion on his head, surmounted by a crown, which left his manly features exposed to public view, as with cool and considerate eye, he per- used each rank as it passed him, and returned the salutation of the leaders. His tunic was of sky- coloured velvet, covered with plates of silver, and his hose of crimson-silk, slashed with cloth of gold. By his side stood the seeming Ethiopian slave, holding the noble dog in a leash, such as was used in wood- craft. It was a circumstance which attracted no notice, for many of the princes of the Crusade had introduced black slaves into their household, in imita- tion of the barbarous splendour of the Saracens. Over the King's head streamed the large folds of the banner, and, as he looked to it from time to time, he seemed to regard a ceremony, indifferent to himself person- ally, as important, when considered as atoning an indignity offered to the kingdom which he ruled. In the background, and on the very summit of the Mount, a wooden turret, erected for the occasion, held the Queen Berengaria and the principal ladies of the court. To this the King looked from time to time, and then ever and anon his eyes were turned on the Nubian and the dog, but only when such leaders approached, as, from circumstances of previous ill- will he suspected of being accessary to the theft of the standard, or whom he judged capable of a crime so mean.

Thus, he did not look in that direction when Philip Augustus of France approached at the head of his splendid troops of Gallic chivalry—nay, he anticipated the motions of the French King, by descending the Mount as the latter came up the ascent, so that they met in the middle space, and blended their greetings so gracefully, that it appeared they met in fraternal equality. The sight of the two greatest princes in Europe, in rank at once and power, thus publicly avowing their concord, called forth bursts of thunder- ing acclaim from the Crusading host at many miles' distance, and made the roving Arab scouts of the de- sert alarm the camp of Saladin with intelligence, that the army of the Christians was in motion. Yet who but the King of kings can read the hearts of monarchs? Under this smooth show of courtesy, Richard nourished displeasure and suspicion against Philip, and Philip meditated withdrawing himself and his host from the army of the Cross, and leaving Richard to accomplish or fail in the enterprise with his own unassisted forces.

Richard's demeanour was different when the dark- armed knights and squires of the Temple chivalry approached—men with countenances bronzed to Asia- tic blackness by the suns of Palestine, and the ad- mirable state of whose horses and appointments far surpassed even that of the choicest troops of France and England. The King cast a hasty glance aside, but the Nubian stood quiet, and his trusty dog sat at his feet, watching, with a sagacious yet pleased look, the ranks which now passed before them. The King's look turned again on the chivalrous Templars, as the Grand Master, availing himself of his mingled character, bestowed his benediction on Richard as a priest, instead of doing him reverence as a military leader.

"The misproud and amphibious caitiff puts the monk upon me," said Richard to the Earl of Sals- bury. "But, Longsword, we will let it pass. A punctilio must not lose Christendom the services of these experienced lances, because their victories have rendered them overweening.—Lo you, here comes our valiant adversary, the Duke of Austria—mark his manner and bearing, Longsword—and thou, Nubian, let the hound have full view of him. By Heaven, he brings his buffoons along with him!"

* *Perhaps the same with Gyges.*

In fact, whether from habit, or, which is more likely, to intimate contempt of the ceremonial he was about to comply with, Leopold was attended by his *spruch-sprecher* and his jester, and, as he advanced towards Richard, he whistled in what he wished to be considered as an indifferent manner, though his heavy features evinced the sullenness, mixed with the fear, with which a truant schoolboy may be seen to approach his master. As the reluctant dignitary made, with discomposed and sulky look, the obeisance required, the *spruch-sprecher* shook his batoon, and proclaimed, like a herald, that, in what he was now doing, the Archduke of Austria was not to be held derogating from the rank and privileges of a sovereign prince; to which the jester answered with a sonorous *amen*, which provoked much laughter among the bystanders.

King Richard looked more than once at the Nubian and his dog; but the former moved not, nor did the latter strain at the leash, so that Richard said to the slave with some scorn, "Thy success in this enterprise, my sable friend, even though thou hast brought thy hound's sagacity to back thine own, will not, I fear, place thee high in the rank of wizards, or much augment thy merits towards our person."

The Nubian answered, as usual, only by a lowly obeisance.

Mean time the troops of the Marquis of Montserrat next passed in order before the King of England. That powerful and wily baron, to make the greater display of his forces, had divided them into two bodies. At the head of the first, consisting of his vassals and followers, and levied from his Syrian possessions, came his brother Enguerrand, and he himself followed, leading on a gallant band of twelve hundred Stradiots, a kind of light cavalry raised by the Venetians in their Dalmatian possessions, and of which they had intrusted the command to the Marquis, with whom the republic had many bonds of connexion. These Stradiots were clothed in a fashion partly European, but partaking chiefly of the Eastern fashion. They wore, indeed, short hauberks, but had over them parti-coloured tunics of rich stuffs, with large wide pantaloons and half-boots. On their heads were straight upright caps, similar to those of the Greeks, and they carried small round targets, bows and arrows, cimeters, and poniards. They were mounted on horses, carefully selected, and well maintained at the expense of the State of Venice; their saddles and appointments resembled those of the Turks, and they rode in the same manner, with short stirrups and upon a high seat. These troops were of great use in skirmishing with the Arabs, though unable to engage in close combat, like the iron-sheathed men-at-arms of Western and Northern Europe.

Before this goodly band came Conrade, in the same garb with the Stradiots, but of such rich stuff that he seemed to blaze with gold and silver, and the milk-white plume fastened in his cap by a clasp of diamonds, seemed tall enough to sweep the clouds. The noble steed which he reined bounded and caracoled, and displayed his spirit and agility in a manner which might have troubled a less admirable horseman than the Marquis, who gracefully ruled him with the one hand, while the other displayed the batoon, whose predominancy over the ranks which he led seemed equally absolute. Yet his authority over the Stradiots was more in show than in substance; for there paced beside him, on an ambling palfrey of soberest mood, a little old man, dressed entirely in black, without beard or mustaches, and having an appearance altogether mean and insignificant, when compared with the blaze of splendour around him. But this mean-looking old man was one of those deputies whom the Venetian government sent into camps to overlook the conduct of the generals to whom the leading was consigned, and to maintain that jealous system of espial and control which had long distinguished the policy of the republic.

Conrade, who, by cultivating Richard's humour, *had attained a certain degree* of favour with him, no *sooner was come within* his ken than the King of *England descended a step* or two to meet him, *exclaiming, at the same time*, "Ha, Lord Marquis, thou at the head of the fleet Stradiots, and thy black shadow attending thee as usual, whether the sun shines or not!—May not one ask thee whether the rule of the troops remains with the shadow or the substance?"

Conrade was commencing his reply with a smile, when Roswal, the noble hound, uttering a furious and savage yell, sprung forward. The Nubian, at the same time, slipped the leash, and the hound, rushing on, leapt upon Conrade's noble charger, and seizing the Marquis by the throat, pulled him down from the saddle. The plumed rider lay rolling on the sand, and the frightened horse fled in wild career through the camp.

"Thy hound hath pulled down the right quarry, I warrant him"—said the King to the Nubian, "and I vow to Saint George he is a stag of ten tynes!—Pluck the dog off, lest he throttle him."

The Ethiopian, accordingly, though not without difficulty, disengaged the dog from Conrade, and fastened him up, still highly excited, and struggling in the leash. Mean while many crowded to the spot, especially followers of Conrade, and officers of the Stradiots, who, as they saw their leader lie gazing wildly on the sky, raised him up amid a tumultuary cry of—"Cut the slave and his hound to pieces!"

But the voice of Richard, loud and sonorous, was heard clear above all other exclamations—"He dies the death who injures the hound! He hath but done his duty, after the sagacity with which God and nature have endowed the brave animal.—Stand forward for a false traitor, thou Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat! I impeach thee of treason."

Several of the Syrian leaders had now come up, and Conrade, vexation, and shame, and confusion struggling with passion in his manner and voice, exclaimed, "What means this?—With what am I charged?—Why this base usage, and these reproachful terms?—Is this the league of concord which England renewed but so lately?"

"Are the Princes of the Crusade turned hares or deers in the eyes of King Richard, that he should slip hounds on them?" said the sepulchral voice of the Grand Master of the Templars.

"It must be some singular accident—some fatal mistake"—said Philip of France, who rode up at the same moment.

"Some deceit of the Enemy," said the Archbishop of Tyre.

"A stratagem of the Saracens," cried Henry of Champagne—"It were well to hang up the dog, and put the slave to the torture."

"Let no man lay hand upon them," said Richard, "as he loves his own life!—Conrade, stand forth, if thou darest, and deny the accusation which this mute animal hath in his noble instinct brought against thee, of injury done to him, and foul scorn to England?"

"I never touched the banner," said Conrade, hastily.

"Thy words betray thee, Conrade!" said Richard; "for how didst thou know, save from conscious guilt, that the question is concerning the banner?"

"Hast thou then not kept the camp in turmoil on that and no other score?" answered Conrade; "and dost thou impute to a prince and an ally a crime, which, after all, was probably committed by some paltry felon for the sake of the gold thread? Or wouldst thou now impeach a confederate on the credit of a dog?"

By this time the alarm was becoming general, so that Philip of France interposed.

"Princes and nobles," he said, "you speak in presence of those whose swords will soon be at the throats of each other, if they hear their leaders at such terms together. In the name of Heaven, let us draw off, each his own troops, into their separate quarters, and ourselves meet an hour hence in the Pavilion of Council, to take some order in this new state of confusion."

"Content," said King Richard, "though I should have liked to have interrogated that caitiff while his gay doublet was yet besmirched with sand—But the pleasure of France shall be ours in this matter."

The leaders separated as was proposed, each prince leaving himself at the head of his own forces; and ten was heard on all sides the crying of war-cries, nd the sounding of gathering-notes upon bugles and umpets, by which the different stragglers were summoned to their prince's banner; and the troops were ortly seen in motion, each taking different routes rough the camp to their own quarters. But although ny immediate act of violence was thus prevented, t the accident which had taken place dwelt on every ind; and those foreigners, who had that morning iled Richard as the worthiest to lead their army, ow resumed their prejudices against his pride and tolerance, while the English, conceiving the honour their country connected with the quarrel, of which rious reports had gone about, considered the natives other countries jealous of the fame of England d her King, and disposed to undermine it by the eanest arts of intrigue. Many and various were the mours spread upon the occasion, and there was one hich averred that the Queen and her ladies had been ach alarmed by the tumult, and that one of them id swooned.

The Council assembled at the appointed hour. onrade had in the mean while laid aside his disnoured dress, and with it the shame and confusion rich, in spite of his talents and promptitude, had at st overwhelmed him, owing to the strangeness of accident, and suddenness of the accusation. He s now robed like a prince, and entered the coun-chamber attended by the Archduke of Austria, the and Masters both of the Temple and of the Order Saint John, and several other potentates, who ade a show of supporting him and defending his use, chiefly perhaps from political motives, or beuse they themselves nourished a personal enmity ainst Richard.

This appearance of union in favour of Conrade s far from influencing the King of England. He tered the Council with his usual indifference of nner, and in the same dress in which he had just ghted from horseback. He cast a careless and newhat scornful glance on the leaders, who had th studied affectation arranged themselves around nrade, as if owning his cause, and in the most ect terms charged Conrade of Montserrat with ring stolen the Banner of England, and wounded faithful animal who stood in its defence.

Conrade arose boldly to answer, and in despite, as expressed himself, of man and brute, king or dog, pucheti his innocence of the crime charged.

"Brother of England," said Philip, who willingly umed the character of moderator of the assembly, his is an unusual impeachment. We do not hear avouch your own knowledge of this matter, far- than your belief resting upon the demeanour of hound towards the Marquis of Montserrat. ely the word of a knight and prince should bear out against the barking of a cur?"

"Royal brother," returned Richard, "recollect that Almighty, who gave the dog to be companion of pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a ture noble and incapable of deceit. He forgets ither friend nor foe—remembers, and with accuracy, th benefit and injury. He hath a share of man's elligence, but no share of man's falsehood. You ry bribe a soldier to slay a man with his sword, or witness to take life by false accusation; but you anot make a hound tear his benefactor—he is the end of man, save when man justly incurs his enty. Dress yonder Marquis in what peacock-robes u will—disguise his appearance—alter his comxion with drugs and washes—hide him amidst a ndred men—I will yet pawn my sceptre that the und detects him, and expresses his resentment, as u have this day beheld. This is no new incident, hough a strange one. Murderers and robbers have en, ere now, convicted, and suffered death under such idence, and men have said that the finger of God as in it. In thine own land, royal brother, and upon ch an occasion, the matter was tried by a solemn el betwixt the man and the dog, as appellant and *fendant in a challenge of murder.* The dog was *torious, the man was punished, and the crime was* confessed. Credit me, royal brother, that hidden crimes have often been brought to light by the testimony even of inanimate substances, not to mention animals far inferior in instinctive sagacity to the dog, who is the friend and companion of our race."

"Such a duel there hath indeed been, royal brother," answered Philip, "and that in the reign of one of our predecessors, to whom God be gracious. But it was in the olden time, nor can we hold it a precedent fitting for this occasion. The defendant in that case was a private gentleman, of small rank or respect; his offensive weapons were only a club, his defensive a leathern jerkin. But we cannot degrade a prince to the disgrace of using such rude arms, or to the ignominy of such a combat."

"I never meant that you should," said King Richard; "it were foul play to hazard the good hound's life against that of such a double-faced traitor as this Conrade hath proved himself. But there lies our own glove—we appeal him to the combat in respect of the evidence we brought forth against him. A king, at least, is more than the mate of a marquis."

Conrade made no hasty effort to seize on the pledge which Richard cast into the middle of the assembly, and King Philip had time to reply, ere the Marquis made a motion to lift the glove.

"A king," said he of France, "is as much more than a match for the Marquis Conrade, as a dog would be less. Royal Richard, this cannot be permitted. You are the leader of our expedition—the sword and buckler of Christendom."

"I protest against such a combat," said the Venetian proveditore, "until the King of England shall have repaid the fifty thousand bezants which he is indebted to the republic. It is enough to be threatened with loss of our debt, should our debtor fall by the hands of the pagans, without the additional risk of his being slain in brawls amongst Christians, concerning dogs and banners."

"And I," said William with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, "protest in my turn against my royal brother periling his life, which is the property of the people of England, in such a cause.—Here, noble brother, receive back your glove, and think only as if the wind had blown it from your hand. Mine shall lie in its stead. A king's son, though with the bar sinister on his shield, is at least a match for this mar moset of a marquis."

"Princes and nobles," said Conrade, "I will not accept of King Richard's defiance. He hath been chosen our leader against the Saracens, and if *his* conscience can answer the accusation of provoking an ally to the field on a quarrel so frivolous, *mine*, at least, cannot endure the reproach of accepting it. But touching his bastard brother, William of Woodstock, or against any other who shall adopt, or shall dare to stand godfather to this most false charge, I will defend my honour in the lists, and prove whosoever impeaches it a false liar."

"The Marquis of Montserrat," said the Archbishop of Tyre, "hath spoken like a wise and moderate gentleman; and methinks this controversy might, without dishonour to any party, end at this point."

"Methinks it might so terminate," said the King of France, "provided King Richard will recall his accusation, as made upon over slight grounds."

"Philip of France," answered Cœur de Lion, "my words shall never do my thoughts so much injury. I have charged yonder Conrade as a thief, who, under cloud of night, stole from its place the emblem of England's dignity. I still believe and charge him to be such; and when a day is appointed for the combat, doubt not that, since Conrade declines to meet me in person, I will find a champion to appear in support of my challenge; for thou, William, must not thrust thy long sword into this quarrel without our special license."

"Since my rank makes me arbiter in this most unhappy matter," said Philip of France, "I appoint the fifth day from hence for the decision thereof, by way of combat, according to knightly usage—Richard, King of England, to appear by his champion as appellant, and Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, in his own person, as defendant. Yet I own I know not

where to find neutral ground where such a quarrel may be fought out; for it must not be in the neighbourhood of this camp, where the soldiers would make faction on the different sides."

"It were well," said Richard, "to apply to the generosity of the royal Saladin, since, heathen as he is, I have never known knight more fulfilled of nobleness, or to whose good faith we may so peremptorily intrust ourselves. I speak thus for those who may be doubtful of mishap—for myself, wherever I see my foe, I make that spot my battle-ground."

"Be it so," said Philip; "we will make this matter known to Saladin, although it be showing to an enemy the unhappy spirit of discord which we would willingly hide from even ourselves, were it possible. Mean while, I dismiss this assembly, and charge you all, as Christian men and noble knights, that ye let this unhappy feud breed no farther brawling in the camp, but regard it as a thing solemnly referred to the judgment of God, to whom each of you should pray that he will dispose of victory in the combat according to the truth of the quarrel; and therewith may His will be done!"

"Amen, amen!" was answered on all sides; while the Templar whispered the Marquis, "Conrade, wilt thou not add a petition to be delivered from the power of the dog, as the Psalmist hath it?"

"Peace, thou ——!" replied the Marquis; "there is a revealing demon abroad, which may report, amongst other tidings, how far thou dost carry the motto of thy order—*Feriatur Leo.*"

"Thou wilt stand the brunt of challenge?" said the Templar.

"Doubt me not," said Conrade. "I would not, indeed, have willingly met the iron arm of Richard himself, and I shame not to confess that I rejoice to be free of his encounter. But, from his bastard brother downward, the man breathes not in his ranks whom I fear to meet."

"It is well you are so confident," continued the Templar; "and in that case, the fangs of yonder hound have done more to dissolve this league of princes, than either thy devices, or the dagger of the Charegite. Seest thou how, under a brow studiously overclouded, Philip cannot conceal the satisfaction which he feels at the prospect of release from the alliance which sat so heavy on him? Mark how Henry of Champagne smiles to himself, like a sparkling goblet of his own wine—and see the chuckling delight of Austria, who thinks his quarrel is about to be avenged, without risk or trouble of his own. Hush, he approaches.—A most grievous chance, most royal Austria, that these breaches in the walls of our Zion"——

"If thou meanest this Crusade," replied the Duke, "I would it were crumbled to pieces, and each were safe at home!—I speak this in confidence."

"But," said the Marquis of Montserrat, "to think this disunion should be made by the hands of King Richard, for whose pleasure we have been contented to endure so much, and to whom we have been as submissive as slaves to a master, in hopes that he would use his valour against our enemies, instead of exercising it upon our friends!"

"I see not that he is so much more valorous than others," said the Archduke. "I believe, had the noble Marquis met him in the lists, he would have had the better; for, though the islander deals heavy blows with the pole-axe, he is not so very dexterous with the lance. I should have cared little to have met him myself on our old quarrel, had the weal of Christendom permitted to sovereign princes to breathe themselves in the lists—And if thou desirest it, noble Marquis, I will myself be your godfather in this combat."

"And I also," said the Grand Master.

"Come, then, and take your nooning in our tent, noble sirs," said the Duke, "and we'll speak of this business, over some right *nierenstein*.

They entered together accordingly.

"What said our patron and these great folks together?" said Jonas Schwanker to his companion, the *spruch-sprecher*, who had used the freedom to press nigh to his master when the council was dismissed, while the jester waited at a more respectful distance.

"Servant of Folly," said the *spruch-sprecher*, "moderate thy curiosity—it beseems not that I should tell to thee the counsels of our master."

"Man of wisdom, you mistake," answered Jonas; "we are both the constant attendants on our patron, and it concerns us alike to know whether thou or I—Wisdom or Folly—have the deeper interest in him."

"He told to the Marquis," answered the *spruch-sprecher*, "and to the Grand Master, that he was aweary of these wars, and would be glad he was safe at home."

"That is a drawn cast, and counts for nothing in the game," said the jester; "it was most wise to think thus, but great folly to tell it to others—proceed."

"Ha, hem!" said the *spruch-sprecher*; "he next said to them, that Richard was not more valorous than others, or over dexterous in the tilt-yard."

"Woodcock of my side," said Schwanker; "this was egregious folly. What next?"

"Nay, I am something oblivious," replied the man of wisdom—"he invited them to a goblet of *nierenstein*."

"That hath a show of wisdom in it," said Jonas, "thou may'st mark it to thy credit in the mean time; but an he drink too much, as is most likely, I will have it pass to mine. Any thing more?"

"Nothing worth memory," answered the orator, "only he wished he had taken the occasion to meet Richard in the lists."

"Out upon it—out upon it!" said Jonas—"this is such dotage of folly, that I am well nigh ashamed of winning the game by it—Ne'ertheless, fool as he is, we will follow him, most sage *spruch-sprecher*, and have our share of the wine of *nierenstein*."

CHAPTER XXV.

Yet this inconstancy is such,
As thou, too, shalt adore;
I could not love thee, love, so much,
Loved I not honour more.—MONTROSE'S *Lines.*

WHEN King Richard returned to his tent, he commanded the Nubian to be brought before him. He entered with his usual ceremonial reverence, and, having prostrated himself, remained standing before the King, in the attitude of a slave awaiting the orders of his master. It was perhaps well for him, that the preservation of his character required his eyes to be fixed on the ground, since the keen glance with which Richard for some time surveyed him in silence, would, if fully encountered, have been difficult to sustain.

"Thou canst well of wood-craft," said the King, after a pause, "and hast started thy game and brought him to bay, as ably as if Tristrem himself had taught thee.* But this is not all—he must be brought down at force. I myself would have liked to have levelled my hunting-spear at him. There are, it seems, respects which prevent this. Thou art about to return to the camp of the Soldan, bearing a letter, requiring of his courtesy to appoint neutral ground for the deed of chivalry, and, should it consist with his pleasure, to concur with us in witnessing it. Now, speaking conjecturally, we think thou might'st find in that camp some cavalier, who, for the love of truth, and his own augmentation of honour, will do battle with this same traitor of Montserrat?"

The Nubian raised his eyes and fixed them on the King with a look of eager ardour; then raised them to Heaven with such solemn gratitude, that the water soon glistened in them—then bent his head, as affirming what Richard desired, and resumed his usual posture of submissive attention.

"It is well," said the King; "and I see thy desire to oblige me in this matter. And herein, I must needs say, lies the excellence of such a servant as thou, who hast not speech either to debate our purpose, or to re-

* A universal tradition ascribed to Sir Tristrem, famous for his love of the fair Queen Yseult—the laws concerning the practice of wood-craft, or venerie, as it was called, being those that related to the rules of the chase, which were deemed of much consequence during the middle ages.

saire explanation of what we have determined. An English serving-man, in thy place, had given me his logged advice to trust the combat with some good ance of my household, who, from my brother Long-sword downwards, are all on fire to do battle in my cause; and a chattering Frenchman had made a thousand attempts to discover wherefore I look for a champion from the camp of the infidels. But thou, my silent agent, canst do mine errand, without questioning or comprehending it; with thee to hear, is to obey."

A bend of the body, and a genuflection, were the appropriate answer of the Ethiopian to these observations.

"And now to another point," said the King, and speaking suddenly and rapidly.—"Have you yet seen Edith Plantagenet?"

The mute looked up as in the act of being about to speak,—nay, his lips had begun to utter a distinct negative,—when the abortive attempt died away in the imperfect murmurs of the dumb.

"Why, lo you there!" said the King. "The very sound of the name of a royal maiden, of beauty so surpassing as that of our lovely cousin, seems to have power enough well nigh to make the dumb speak. What miracles then might her eye work upon such a subject! I will make the experiment, friend slave. Thou shalt see this choice beauty of our court, and do the errand of the princely Soldan."

Again a joyful glance—again a genuflection—but, as he arose, the King laid his hand heavily on his shoulder, and proceeded with stern gravity thus.—"Let me in one thing warn you, my sable envoy. Even if thou shouldst feel that the kindly influence of her, whom thou art soon to behold, should loosen the bonds of thy tongue, presently imprisoned, as the good Soldan expresses it, within the ivory walls of its castle, beware how thou changest thy taciturn character, or speakest a word in her presence, even if thy powers of utterance were to be miraculously restored. Believe me, that I should have thy tongue extracted by the roots, and its ivory palace, that is, I presume, its range of teeth, drawn out one by one. Wherefore, be wise and silent still."

The Nubian, so soon as the King had removed his heavy grasp from his shoulder, bent his head, and laid his hand on his lips, in token of silent obedience.

But Richard again laid his hand on him more gently, and added, "This behest we lay on thee as on a slave. Were thou knight and gentleman, we would require thine honour in pledge of thy silence, which is one especial condition of our present trust."

The Ethiopian raised his body proudly, looked full at the King, and laid his right hand on his heart.

Richard then summoned his chamberlain.

"Go, Neville," he said, "with this slave, to the tent of our royal consort, and say it is our pleasure that he have an audience—a private audience—of our cousin Edith. He is charged with a commission to her. Thou canst show him the way also, in case he requires thy guidance, though thou may'st have observed it is wonderful how familiar he already seems to be with the purlieus of our camp.—And thou, too, friend Ethiop," the King continued, "what thou dost, do quickly, and return hither within the half hour."

"I stand discovered," thought the seeming Nubian, as, with downcast looks and folded arms, he followed the hasty stride of Neville towards the tent of Queen Berengaria.—"I stand undoubtedly discovered and unfolded to King Richard; yet I cannot perceive that his resentment is hot against me. If I understand his words, and surely it is impossible to misinterpret them, he gives me a noble chance of redeeming my honour upon the crest of this false Marquis, whose guilt I read in his craven eye and quivering lip, when the charge was made against him.—Roswal, faithfully hast thou served thy master, and most dearly shall thy wrong be avenged!—But what is the meaning of my present permission to look upon her, whom I had despaired ever to see again?—And why, or how, can the royal Plantagenet consent that I should see his divine kinswoman, either as the messenger of the heathen *Saladin, or as the guilty* exile whom he so lately expelled from his camp—his audacious avowal of the affection which is his pride, being the greatest enhancement of his guilt? That Richard should consent to her receiving a letter from an infidel lover, by the hands of one of such disproportioned rank, are either of them circumstances equally incredible, and, at the same time, inconsistent with each other. But Richard, when unmoved by his heady passions, is liberal, generous, and truly noble, and as such I will deal with him, and act according to his instructions, direct or implied, seeking to know no more than may gradually unfold itself without my officious inquiry. To him who has given me so brave an opportunity to vindicate my tarnished honour, I owe acquiescence and obedience, and, painful as it may be, the debt shall be paid. And yet,"—thus the proud swelling of his heart farther suggested,—"Cœur de Lion, as he is called, might have measured the feelings of others by his own. I urge an address to his kinswoman! I, who never spoke word to her when I took a royal prize from her hand—when I was accounted not the lowest in feats of chivalry among the defenders of the Cross!" *I* approach her when in a base disguise, and in a servile habit—and, alas! when my actual condition is that of a slave, with a spot of dishonour on that which was once my shield! *I* do this! He little knows me. Yet I thank him for the opportunity which may make us all better acquainted with each other."

As he arrived at this conclusion, they paused before the entrance of the Queen's pavilion.

They were of course admitted by the guards, and Neville leaving the Nubian in a small apartment, or antechamber, which was but too well remembered by him, passed into that which was used as the Queen's presence-chamber. He communicated his royal master's pleasure in a low and respectful tone of voice, very different from the bluntness of Thomas de Vaux, to whom Richard was every thing, and the rest of the court, including Berengaria herself, was nothing. A burst of laughter followed the communication of his errand.

"And what like is the Nubian slave, who comes ambassador on such an errand from the Soldan?—a Negro, De Neville, is he not?" said a female voice, easily recognised for that of Berengaria. "A Negro is he not, De Neville, with black skin, a head curled like a ram's, a flat nose, and blubber lips—ha, worthy Sir Henry?"

"Let not your Grace forget the shin-bones," said another voice, "bent outwards like the edge of a Saracen cimeter."

"Rather like the bow of a Cupid, since he comes upon a lover's errand," said the Queen. "Gentle Neville, thou art ever prompt to pleasure us poor women, who have so little to pass away our idle moments. We must see this messenger of love. Turks and Moors have I seen many but Negro never."

"I am created to obey your Grace's commands, so you will bear me out with my sovereign for doing so," answered the debonair knight. "Yet let me assure your Grace, you will see somewhat different from what you expect."

"So much the better—uglier yet than our imaginations can fancy, yet the chosen love-messenger of this gallant Soldan!"

"Gracious madam," said the lady Calista, "may I implore you would permit the good knight to carry this messenger straight to the Lady Edith, to whom his credentials are addressed? We have already escaped hardly for such a frolic."

"Escaped?"—repeated the Queen, scornfully. "Yet thou mayst be right, Calista, in thy caution—let this Nubian, as thou callest him, first do his errand to our cousin—Besides, he is mute too—is he not?"

"He is, gracious madam," answered the knight.

"Royal sport have these Eastern ladies," said Berengaria, "attended by those before whom they may say any thing, yet who can report nothing. Whereas in our camp, as the Prelate of St. Jude's is wont to say, a bird of the air will carry the matter."

"Because said De Neville, "your Grace forgets that you speak within canvass walls."

The voices sunk on this observation, and after a

little whispering, the English knight again returned to the Ethiopian, and made him a sign to follow. He did so, and Neville conducted him to a pavilion, pitched somewhat apart from that of the Queen, for the accommodation, it seemed, of the Lady Edith and her attendants. One of her Coptic maidens received the message communicated by Sir Henry Neville, and, in the space of a very few minutes, the Nubian was ushered into Edith's presence, while Neville was left on the outside of the tent. The slave who introduced him withdrew on a signal from her mistress, and it was with humiliation, not of the posture only, but of the very inmost soul, that the unfortunate knight, thus strangely disguised, threw himself on one knee, with looks bent on the ground, and arms folded on his bosom, like a criminal who expects his doom. Edith was clad in the same manner as when she received King Richard, her long transparent dark veil hanging around her like the shade of a summer night on a beautiful landscape, disguising and rendering obscure the beauties which it could not hide. She held in her hand a silver lamp, fed with some aromatic spirit, which burned with unusual brightness.

When Edith came within a step of the kneeling and motionless slave, she held the light towards his face, as if to peruse his features more attentively, then turned from him, and placed her lamp so as to throw the shadow of his face in profile upon the curtain which hung beside. She at length spoke in a voice composed, yet deeply sorrowful.

"Is it you?—Is it indeed you, brave Knight of the Leopard—gallant Sir Kenneth of Scotland—is it indeed you?—thus servilely disguised—thus surrounded by a hundred dangers?"

At hearing the tones of his lady's voice thus unexpectedly addressed to him, and in a tone of compassion approaching to tenderness, a corresponding reply rushed to the knight's lips, and scarce could Richard's commands, and his own promised silence, prevent his answering, that the sight he saw, the sounds he just heard, were sufficient to recompense the slavery of a life, and dangers which threatened that life every hour. He *did* recollect himself, however, and a deep and impassioned sigh was his only reply to the high-born Edith's question.

"I see—I know I have guessed right"—continued Edith. "I marked you from your first appearance near the platform on which I stood with the Queen. I knew, too, your valiant hound. She is no true lady, and is unworthy of the service of such a knight as thou art, from whom disguises of dress or hue could conceal a faithful servant. Speak, then, without fear, to Edith Plantagenet. She knows how to grace in adversity the good knight who served, honoured, and did deeds of arms in her name, when fortune befriended him.—Still silent! Is it fear or shame that keeps thee so? Fear should be unknown to thee; and for shame, let it remain with those who have wronged thee."

The knight, in despair at being obliged to play the mute in an interview so interesting, could only express his mortification by sighing deeply, and laying his finger upon his lips. Edith stepped back, as if somewhat displeased.

"What!" she said, "the Asiatic mute in very deed, as well as in attire? This I looked not for—Or thou mays't scorn me, perhaps, for thus boldly acknowledging that I have heedfully observed the homage thou hast paid me? Hold no unworthy thoughts of Edith on that account. She knows well the bounds which reserve and modesty prescribe to high-born maidens, and she knows when and how far they should give place to gratitude—to a sincere desire that it were in her power to repay services and repair injuries, arising from the devotion which a good knight bore towards her.—Why fold thy hands together, and wring them with so much passion?—Can it be," she added, shrinking back at the idea—"that their cruelty has actually deprived thee of speech? Thou shakest thy head. Be it a spell—be it obstinacy, I question thee no farther, but leave thee to do thine errand after thine own fashion. I also can be mute."

The disguised knight made an action as if at once lamenting his own condition, and deprecating her displeasure, while at the same time he presented to her, wrapped, as usual, in fine silk and cloth of gold, the letter of the Soldan. She took it, surveyed it carelessly, then laid it aside, and bending her eyes once more on the knight, she said in a low tone—"Not even a word to do thine errand to me?"

He pressed both his hands to his brow, as if to intimate the pain which he felt at being unable to obey her; but she turned from him in anger.

"Begone!" she said. "I have spoken enough—too much—to one who will not waste on me a word in reply. Begone!—and say, if I have wronged thee, I have done penance; for if I have been the unhappy means of dragging thee down from a station of honour, I have, in this interview, forgotten my own worth, and lowered myself in thy eyes and in my own."

She covered her eyes with her hand, and seemed deeply agitated. Sir Kenneth would have approached but she waved him back.

"Stand off! thou whose soul Heaven hath suited to its new station! Aught less dull and fearful than a slavish mute had spoken a word of gratitude, were it but to reconcile me to my own degradation. Why pause you?—begone!"

The disguised knight almost involuntarily looked towards the letter as an apology for protracting his stay. She snatched it up, saying, in a tone of irony and contempt, "I had forgotten—the dutiful slave waits an answer to his message.—How's this—from the Soldan!"

She hastily ran over the contents, which were expressed both in Arabic and French, and when she had done, she laughed in bitter anger.

"Now this passes imagination!" she said; "no jongleur can show so deft a transmutation! His legerdemain can transform zechins and bezants into doits and maravedies; but can his art convert a Christian knight, ever esteemed among the bravest of the Holy Crusade, into the dust-kissing slave of a heathen Soldan—the bearer of a Paynim's insolent proposals to a Christian maiden—nay, forgetting the laws of honourable chivalry, as well as of religion! But it avails not talking to the willing slave of a heathen hound. Tell your master, when his scourge shall have found thee a tongue, that which thou hast seen me do."—So saying, she threw the Soldan's letter on the ground, and placed her foot upon it—"And say to him, that Edith Plantagenet scorns the homage of an unchristened Pagan."

With these words she was about to shoot from the knight, when, kneeling at her feet in bitter agony, he ventured to lay his hand upon her robe, and oppose her departure.

"Heardst thou not what I said, dull slave?" she said, turning short round on him, and speaking with emphasis; "tell the heathen Soldan, thy master, that I scorn his suit as much as I despise the prostration of a worthless renegade to religion and chivalry—to God and to his lady!"

So saying, she burst from him, tore her garment from his grasp, and left the tent.

The voice of Neville, at the same time, summoned him from without. Exhausted and stupified by the distress he had undergone during this interview, from which he could only have extricated himself by breach of the engagement which he had formed with King Richard, the unfortunate knight staggered rather than walked after the English baron, till they reached the royal pavilion, before which a party of horsemen had just dismounted. There was light and motion within the tent, and when Neville entered with his disguised attendant, they found the King, with several of his nobility, engaged in welcoming those who were newly arrived.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"The tears I shed must ever fall!
I weep not for an absent swain,
For time may happier hours recall,
And parted lovers meet again.

"I weep not for the silent dead,
Their pains are past, their sorrows o'er,
And those that loved their steps must tread,
When death shall join to part no more."

But worse than absence, worse than death,
She wept her lover's sullied fame,
And, fired with all the pride of birth,
She wept a soldier's injured name.—*Ballad.*

THE frank and bold voice of Richard was heard in joyous gratulation.

"Thomas de Vaux! stout Tom of the Gills! by the head of King Henry, thou art welcome to me as ever was flask of wine to a jolly toper! I should scarce have known how to order my battle array, unless I had thy bulky form in mine eye as a landmark to form my ranks upon. We shall have blows anon, Thomas, if the saints be gracious to us; and had we fought in thine absence, I would have looked to hear of thy being found hanging upon an elder-tree."

"I should have borne my disappointment with more Christian patience, I trust," said Thomas de Vaux, "than to have died the death of an apostate. But I thank your Grace for my welcome, which is the more generous, as it respects a banquet of blows, of which, saving your pleasure, you are ever too apt to engross the larger share; but here have I brought one, to whom your Grace will, I know, give a yet warmer welcome."

The person who now stepped forward to make obeisance to Richard, was a young man of low stature and slight form. His dress was as modest as his figure was unimpressive, but he bore on his bonnet a gold buckle, with a gem, the lustre of which could only be rivalled by the brilliancy of the eye which the bonnet shaded. It was the only striking feature in his countenance; but when once noticed, it ever made a strong impression on the spectator. About his neck there hung in a scarf of sky-blue silk a *wrest*, as it was called,—that is, the key with which a harp is tuned, and which was of solid gold.

This personage would have kneeled reverently to Richard, but the monarch raised him in joyful haste, pressed him to his bosom warmly, and kissed him on either side of the face.

"Blondel de Nesle!" he exclaimed joyfully—"welcome from Cyprus, my king of minstrels!—welcome to the King of England, who rates not his own dignity more highly than he does thine. I have been sick, man, and, by my soul, I believe it was for lack of thee; for, were I half way to the gate of Heaven, methinks thy strains could call me back.—And what news, my gentle master, from the land of the lyre? Any thing fresh from the *trouveurs* of Provence?—any thing from the minstrels of merry Normandy?—above all, hast thou thyself been busy?—But I need not ask thee—thou canst not be idle, if thou wouldst—thy noble qualities are like a fire burning within, and compel thee to pour thyself out in music and song."

"Something I have learned, and something I have done, noble King," answered the celebrated Blondel, with a retiring modesty, which all Richard's enthusiastic admiration of his skill had been unable to banish.

"We will hear thee, man—we will hear thee instantly," said the King;—then touching Blondel's shoulder kindly, he added, "that is, if thou art not fatigued with thy journey; for I would sooner ride my best horse to death, than injure a note of thy voice."

"My voice is, as ever, at the service of my royal patron," said Blondel; "but your Majesty," he added, looking at some papers on the table, "seems more importantly engaged, and the hour waxes late."

"Not a whit, man, not a whit, my dearest Blondel. I did but sketch an array of battle against the Saracens, a thing of a moment—almost as soon done as the routing of them."

"Methinks, *however*," said Thomas de Vaux, "it were not unfit to inquire what soldiers your Grace hath to array. I bring reports on that subject from Ascalon."

"Thou art a mule, Thomas," said the King—"a very mule for dulness and obstinacy!—Come, nobles—a hall—a hall!—range ye around him—Give Blondel the tabourct—Where is his harp-bearer?—or, soft—lend him my harp, his own may be damaged by the journey?"

"I would your Grace would take my report," said Thomas de Vaux. "I have ridden far, and have more list to my bed than to have my ears tickled."

"*Thy* ears tickled!" said the King; "that must be with a woodcock's feather, and not with sweet sounds. Hark thee, Thomas, do thine ears know the singing of Blondel from the braying of an ass?"

"In faith, my liege," replied Thomas, "I cannot well say; but, setting Blondel out of the question, who is a born gentleman, and doubtless of high acquirements, I shall never, for the sake of your Grace's question, look on a minstrel, but I shall think upon an ass."

"And might not your manners," said Richard, "have excepted me, who am a gentleman born as well as Blondel, and, like him, a guild-brother of the Joyeuse science?"

"Your Grace should remember," said De Vaux, smiling, "that 'tis useless asking for manners from a mule."

"Most truly spoken," said the King; "and an ill-conditioned animal thou art—But come hither, master mule, and be unloaded, that thou mayst get thee to thy litter, without any music being wasted on thee.—Mean time do thou, good brother of Salisbury, go to our consort's tent, and tell her that Blondel has arrived, with his budget fraught with the newest minstrelsey—Bid her come hither instantly, and do thou escort her, and see that our cousin, Edith Plantagenet, remain not behind."

His eye then rested for a moment on the Nubian, with that expression of doubtful meaning, which his countenance usually displayed when he looked at him.

"Ha, our silent and secret messenger returned?—Stand up, slave, behind the back of De Neville, and thou shalt hear presently sounds which will make thee bless God that he afflicted thee rather with dumbness than deafness."

So saying, he turned from the rest of the company towards De Vaux, and plunged instantly into the military details which that baron laid before him.

About the time that the Lord of Gilsland had finished his audience, a messenger announced that the Queen and her attendants were approaching the royal tent.—"A flask of wine, ho!" said the King "of old King Isaac's long-saved Cyprus, which we won when we stormed Famagosta—fill to the stout Lord of Gilsland, gentles—a more careful and faithful servant never had any prince."

"I am glad," said Thomas de Vaux, "that your Grace finds the mule a youthful slave, though his voice be less musical than horse hair or wire."

"What, thou canst not yet digest that quip of the mule?" said Richard. "Wash it down with a brimming flagon, man, or thou wilt choke upon it.—Why, so—well pulled!—and now I will tell thee, thou art a soldier as well as I, and we must brook each other's jests in the hall, as each other's blows in the tourney, and love each other the harder we hit. By my faith, if thou didst not hit me as hard as I did thee in our late encounter! thou gavest all thy wit to the thrust. But here lies the difference betwixt thee and Blondel. Thou art but my comrade—I might say my pupil—in the art of war; Blondel is my master in the science of minstrelsey and music. To thee I permit the freedom of intimacy—to him I must do reverence, as to my superior in his art. Come, man, be not peevish, but remain and hear our glee."

"To see your Majesty in such cheerful mood," said the Lord of Gilsland, "by my faith, I could remain till Blondel had achieved the great Romance of King Arthur, which lasts for three days."

"We will not tax your patience so deeply," said the King. "But see, yonder glare of torches without shows that our consort approaches—Away to receive

her, man, and win thyself grace in the fairest eyes of Christendom.—Nay, never stop to adjust thy cloak. See, thou hast let Neville come between the wind and the sails of thy galley!"

"He was never before me in the field of battle," said De Vaux, not greatly pleased to see himself anticipated by the more active service of the chamberlain.

"No, neither he nor any one went before thee there, my good Tom of the Gills," said the King, "unless it was ourself now and then."

"Ay, my liege," said De Vaux, "and let us do justice to the unfortunate;—the unhappy Knight of the Leopard hath been before me, too, at a season; for, look you, he weighs less on horseback, and so"——

"Hush!" said the King, interrupting him in a peremptory tone—"not a word of him!"—and instantly stepped forward to greet his royal consort; and when he had done so, he presented to her Blondel, as king of minstrelsey, and his master in the gay science. Berengaria, who well knew that her royal husband's passion for poetry and music almost equalled his appetite for warlike fame, and that Blondel was his especial favourite, took anxious care to receive him with all the flattering distinctions due to one whom the King delighted to honour. Yet it was evident, that, though Blondel made suitable returns to the compliments showered on him something too abundantly by the royal beauty, he owned with deeper reverence and more humble gratitude the simple and graceful welcome of Edith, whose kindly greeting appeared to him, perhaps, sincere in proportion to its brevity and simplicity.

Both the Queen and her royal husband were aware of this distinction, and Richard, seeing his consort somewhat piqued at the preference assigned to his cousin, by which perhaps he himself did not feel much gratified, said in the hearing of both,—"We minstrels, Berengaria, as thou mayst see by the bearing of our master Blondel, pay more reverence to a severe judge, like our kinswoman, than to a kindly partial friend, like thyself, who is willing to take our worth upon trust."

Edith was moved by this sarcasm of her royal kinsman, and hesitated not to reply, that, "To be a harsh and severe judge, was not an attribute proper to her alone of all the Plantagenets."

She had perhaps said more, having some touch of the temper of that house, which, deriving their name and cognisance from the lowly broom, (*Planta Genista,*) assumed as an emblem of humility, were perhaps one of the proudest families that ever ruled in England; but her eye, when kindling in her reply, suddenly caught those of the Nubian, although he endeavoured to conceal himself behind the nobles who were present, and she sunk upon a seat, turning so pale, that the Queen Berengaria deemed herself obliged to call for water and essences, and to go through the other ceremonies appropriate to a lady's swoon. Richard, who better estimated Edith's strength of mind, called to Blondel to assume his seat and commence his lay, declaring that minstrelsey was worth every other recipe to recall a Plantagenet to life.—"Sing us," he said, "that song of the Bloody Vest, of which thou didst formerly give me the argument, ere I left Cyprus; thou must be perfect in it by this time, or, as our yeomen say, thy bow is broken."

The anxious eye of the minstrel, however, dwelt on Edith, and it was not till he observed her returning colour that he obeyed the repeated commands of the King. Then, accompanying his voice with the harp, so as to grace, but yet not drown, the sense of what he sung, he chanted in a sort of recitative, one of those ancient adventures of love and knighthood, which were wont of yore to win the public attention. So soon as he began to prelude, the insignificance of his personal appearance seemed to disappear, and his countenance glowed with energy and inspiration. His full, manly, mellow voice, so absolutely under command of the purest taste, thrilled on every ear, and to every heart. Richard, rejoiced as after victory, called out the appropriate summons for silence,

Listen, lords, in bower and hall!

while with the zeal of a patron at once and a pupil, he arranged the circle around, and hushed them into silence; and he himself sat down with an air of expectation and interest, not altogether unmixed with the gravity of the professed critic. The courtiers turned their eyes on the King, that they might be ready to trace and imitate the emotions his features should express, and Thomas de Vaux yawned tremendously, as one who submitted unwillingly to a wearisome penance. The song of Blondel was of course in the Norman language; but the verses which follow, express its meaning and its manner.

THE BLOODY VEST.

'Twas near the fair city of Benevent,
When the sun was setting on bough and bent,
And knights were preparing in bower and tent,
On the eve of the Baptist's tournament;
When in Lincoln green a stripling gent,
Well seeming a page by a princess sent,
Wander'd the camp, and, still as he went,
Inquired for the Englishman, Thomas a Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther must fare,
Till he finds his pavilion nor stately nor rare—
Little save iron and steel was there:
And, as lacking the coin to pay armourer's care,
With his sinewy arms to the shoulders bare,
The good knight with hammer and file did repair
The mail that to morrow must see him wear,
For the honour of Saint John and his lady fair.

"Thus speaks my lady," the page said he,
And the knight bent lowly both head and knee,
"She is Benevent's Princess so high in degree,
And thou art as lowly as knight may well be—
He that would climb so lofty a tree,
Or spring such a gulf as divides her from thee,
Must dare some high deed, by which all men may see
His ambition is back'd by his his chivalrie.

"Therefore thus speaks my lady," the fair page he said,
And the knight lowly louted with hand and with head,
"Fling aside the good armour in which thou art clad,
And don thou this weed of her night-gear instead,
For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of thread:
And charge, thus attired, in the tournament dread,
And fight as thy wont is where most blood is shed,
And bring honour away, or remain with the dead."

Untroubled in his look, and untroubled in his breast,
The knight the weed hath taken, and reverently hath kissed;—
"Now blessed be the moment, the messenger be blest!
Much honour'd do I hold me in my lady's high behest;
And say unto my lady, in this dear night-weed dress'd,
To the best armed champion I will not veil my crest;
But if I live and bear me well 'tis her turn to take the test."
Here, gentles, ends the foremost fytte of the Lady of the Bloody Vest.

"Thou hast changed the measure upon us unawares in that last couplet, my Blondel?" said the King.

"Most true, my lord," said Blondel. "I rendered the verses from the Italian of an old harper, whom I met in Cyprus, and not having had time either to translate it accurately, or commit it to memory, I am fain to supply gaps in the music and the verse as I can upon the spur of the moment, as you see boors men a quickset fence with a fagot."

"Nay, on my faith," said the King, "I like these rattling rolling Alexandrines—methinks they come more twangingly off to the music than that briefer measure."

"Both are licensed, as is well known to your Grace," answered Blondel.

"They are so, Blondel," said Richard; "yet methinks the scene, where there is like to be fighting, will go best on in these same thundering Alexandrines, which sound like the charge of cavalry; while the other measure is but like the sidelong amble of a lady's palfrey."

"It shall be as your Grace pleases," replied Blondel, and began again to prelude.

"Nay, first cherish thy fancy with a cup of fiery Chios wine," said the King; "and hark thee, I would have thee fling away that newfangled restriction of thine, of terminating in accurate and similar rhymes. They are a constraint on thy flow of fancy, and make thee resemble a man dancing in fetters."

"The fetters are easily flung off, at least," said Blondel, again sweeping his fingers over the strings as one who would rather have played than listened to criticism.

why got them on, men?" continued the
Wherefore thrust thy genius into iron brace-
marvel how you got forward at all—I am sure
not have been able to compose a stanza in
ampered measure."
l looked down and hushed himself with the
his harp, to hide an involuntary smile which
r his features; but it escaped not Richard's
on.
y faith, thou laugh'st at me, Blondel," he
nd, in good truth, every man deserves it,
ames to play the master when he should be
; but we kings get bad habits of self-opinion.
on with thy lay; dearest Blondel—on after
n fashion, better than aught that we can
hough we must needs be talking."
l resumed the lay; but, as extemporaneous
ion was familiar to him, he failed not to
rith the King's hints, and was perhaps not
l to show with how much ease he could
el a poem even while in the act of recitation.

THE BLOODY VEST.

FYTTE SECOND.

d's fair marrow beheld gallant feats—
winging of honour, and losing of seats—
hewing with falchions, and splintering of staves,
t won glory, the vanquished won graves.
knight there fought bravely and well,
s accounted his peers to excel,
he whose armour on body and breast,
weed of a damsel when bound for her rest.

some dealt him wounds that were bloody and sore,
suspected his plight, and forbore,
death of honour," they said, "and I trow,
rightly to slay him achieving his vow."
vince, for his sake, bade the tournament cease,
rn his warder, the trumpets sang peace;
ges declare, and competitors yield,
Knight of the Night-gear was first in the field.

t was nigh, and the mass it was nigher,
e the fair Princess low louted a squire,
'd a garment uncloudy to view,
nd-cut and spear-thrust, all hack'd and pierced
ugh;
d all tatter'd, all clotted with blood,
of the horses, with dust, and with mud.
ist of that lady's small finger, I ween,
rested on spot was unsullied and clean.

is my master, Sir Thomas a Kent,
the Princess of fair Beauvoys';
mbs the tall tree has won right to the fruit,
ps the wide gulf should prevail in his suit;
is a utmost peril the prize I have won,
test the faith of my mistress be shown;
o prompts knight on such danger to ran,
sh his true service in front of the sun.

,' says my master, 'the garment I've worn.
r of the Princess to don it in turn:
ns and its rents she should prize it the more,
mse 'tis unsullied, though crimson'd with gore.'"
blush'd the Princess—yet kiss'd she and press'd
spotted robes to her lips and her breast.
y true knight, church and chamber shall show,
is blood on this garment or no."

It was time for the nobles to pass,
procession to minster and mass,
alk'd the Princess in purple and pall,
ed besmear'd night-robe she wore over all;
the hall, where they all sat at dine,
knelt to her father and proffered the wine,
r rich robes and state jewels, she wore
e unseemly bedabbled with gore.

whisper'd ladies, as well you may think,
applied, with nod, titter, and wink;
ilton, who in anger and shame had look'd down,
spoke to his daughter, and spoke with a frown;
on thou hast publish'd thy folly and guilt,
With thy hand for the blood thou hast spilt;
f your boldness you both will repent,
wander as exiles from fair Beauvent."

spoke stout Thomas, in hall where he stood,
and feeble but dauntless of mood;
d that I lost for this daughter of thine,
rth as freely as flask gives its wine;
my sake she brooks penance and blame,
ot I will save her from suffering and shame:
will she rock of thy princedom and rent,
ll her, in England, the Countess of Kent!"

our of applause ran through the assembly,
the example of Richard himself, who loaded
with praises his favourite minstrel, and ended by presenting him with a ring of considerable value. The Queen hastened to distinguish the favourite by a rich bracelet, and many of the nobles who were present followed the royal example.

"Is our cousin Edith," said the King, "become insensible to the sound of the harp she once loved?"

"She thanks Blondel for his lay," replied Edith, "but doubly the kindness of the kinsman who suggested it."

"Thou art angry, cousin," said the King; "angry because thou hast heard of a woman more wayward than thyself. But you escape me not—I will walk a space homeward with you towards the Queen's pavilion—we must have conference together ere this night has waned into morning."

The Queen and her attendants were now on foot, and the other guests withdrew from the royal seat. A train with blazing torches, and an escort of archers, awaited Berengaria without the pavilion, and she was soon on her way homeward. Richard, as he had proposed, walked beside his kinswoman, and compelled her to accept of his arm as her support, so that they could speak to each other without being overheard.

"What answer, then, am I to return to the noble Soldan?" said Richard. "The Kings and Princes are falling from me, Edith—this new quarrel hath alienated them once more. I would do something for the Holy Sepulchre by composition, if not by victory; and the chance of my doing this depends, alas, on the caprice of a woman. I would lay my single spear in the rest against ten of the best lances in Christendom, rather than argue with a wilful wench, who knows not what is for her own good.—What answer, coz, am I to return to the Soldan? It must be decisive."

"Tell him," said Edith, "that the poorest of the Plantagenets will rather wed with misery than with misbelief."

"Shall I say with *slavery*, Edith?" said the King—"Methinks that is nearer thy thoughts."

"There is no room" said Edith, "for the suspicion you so grossly insinuate. Slavery of the body might have been pitied, but that of the soul is only to be despised. Shame to thee, King of merry England! Thou hast enthralled both the limbs and the spirit of a knight, once scarce less famed than thyself."

"Should I not prevent my kinswoman from drinking poison, by sullying the vessel which contained it, if I saw no other means of disgusting her with the fatal liquor?" replied the King.

"It is thyself," answered Edith, "that would press me to drink poison, because it is proffered in a golden chalice."

"Edith," said Richard, "I cannot force thy resolution; but beware you shut not the door which Heaven opens. The hermit of Engaddi, he whom Popes and Councils have regarded as a prophet, hath read in the stars that thy marriage shall reconcile me with a powerful enemy, and that thy husband shall be Christian, leaving thus the fairest ground to hope, that the conversion of the Soldan, and the bringing in of the sons of Ishmael to the pale of the church, will be the consequence of thy wedding with Saladin. Come, thou must make some sacrifice rather than mar such happy prospects."

"Men may sacrifice rams and goats," said Edith, "but not honour and conscience. I have heard that it was the dishonour of a Christian maiden which brought the Saracens into Spain—the shame of another is no likely mode of expelling them from Palestine."

"Dost thou call it shame to become an Empress?" said the King.

"I call it shame and dishonour to profane a Christian sacrament, by entering into it with an infidel whom it cannot bind; and I call it foul dishonour, that I, the descendant of a Christian princess, should become of free-will the head of a harem of heathen concubines."

"Well, kinswoman," said the King, after a pause, "I must not quarrel with thee, though I think, in

dependent condition might have dictated more compliance."

"My liege," replied Edith, "your Grace hath worthily succeeded to all the wealth, dignity, and dominion of the House of Plantagenet,—do not, therefore, begrudge your poor kinswoman some small share of their pride."

"By my faith, wench," said the King, "thou hast unhorsed me with that very word! so we will kiss and be friends. I will presently despatch thy answer to Saladin. But after all, coz, were it not better to suspend your answer till you have seen him? Men say he is pre-eminently handsome."

"There is no chance of our meeting, my lord," said Edith.

"By Saint George, but there is next to a certainty of it," said the King; "for Saladin will doubtless afford us a free field for the doing of this new battle of the Standard, and will witness it himself. Berengaria is wild to behold it also, and I dare be sworn not a feather of you, her companions and attendants, will remain behind—least of all thou thyself, fair coz. But come, we have reached the pavilion, and must part—not in unkindness though—nay, thou must seal it with thy lip as well as thy hand, sweet Edith—it is my right as a sovereign to kiss my pretty vassals."

He embraced her respectfully and affectionately, and returned through the moonlight camp, humming to himself such snatches of Blondel's lay as he could recollect.

On his arrival, he lost no time in making up his despatches for Saladin, and delivered them to the Nubian, with a charge to set out by peep of day on his return to the Soldan.

CHAPTER XXVII.

> We heard the Tecbir,—so these Arabs call
> Their shout of onset, when, with loud acclaim,
> They challenge heaven to give them victory.
> *Siege of Damascus.*

On the subsequent morning, Richard was invited to a conference by Philip of France, in which the latter, with many expressions of his high esteem for his brother of England, communicated to him, in terms extremely courteous, but too explicit to be misunderstood, his positive intention to return to Europe, and to the cares of his kingdom, as entirely despairing of future success in their undertaking, with their diminished forces and civil discords. Richard remonstrated, but in vain; and when the conference ended, he received without surprise a manifesto from the Duke of Austria, and several other princes, announcing a resolution similar to that of Philip, and in no modified terms, assigning, for their defection from the cause of the Cross, the inordinate ambition and arbitrary domination of Richard of England. All hopes of continuing the war with any prospect of ultimate success, were now abandoned, and Richard, while he shed bitter tears over his disappointed hopes of glory, was little consoled by the recollection, that the failure was in some degree to be imputed to the advantages which he had given his enemies by his own hasty and imprudent temper.

"They had not dared to have deserted my father thus," he said to De Vaux, in the bitterness of his resentment.—"No slanders they could have uttered against so wise a king would have been believed in Christendom; whereas,—fool that I am!—I have not only afforded them a pretext for deserting me, but even a colour for casting all the blame of the rupture upon my unhappy foibles."

These thoughts were so deeply galling to the King, that De Vaux was rejoiced when the arrival of an ambassador from Saladin turned his reflections into a different channel.

This new envoy was an Emir much respected by the Soldan, whose name was Abdallah el Hadgi. He derived his descent from the family of the Prophet, and the race or tribe of Hasheim, in witness of which genealogy he wore a green turban of large dimensions. He had also three times performed the journey to Mecca, from which he derived his epithet of El Hadgi, or the Pilgrim. Notwithstanding these various pretentions to sanctity, Abdallah was (for an Arab) a boon companion, who enjoyed a merry tale, and laid aside his gravity so far as to quaff a blithe flagon, when secrecy ensured him against scandal. He was likewise a statesman, whose abilities had been used by Saladin in various negotiations with the Christian Princes, and particularly with Richard, to whom El Hadgi was personally known and acceptable. Animated by the cheerful acquiescence with which the envoy of Saladin afforded a fair field for the combat, a safe conduct for all who might choose to witness it, and offered his own person as a guarantee of his fidelity, Richard soon forgot his disappointed hopes, and the approaching dissolution of the Christian league, in the interesting discussions preceding a combat in the lists.

The station, called the Diamond of the Desert, was assigned for the place of conflict, as being nearly at an equal distance betwixt the Christian and Saracen camps. It was agreed that Conrade of Montserrat, the defendant, with his godfathers, the Archduke of Austria and the Grand Master of the Templars, should appear there on the day fixed for the combat, with a hundred armed followers, and no more; that Richard of England, and his brother Salisbury, who supported the accusation, should attend with the same number, to protect his champion; and that the Soldan should bring with him a guard of five hundred chosen followers, a band considered as not more than equal to the two hundred Christian lances. Such persons of consideration as either party chose to invite to witness the contest, were to wear no other weapons than their swords, and to come without defensive armour. The Soldan undertook the preparation of the lists, and to provide accommodations and refreshments of every kind for all who were to assist at the solemnity; and his letters expressed, with much courtesy, the pleasure which he anticipated in the prospect of a personal and peaceful meeting with the Melech Ric, and his anxious desire to render his reception as agreeable as possible.

All preliminaries being arranged, and communicated to the defendant and his godfathers, Abdallah the Hadgi was admitted to a more private interview, where he heard with delight the strains of Blondel. Having first carefully put his green turban out of sight, and assumed a Greek cap in its stead, he requited the Norman minstrel's music with a drinking song from the Persian, and quaffed a hearty flagon of Cyprus wine, to show that his practice matched his principles. On the next day, grave and sober as the water-drinker Mirglip, he bent his brow to the ground before Saladin's footstool, and rendered to the Soldan an account of his embassy.

On the day before that appointed for the combat, Conrade and his friends set off by daybreak to repair to the place assigned, and Richard left the camp at the same hour, and for the same purpose; but, as had been agreed upon, he took his journey by a different route, a precaution which had been judged necessary, to prevent the possibility of a quarrel betwixt their armed attendants.

The good King himself was in no humour for quarrelling with any one. Nothing could have added to his pleasurable anticipations of a desperate and bloody combat in the lists, except his being in his own royal person one of the combatants; and he was half in charity again even with Conrade of Montserrat. Lightly armed, richly dressed, and gay as a bridegroom on the eve of his nuptials, Richard caracoled along by the side of Queen Berengaria's litter, pointing out to her the various scenes through which they passed, and cheering with tale and song the bosom of the inhospitable wilderness. The former route of the Queen's pilgrimage to Engaddi had been on the other side of the chain of mountains, so that the ladies were strangers to the scenery of the desert; and though Berengaria knew her husband's disposition too well not to endeavour to seem interested in what he was pleased either to say or to sing, she could not help indulging some female fears when she found herself in the bowling wilderness with so small an

escort, which seemed almost like a moving speck on the bosom of the plain, and knew, at the same time, they were not so distant from the camp of Saladin but what they might be in a moment surprised and swept off by an overpowering host of his fiery-footed cavalry, should the Pagan be faithless enough to embrace an opportunity thus tempting. But when she hinted the suspicions to Richard, he repelled them with displeasure and disdain. "It were worse than ingratitude," he said, "to doubt the good faith of the generous Soldan."

Yet the same doubts and fears recurred more than once, not to the timid mind of the Queen alone, but to the firmer and more candid soul of Edith Plantagenet, who had no such confidence in the faith of the Moslem as to render her perfectly at ease when so much in their power; and her surprise had been far less than her terror, if the desert around had suddenly resounded, with the shout of Alla hu! and a band of Arab cavalry had pounced on them like vultures on their prey. Nor were these suspicions lessened, when, as evening approached, they were aware of a single Arab horseman, distinguished by his turban and long lance, hovering on the edge of a small eminence like a hawk poised in the air, and who instantly, on the appearance of the royal retinue, darted off with the speed of the same bird, when it shoots down the wind and disappears from the horizon.

"We must be near the station," said King Richard; "and yonder cavalier is one of Saladin's outposts—methinks I hear the noise of the Moorish horns and cymbals. Get you into order, my hearts, and form yourselves around the ladies soldierlike and firmly."

As he spoke, each knight, squire, and archer, hastily closed in upon his appointed ground, and they proceeded in the most compact order, which made their numbers appear still smaller; and to say the truth, though there might be no fear, there was anxiety as well as curiosity in the attention with which they listened to the wild bursts of Moorish music, which came ever and anon more distinctly from the quarter in which the Arab horseman had been seen to disappear.

De Vaux spoke in a whisper to the King—"Were it not well, my liege, to send a page to the top of that sand-bank? Or would it stand with your pleasure that I prick forward? Methinks, by all yonder clash and clang, if there be no more than five hundred men beyond the sand-hills, half of the Soldan's retinue must be drummers and cymbal-tossers.—Shall I spur on?"

The baron had checked his horse with the bit, and was just about to strike him with the spurs, when the King exclaimed—"Not for the world. Such a caution would express suspicion, and could do little to prevent surprise, which, however, I apprehend not."

They advanced accordingly in close and firm order till they surmounted the line of low sand-hills, and came in sight of the appointed station, when a splendid, but at the same time a startling spectacle, awaited them.

The Diamond of the Desert, so lately a solitary fountain, distinguished only amid the waste by solitary groups of palm-trees, was now the centre of an encampment, the embroidered flags and gilded ornaments of which glittered far and wide, and reflected a thousand rich tints against the setting sun. The coverings of the large pavilions were of the gayest colours, scarlet, bright yellow, pale blue, and other gaudy and gleaming hues, and the tops of their pillars, or tent-poles, were decorated with golden pomegranates, and small silken flags. But, besides these distinguished pavilions, there were, what Thomas de Vaux considered as a portentous number of the ordinary black tents of the Arabs, being sufficient, as he conceived, to accommodate, according to the Eastern fashion, a host of five thousand men. A number of Arabs and Curds, fully corresponding to the extent of the encampment, were hastily assembling, each leading his horse in his hand, and their muster was accompanied by an astonishing clamour of their noisy instruments of martial music, by which, in all ages, the warfare of the Arabs has been animated.

They soon formed a deep and confused mass of dismounted cavalry in front of their encampment, when, at the signal of a shrill cry, which arose high over the clangour of the music, each cavalier sprung to his saddle. A cloud of dust, arising at the moment of this manœuvre, hid from Richard and his attendants the camp, the palm-trees, and the distant ridge of mountains, as well as the troops whose sudden movement had raised the cloud, and, ascending high over their heads, formed itself into the fantastic forms of writhed pillars, domes, and minarets. Another shrill yell was heard from the bosom of this cloudy tabernacle. It was the signal for the cavalry to advance, which they did at full gallop, disposing themselves as they came forward, so as to come in at once, on the front, flanks, and rear, of Richard's little body-guard, who were thus surrounded, and almost choked, by the dense clouds of dust enveloping them on each side, through which were seen alternately, and lost, the grim forms and wild faces of the Saracens, brandishing and tossing their lances in every possible direction, with the wildest cries and halloos, and frequently only reining up their horses when within a spear's length of the Christians, while those in the rear discharged over the heads of both parties thick volleys of arrows. One of these struck the litter in which the Queen was seated, who loudly screamed, and the red spot was on Richard's brow in an instant.

"Ha! Saint George," he exclaimed, "we must take some order with this infidel scum!"

But Edith, whose litter was near, thrust her head out, and with her hand holding one of the shafts, exclaimed, "Royal Richard, beware what you do! see, these arrows are headless!"

"Noble, sensible wench!" exclaimed Richard; "by Heaven, thou shamest us all by thy readiness of thought and eye.—Be not moved, my English hearts," he exclaimed, to his followers—"their arrows have no heads—and their spears, too, lack their steel points. It is but a wild welcome, after their savage fashion, though doubtless they would rejoice to see us daunted or disturbed. Move onward, slow and steady."

The little phalanx moved forward accordingly, accompanied on all sides by the Arabs, with the shrillest and most piercing cries, the bowmen, mean while, displaying their agility by shooting as near the crests of the Christians as was possible, without actually hitting them, while the lancers charged each other with such rude blows of their blunt weapons, that more than one of them lost his saddle, and well nigh his life, in this rough sport. All this, though designed to express welcome, had rather a doubtful appearance in the eyes of the Europeans.

As they had advanced nearly half way towards the camp, King Richard and his suite forming, as it were, the nucleus round which this tumultuary body of horsemen howled, whooped, skirmished, and galloped, creating a scene of indescribable confusion, another shrill cry was heard, on which all these irregulars, who were on the front and upon the flanks of the little body of Europeans, wheeled off, and forming themselves into a long and deep column, followed with comparative order and silence in the rear of Richard's troop. The dust began now to dissipate in their front, when there advanced to meet them, through that cloudy veil, a body of cavalry of a different and more regular description, completely armed with offensive and defensive weapons, and who might well have served as a body-guard to the proudest of Eastern monarchs. This splendid troop consisted of five hundred men, and each horse which it contained was worth an earl's ransom. The riders were Georgian and Circassian slaves in the very prime of life; their helmets and hauberks were formed of steel rings, so bright that they shone like silver; their vestures were of the gayest colours, and some of cloth of gold and silver; the sashes were twisted with silk and gold, their rich turbans were plumed and jeweled, and their sabres and poniards, of Damascene steel, were adorned with gold and gems on hilt and scabbard.

This splendid array advanced to the sound of military music, and when they met the Christian body-

they opened their files to the right and left, and let them enter between their ranks. Richard now assumed the foremost place in his troop, aware that Saladin himself was approaching. Nor was it long when, in the centre of his body-guard, surrounded by his domestic officers, and those hideous negroes who guard the Eastern haram, and whose misshapen forms were rendered yet more frightful by the richness of their attire, came the Soldan, with the look and manners of one on whose brow Nature had written, This is a King! In his snow-white turban, vest, and wide Eastern trowsers, wearing a sash of scarlet silk, without any other ornament, Saladin might have seemed the plainest dressed man in his own guard. But closer inspection discerned in his turban that inestimable gem, which, was called by the poets, the Sea of Light; the diamond on which his signet was engraved, and which he wore in a ring, was probably worth all the jewels of the English crown, and a sapphire, which terminated the hilt of his canjiar, was not of much inferior value. It should be added, that to protect him from the dust, which, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, resembles the finest ashes, or, perhaps out of Oriental pride, the Soldan wore a sort of veil attached to his turban, which partly obscured the view of his noble features. He rode a milk white Arabian, which bore him as if conscious and proud of his noble burden.

There was no need of farther introduction. The two heroic monarchs, for such they both were, threw themselves at once from horseback, and the troops halting and the music suddenly ceasing, they advanced to meet each other in profound silence, and, after a courteous inclination on either side, they embraced as brethren and equals. The pomp and display upon both sides attracted no farther notice—no one saw aught save Richard and Saladin, and they too beheld nothing but each other. The looks with which Richard surveyed Saladin, were, however, more intently curious than those which the Soldan fixed upon him; and the Soldan also was the first to break silence.

"The Melech Ric is welcome to Saladin as water to this desert! I trust he hath no distrust of this numerous array? Excepting the armed slaves of my household, those who surround you with eyes of wonder and of welcome, are, even the humblest of them, the privileged nobles of my thousand tribes; for who that could claim a title to be present, would remain at home when such a Prince was to be seen as Richard, with the terrors of whose name, even on the sands of Yemen, the nurse stills her child, and the free Arab subdues his restive steed!"

"And these are all nobles of Araby?" said Richard, looking around on wild forms with their persons covered with haicks, their countenance swart with the sunbeams, their teeth as white as ivory, their black eyes glancing with fierce and preternatural lustre from under the shade of their turbans, and their dress being in general simple, even to meanness.

"They claim such rank," said Saladin; "but though numerous, they are within the conditions of the treaty, and bear no arms but the sabre—even the iron of their lances is left behind."

"I fear," muttered De Vaux in English, "they have left them where they can be soon found.—A most flourishing House of Peers, I confess, and would find Westminster-Hall something too narrow for them."

"Hush, De Vaux," said Richard, "I command thee.—" Noble Saladin," he said, "suspicion and thou cannot exist on the same ground.—Seest thou," pointing to the litters—"I too have brought some champions with me, though armed, perhaps, in breach of agreement, for bright eyes and fair features are weapons which cannot be left behind."

The Soldan, turning to the litters, made an obeisance as lowly as if looking towards Mecca, and kissed the sand in token of respect.

"*Nay,*" *said Richard,*—"they will not fear a closer encounter, brother; wilt thou not ride towards their litters, and the curtains will be presently with-*"

"That may Alla prohibit!" said Saladin, "since not an Arab looks on, who would not think it shame to the noble ladies to be seen with their faces uncovered."

"Thou shalt see them, then, in private, my royal brother," answered Richard.

"To what purpose?" answered Saladin, mournfully. "Thy last letter was, to the hopes which I had entertained, like water to fire; and wherefore should I again light a flame, which may indeed consume, but cannot cheer me?—But will not my brother pass to the tent which his servant hath prepared for him? My principal black slave hath taken order for the reception of the Princesses—the officers of my household will attend your followers, and ourself will be the chamberlain of the royal Richard."

He led the way accordingly to a splendid pavilion, where was every thing that royal luxury could devise. De Vaux, who was in attendance, then removed the chappe (*capa,*) or long riding-cloak which Richard wore, and he stood before Saladin in the close dress which showed to advantage the strength and symmetry of his person, while it bore a strong contrast to the flowing robes which disguised the thin frame of the Eastern monarch. It was Richard's two-handed sword that chiefly attracted the attention of the Saracen, a broad straight blade, the seemingly unwieldy length of which extended well nigh from the shoulder to the heel of the wearer.

"Had I not," said Saladin, "seen this brand flaming in the front of battle, like that of Azrael, I had scarce believed that human arm could wield it. Might I request to see the Melech Ric strike one blow with it in peace, and in pure trial of strength?"

"Willingly, noble Saladin," answered Richard; and looking around for something whereon to exercise his strength, he saw a steel mace, held by one of the attendants, the handle being of the same metal, and about an inch and a half in diameter—this he placed on a block of wood.

The anxiety of De Vaux for his master's honour led him to whisper in English—"For the blessed Virgin's sake, beware what you attempt, my liege! Your full strength is not as yet returned—give no triumph to the infidel."

"Peace, fool!" said Richard, standing firm on his ground, and casting a fierce glance around—"thinkest thou that I can fail in *his* presence?"

The glittering broadsword, wielded by both his hands, rose aloft to the King's left shoulder, circled round his head, descended with the sway of some terrific engine, and the bar of iron rolled on the ground in two pieces as a woodsman would sever a sapling with a hedging-bill.

"By the head of the Prophet, a most wonderful blow!" said the Soldan, critically and accurately examining the iron bar which had been cut asunder; and the blade of the sword was so well tempered as to exhibit not the least token of having suffered by the feat it had performed. He then took the King's hand, and looking on the size and muscular strength which it exhibited, laughed as he placed it beside his own, so lank and thin, so inferior in brawn and sinew.

"Ay, look well," said De Vaux, in English, "it will be long ere your long jackanape's fingers do such a feat with your fine gilded reaping-hook there."

"Silence, De Vaux," said Richard; "by Our Lady, he understands or guesses thy meaning—be not so broad, I pray thee."

The Soldan, indeed, presently said—"Something I would fain attempt—though, wherefore should the weak show their inferiority in presence of the strong? Yet, each land hath its own exercises, and this may be new to the Melech Ric."—So saying, he took from the floor a cushion of silk and down, and placed it upright on one end.—"Can thy weapon, my brother, sever that cushion?" he said to King Richard.

"No, surely," replied the King; "no sword on earth, were it the Excalibar of King Arthur, can cut that which opposes no steady resistance to the blow."

"Mark, then," said Saladin; and, tucking up the sleeve of his gown, showed his arm, thin indeed and bare, but which constant exercise had hardened into a mass consisting of naught but bone, brawn, and sinew. He unsheathed his cimeter, a curved and narrow blade, which glittered not like the swords of the Franks, but was, on the contrary, of a dull blue colour, marked with ten millions of meandering lines, which showed how anxiously the metal had been wielded by the armourer. Wielding this weapon, apparently so inefficient when compared to that of Richard, the Soldan stood resting his weight upon his left foot, which was slightly advanced; he balanced himself a little as if to steady his aim, then stepping at once forward, drew the cimeter across the cushion, applying the edge so dexterously, and with so little apparent effort, that the cushion seemed rather to fall asunder than to be divided by violence.

"It is a juggler's trick," said De Vaux, darting forward and snatching up the portion of the cushion which had been cut off, as if to assure himself of the reality of the feat,—"there is gramarye in this."

The Soldan seemed to comprehend him, for he unbound the sort of veil which he had hitherto worn, laid it double along the edge of his sabre, extended the weapon edgeways in the air, and drawing it suddenly through the veil, although it hung on the blade entirely loose, severed that also into two parts, which floated to different sides of the tent, equally displaying the extreme temper and sharpness of the weapon, and the exquisite dexterity of him who used it.

"Now, in good faith, my brother," said Richard, "thou art even matchless at the trick of the sword, and right perilous were it to meet thee! Still, however, I put some faith in a downright English blow, and what we cannot do by sleight, we eke out by strength. Nevertheless, in truth thou art as expert in inflicting wounds, as my sage Hakim in curing them. I trust I shall see the learned leech—I have much to thank him for, and had brought some small present."

As he spoke, Saladin exchanged his turban for a Tartar cap. He had no sooner done so, than De Vaux opened at once his extended mouth and his large round eyes, and Richard gazed with scarce less astonishment, while the Soldan spoke in a grave and altered voice: "The sick man, sayeth the poet, while he is yet infirm, knoweth the physician by his step; but when he is recovered, he knoweth not even his face when he looks upon him."

"A miracle!—a miracle?" exclaimed Richard.

"Of Mahound's working, doubtless," said Thomas de Vaux.

"That I should lose my learned Hakim," said Richard, "merely by absence of his cap and robe, and that I should find him again in my royal brother Saladin!"

"Such is oft the fashion of the world," answered the Soldan; "the tattered robe makes not always the dervisch."

"And it was through thy intercession," said Richard, "that yonder Knight of the Leopard was saved from death—and by thy artifice that he revisited my camp in disguise?"

"Even so," replied Saladin; "I was physician enough to know, that unless the wounds of his bleeding honour were stanched, the days of his life must be few. His disguise was more easily penetrated than I had expected from the success of my own."

"An accident," said King Richard, (probably alluding to the circumstance of his applying his lips to the wound of the supposed Nubian,) "let me first know that his skin was artificially discoloured; and that hint once taken, detection became easy, for his form and person are not to be forgotten. I confidently expect that he will do battle on the morrow."

"He is full in preparation, and high in hope," said the Soldan. "I have furnished him with weapons and horse, thinking nobly of him from what I have seen under various disguises."

"Knows he now," said Richard, "to whom he lies under obligation?"

"He doth," replied the Saracen—"I was obliged to unloose my person when I unfolded my purpose."

"And confessed he aught to you?" said the King of England.

"Nothing explicit," replied the Soldan; "but from much that passed between us, I conceive his love is too highly placed to be happy in its issue."

"And thou knowest, that his daring and insolent passion crossed thine own wishes?" said Richard.

"I might guess so much," said Saladin; "but his passion had existed ere my wishes had been formed—and, I must now add, is likely to survive them. I cannot, in honour, revenge me for my disappointment on him who had no hand in it. Or, if this high-born dame loved him better than myself, who can say that she did not justice to a knight, of her own religion, who is full of nobleness?"

"Yet of too mean lineage to mix with the blood of Plantagenet," said Richard, haughtily.

"Such may be your maxims in Frangistan," replied the Soldan. "Our poets of the Eastern countries say, that a valiant camel-driver is worthy to kiss the lip of a fair Queen, when a cowardly prince is not worthy to salute the hem of her garment.—But with your permission, noble brother, I must take leave of thee for the present, to receive the Duke of Austria and yonder Nazarene knight, much less worthy of hospitality, but who must yet be suitably entreated, not for their sakes, but for mine own honour—for what saith the sage Lokman? 'Say not that the food is lost unto thee which is given to the stranger—for if his body be strengthened and fattened therewithal, not less is thine own worship and good name cherished and augmented.'"

The Saracen Monarch departed from King Richard's tent, and having indicated to him, rather with signs than with speech, where the pavilion of the Queen and her attendants was pitched, he went to receive the Marquis of Montserrat and his attendants, for whom, with less good-will, but with equal splendour, the magnificent Soldan had provided accommodations. The most ample refreshments, both in the Oriental, and after the European fashion, were spread before the royal and princely guests of Saladin, each in their own separate pavilion; and so attentive was the Soldan to the habits and taste of his visiters, that Grecian slaves were stationed to present them with the goblet, which is the abomination of the sect of Mahommed. Ere Richard had finished his meal, the ancient Omrah, who had brought the Soldan's letter to the Christian camp, entered with a plan of the ceremonial to be observed on the succeeding day of combat. Richard, who knew the taste of his old acquaintance, invited him to pledge him in a flagon of wine of Schiraz; but Abdallah gave him to understand, with a rueful aspect, that self-denial, in the present circumstances, was a matter in which his life was concerned; for that Saladin, tolerant in many respects, both observed, and enforced by high penalties, the laws of the Prophet.

"Nay, then," said Richard, "if he loves not wine, that lightener of the human heart, his conversion is not to be hoped for, and the prediction of the mad priest of Engaddi goes like chaff down the wind."

The King then addressed himself to settle the articles of combat, which cost a considerable time, as it was necessary on some points to consult with the opposite parties, as well as with the Soldan.

They were at length finally agreed upon, and adjusted by a protocol in French and in Arabian which was subscribed by Saladin as umpire of the field, and by Richard and Leopold as guarantees for the two combatants. As the Omrah took his final leave of King Richard for the evening, De Vaux entered.

"The good knight," he said, "who is to do battle to-morrow, requests to know, whether he may not to-night pay duty to his royal godfather?"

"Hast thou seen him, De Vaux?" said the King smiling; "and didst thou know an ancient acquaintance?"

"By our Lady of Lanercost," answered De Vaux, "there are so many surprises and changes in this land, that my poor brain turns. I scarce knew Sir Kenneth of Scotland, till his good hound, that had been for a short while under my care, came and fawned on me; and even then I only knew the tyke by the

depth of his chest, the roundness of his foot, and his manner of baying; for the poor gaze-hound was painted like any Venetian courtezan."

"Thou art better skilled in brutes than men, De Vaux," said the King.

"I will not deny," said De Vaux, "I have found them ofttimes the honester animals. Also, your Grace is pleased to term me sometimes a brute myself; besides that I serve the Lion, whom all men acknowledge the king of brutes."

"By Saint George, there thou brokest thy lance fairly on my brow," said the King. "I have ever said thou hast a sort of wit, De Vaux—marry, one must strike thee with a sledge-hammer ere it can be made to sparkle. But to the present gear—is the good knight well armed and equipped?"

"Fully, my liege, and nobly," answered De Vaux; "I know the armour well—it is that which the Venetian commissary offered your highness, just ere you became ill, for five hundred bezants."

"And he hath sold it to the infidel Soldan, I warrant me, for a few ducats more, and present payment. These Venetians would sell the sepulchre itself!"

"The armour will never be borne in a nobler cause," said De Vaux.

"Thanks to the nobleness of the Saracen," said the King, "not to the avarice of the Venetians."

"I would to God your Grace would be more cautious," said the anxious De Vaux.—"Here are we deserted by all our allies, for points of offence given to one or another; we cannot hope to prosper upon the land, and we have only to quarrel with the amphibious republic, to lose the means of retreat by sea!"

"I will take care," said Richard, impatiently; "but school me no more. Tell me rather, for it is of interest, hath the knight a confessor?"

"He hath," answered De Vaux; "the hermit of Engaddi, who erst did him that office when preparing for death, attends him on the present occasion; the fame of the duel having brought him hither."

"'Tis well," said Richard; "and now for the knight's request. Say to him, Richard will receive him when the discharge of his devoir beside the Diamond of the Desert shall have atoned for his fault beside the Mount of Saint George; and as thou passest through the camp, let the Queen know I will visit her pavilion—and tell Blondel to meet me there."

De Vaux departed, and in about an hour afterwards, Richard, wrapping his mantle around him, and taking his gittern in his hand, walked in the direction of the Queen's pavilion. Several Arabs passed him, but always with averted heads, and looks fixed upon the earth, though he could observe that all gazed earnestly after him when he was past. This led him justly to conjecture that his person was known to them; but that either the Soldan's commands, or their own Oriental politeness, forbade them to seem to notice a sovereign who desired to remain incognito.

When the King reached the pavilion of his Queen, he found it guarded by those unhappy officials whom Eastern jealousy places around the zenana. Blondel was walking before the door, and touched his rote from time to time, in a manner which made the Africans show their ivory teeth, and bear burden with their strange gestures and shrill unnatural voices.

"What art thou after with this herd of black cattle, Blondel?" said the King; "wherefore goest thou not into the tent?"

"Because my trade can neither spare the head nor the fingers," said Blondel; "and these honest blackamoors threatened to cut me joint from joint if I pressed forward."

"Well, enter with me," said the King, "and I will be thy safeguard."

The blacks accordingly lowered pikes and swords to King Richard, and bent their eyes on the ground, as if unworthy to look upon him. In the interior of the pavilion, they found Thomas de Vaux in attendance on the Queen. While Berengaria welcomed Blondel, King Richard spoke for some time secretly *and apart with his fair kinswoman.*

At length, "Are we still foes, my fair Edith?" he *said in a whisper.*

"*No, my liege,*" said Edith, in a voice just so low as not to interrupt the music—"none can bear enmity against King Richard, when he deigns to show himself, as he really is, generous and noble, as well as valiant and honourable."

So saying, she extended her hand to him. The King kissed it in token of reconciliation, and then proceeded.

"You think, my sweet cousin, that my anger in this matter was feigned; but you are deceived. The punishment I inflicted upon this knight was just; for he had betrayed—no matter for how tempting a bribe, fair cousin—the trust committed to him. But I rejoice, perchance as much as you, that to-morrow gives him a chance to win the field, and throw back the stain which for a time clung to him, upon the actual thief and traitor. No!—future times may blame Richard for impetuous folly; but they shall say, that in rendering judgment, he was just when he should, and merciful when he could."

"Laud not thyself, cousin King," said Edith. "They may call thy justice cruelty—thy mercy caprice."

"And do not thou pride thyself," said the King, "as if thy knight, who hath not yet buckled on his armour, were unbelting it in triumph—Conrade of Montserrat is held a good lance. What if the Scot should lose the day?"

"It is impossible!" said Edith, firmly—"My own eyes saw yonder Conrade tremble and change colour, like a base thief. He is guilty—and the trial by combat is an appeal to the justice of God.—I myself, in such a case, would encounter him without fear."

"By the mass, I think thou wouldst, wench," said the King, "and beat him to boot; for there never breathed a truer Plantagenet than thou."

He paused, and added in a very serious tone,—"See that thou continue to remember what is due to thy birth."

"What means that advice, so seriously given at this moment?" said Edith. "Am I of such light nature as to forget my name—my condition?"

"I will speak plainly, Edith," answered the King, and as to a friend,—What will this knight be to you, should he come off victor from yonder lists?"

"To *me?* said Edith, blushing deep with shame and displeasure,—"What *can* he be to me more than an honoured knight, worthy of such grace as Queen Berengaria might confer on him, had he selected her for his lady, instead of a more unworthy choice? The meanest knight may devote himself to the service of an empress, but the glory of his choice," she said proudly, "must be his reward."

"Yet he hath served and suffered much for you," said the King.

"I have paid his services with honour and applause, and his sufferings with tears," answered Edith.—"Had he desired other reward, he would have done wisely to have bestowed his affections within his own degree."

"You would not then wear the bloody night-gear for his sake?"

"No more," answered Edith, "than I would have required him to expose his life by an action, in which there was more madness than honour."

"Maidens talk ever thus," said the King; "but when the favoured lover presses his suit, she says, with a sigh, her stars had decreed it otherwise."

"Your Grace has now, for the second time, threatened me with the influence of my horoscope," Edith replied, with dignity. "Trust me, my liege, whatever be the power of the stars, your poor kinswoman will never wed either infidel, or obscure adventurer.—Permit me, that I listen to the music of Blondel, for the tone of your royal admonitions is scarce so grateful to the ear."

The conclusion of the evening offered nothing worthy of notice.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?—Gray.

It had been agreed, on account of the heat of the climate, that the judicial combat, which was the cause

pent assemblage of various nations at the
l of the Desert, should take place at one
r sunrise. The wide lists, which had been
ted under the inspection of the Knight of the
, enclosed a space of hard sand, which was
lred and twenty yards long by forty in width.
:ended in length from north to south, so as to
parties the equal advantage of the rising sun.
s royal seat was erected on the western side
closure, just in the centre, where the com-
were expected to meet in mid encounter.
to this was a gallery with closed casements,
ved, that the ladies, for whose accommoda-
as erected, might see the fight without being
es exposed to view. At either extremity of
was a barrier, which could be opened or shut
ire. Thrones had been also erected, but the
e, perceiving that his was lower than King
s, refused to occupy it; and Cœur de Lion,
ld have submitted to much ere any formality
ave interfered with the combat, readily agreed
sponsors, as they were called, should remain
oback during the fight. At one extremity of
were placed the followers of Richard, and
to them were those who accompanied the
, Conrade. Around the throne destined for
an, were ranged his splendid Georgian Guards.
est of the enclosure was occupied by Christian
ohammedan spectators.

before day break, the lists were surrounded by
arger number of Saracens than Richard had
the preceding evening. When the first ray of
e glorious orb arose above the desert, the
call, "To prayer—to prayer!" was poured
the Soldan himself, and answered by others,
ank and zeal entitled them to act as muez-
was a striking spectacle to see them all sink
for the purpose of repeating their devotions,
ir faces turned to Mecca. But when they
m the ground, the sun's rays, now strength-
it, seemed to confirm the Lord of Gilsland's
re of the night before. They were flashed
m many a spear head, for the pointless lances
receding day were certainly no longer such.
t pointed it out to his master, who answered
atience, that he had perfect confidence in the
h of the Soldan; but if De Vaux was afraid
lky body, he might retire.

after this the noise of timbrels was heard, at
id of which the whole Saracen cavaliers
emselves from their horses, and prostrated
es, as if for a second morning prayer. This
ive an opportunity to the Queen, with Edith
attendants, to pass from the pavilion to the
ttended for them. Fifty guards of Saladin's
escorted them, with naked sabres, whose
ere to cut to pieces whomsoever, were he
peasant, should venture to gaze on the ladies
assed, or even presume to raise his head until
ition of the music should make all men aware
were lodged in their gallery, not to be gazed
curious eye.

superstitious observance of Oriental reve-
the fair sex, called forth from Queen Beren-
ne criticisms very unfavourable to Saladin
country. But their den, as the royal fair
being securely closed and guarded by their
tendants, she was under the necessity of
ng herself with seeing, and laying aside for
nt the still more exquisite pleasure of being

time the sponsors of both champions went,
heir duty, to see that they were duly armed,
ared for combat. The Archduke of Austria
o hurry to perform this part of the ceremo-
ng had rather an unusually severe debauch
e of Schiraz the preceding evening. But the
laster of the Temple, more deeply concerned
ent of the combat, was early before the tent
ade of Montserrat. To his great surprise,
dants refused him admittance.

ou not *know me, ye knaves?*" said the Grand
n great anger.

, most valiant and reverend," answered
Conrade's squire; "but even you may not at present enter—the Marquis is about to confess himself."

"Confess himself!" exclaimed the Templar, in a tone where alarm mingled with surprise and scorn—"and to whom, I pray thee?"

"My master bid me be secret," said the squire; on which the Grand Master pushed past him, and entered the tent almost by force.

The Marquis of Montserrat was kneeling at the feet of the Hermit of Engaddi, and in the act of beginning his confession.

"What means this, Marquis?" said the Grand Master; "up, for shame—or, if you must needs confess, am not I here?"

"I have confessed to you too often already," replied Conrade, with a pale cheek and a faltering voice. "For God's sake, Grand Master, begone, and let me unfold my conscience to this holy man."

"In what is he holier than I am?" said the Grand Master.—"Hermit, prophet, madman—say, if thou darest, in what thou excellest me?"

"Bold and bad man," replied the Hermit, "know that I am like the latticed window, and the divine light passes through to avail others, though, alas! it helpeth not me. Thou art like the iron stancheons, which neither receive light themselves, nor communicate it to any one."

"Prate not to me, but depart from this tent," said the Grand Master; "the Marquis shall not confess this morning, unless it be to me, for I part not from his side."

"Is this *your* pleasure?" said the Hermit to Conrade; "for think not I will obey that proud man, if you continue to desire my assistance."

"Alas," said Conrade, irresolutely, "what would you have me say?—Farewell for a while—we will speak anon."

"Oh, procrastination!" exclaimed the Hermit, "thou art a soul-murderer!—Unhappy man, farewell—not for a while, but until we shall both meet—no matter where.—And for thee," he added, turning to the Grand Master, "TREMBLE!"

"Tremble!" replied the Templar, contemptuously, "I cannot if I would."

The Hermit heard not his answer, having left the tent.

"Come! to this gear hastily," said the Grand Master, "since thou wilt needs go through the foolery.—Hark thee—I think I know most of thy frailties by heart, so we may omit the detail, which may be somewhat a long one, and begin with the absolution. What signifies counting the spots of dirt that we are about to wash from our hands?"

"Knowing what thou art thyself," said Conrade, "it is blasphemous to speak of pardoning another."

"That is not according to the canon, Lord Marquis," said the Templar,—"thou art more scrupulous than orthodox. The absolution of the wicked priest is as effectual as if he were himself a saint—otherwise, God help the poor penitent! What wounded man inquires whether the surgeon that tents his gashes have clean hands or no?—Come, shall we to this toy?"

"No," said Conrade, "I will rather die unconfessed than mock the sacrament."

"Come, noble Marquis," said the Templar, "rouse up your courage, and speak not thus. In an hour's time thou shalt stand victorious in the lists, or confess thee in thy helmet like a valiant knight."

"Alas, Grand Master," answered Conrade, "all augurs ill for this affair. The strange discovery by the instinct of a dog—the revival of this Scottish knight, who comes into the lists like a spectre—all betokens evil."

"Pshaw," said the Templar, "I have seen thee bend thy lance boldly against him in sport, and with equal chance of success—think thou art but in a tournament, and who bears him better in the tilt-yard than thou?—Come, squires and armourers, your master must be accoutred for the field."

The attendants entered accordingly, and began to arm the Marquis.

"What morning is without?" said Conrade.

"The sun rises dimly," answered a squire.

"Thou seest, Grand Master," said Conrade, "naught smiles on us."

"Thou wilt fight the more coolly, my son," answered the Templar; "thank Heaven, that hath tempered the sun of Palestine to suit thine occasion."

Thus jested the Grand Master; but his jests had lost their influence on the harassed mind of the Marquis, and, notwithstanding his attempts to seem gay, his gloom communicated itself to the Templar.

"This craven," he thought, "will lose the day in pure faintness and cowardice of heart, which he calls tender conscience. I, whom visions and auguries shake not—who am firm in my purpose as the living rock—I should have fought the combat myself.—Would to God the Scot may strike him dead on the spot—it were next best to his winning the victory. But come what will, he must have no other confessor than myself—our sins are too much in common, and he might confess my share with his own."

While these thoughts passed through his mind, he continued to assist the Marquis in arming, but it was in silence.

The hour at length arrived, the trumpets sounded, the knights rode into the lists armed at all points, and mounted like men who were to do battle for a kingdom's honour. They wore their visors up, and riding around the lists three times, showed themselves to the spectators. Both were goodly persons, and both had noble countenances. But there was an air of manly confidence on the brow of the Scot—a radiancy of hope, which amounted even to cheerfulness, while, although pride and effort had recalled much of Conrade's natural courage, there lowered still on his brow a cloud of ominous despondence. Even his steed seemed to tread less lightly and blithely to the trumpet-sound than the noble Arab which was bestrode by Sir Kenneth; and the *spruch-sprecher* shook his head while he observed, that while the challenger rode around the lists in the course of the sun, that is, from right to left, the defender made the same circuit *widdersins*, that is from left to right, which is in most countries held ominous.

A temporary altar was erected just beneath the gallery occupied by the Queen, and beside it stood the Hermit in the dress of his order, as a Carmelite friar. Other churchmen were also present. To this altar the challenger and defender were successively brought forward, conducted by their respective sponsors. Dismounting before it, each knight avouched the justice of his cause by a solemn oath on the Evangelists, and prayed that his success might be according to the truth or falsehood of what he then swore. They also made oath, that they came to do battle in knightly guise, and with the usual weapons, disclaiming the use of spells, charms, or magical devices, to incline victory to their side. The challenger pronounced his vow with a firm and manly voice, and a bold and cheerful countenance. When the ceremony was finished, the Scottish knight looked at the gallery, and bent his head to the earth, as if in honour of those invisible beauties which were enclosed within; then, loaded with armour as he was, sprung to the saddle without the use of the stirrup, and made his courser carry him in a succession of caracoles to his station at the eastern extremity of the lists. Conrade also presented himself before the altar with boldness enough; but his voice, as he took the oath, sounded hollow, as if drowned in his helmet. The lips with which he appealed to Heaven to adjudge victory to the just quarrel, grew white, as they uttered the impious mockery. As he turned to remount his horse, he Grand Master approached him closer, as if to rectify something about the sitting of his gorget, and whispered,—"Coward and fool!—recall thy senses, and do me this battle bravely, else, by Heaven, shouldst thou escape him, thou escapest not *me!*"

The savage tone in which this was whispered, perhaps completed the confusion of the Marquis's nerves, for he scrambled as he made to horse; and though he recovered his feet, sprung to the saddle with his usual agility, and displayed his address in horsemanship as he assumed his position opposite to the challenger's, yet the accident did not escape those who were on the watch for omens, which might predict the fate of the day.

The priests, after a solemn prayer, that God would show the rightful quarrel, departed from the lists. The trumpets of the challenger then rung a flourish, and a herald-at-arms proclaimed at the eastern end of the lists,—"Here stands a good knight, Sir Kenneth of Scotland, champion for the royal King Richard of England, who accuseth Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, of foul treason and dishonour done to the said King."

When the words Kenneth of Scotland announced the name and character of the champion, hitherto scarce generally known, a loud and cheerful acclaim burst from the followers of King Richard, and hardly, notwithstanding repeated commands of silence, suffered the reply of the defendant to be heard. He, of course, avouched his innocence, and offered his body for battle. The esquires of the combatants now approached, and delivered to each his shield and lance, assisting to hang the former around his neck, that his two hands might remain free, one for the management of the bridle, the other to direct the lance.

The shield of the Scot displayed his old bearing, the leopard, but with the addition of a collar and broken chain, in allusion to his late captivity. The shield of the Marquis bore, in reference to his title, a serrated and rocky mountain. Each shook his lance aloft, as if to ascertain the weight and toughness of the unwieldy weapon, and then laid it in the rest. The sponsors, heralds, and squires, now retired to the barriers, and the combatants sat opposite to each other, face to face, with couched lance and closed visor, the human form so completely enclosed, that they looked more like statues of molten iron, than beings of flesh and blood. The silence of suspense was now general—men breathed thicker, and their very souls seemed seated in their eyes, while not a sound was to be heard, save the snorting and pawing of the good steeds, who, sensible of what was about to happen, were impatient to dash into career. They stood thus for perhaps three minutes, when, at a signal given by the Soldan, a hundred instruments rent the air with their brazen clamours, and each champion striking his horse with the spurs, and slacking the rein, the horses started into full gallop, and the knights met in mid space with a shock like a thunderbolt. The victory was not in doubt—no, not one moment. Conrade, indeed, showed himself a practised warrior; for he struck his antagonist knightly in the midst of his shield, bearing his lance so straight and true, that it shivered into splinters from the steel spear-head up to the very gauntlet. The horse of Sir Kenneth recoiled two or three yards and fell on his haunches, but the rider easily raised him with his hand and rein. But for Conrade, there was no recovery. Sir Kenneth's lance had pierced through the shield, through a plated corslet of Milan steel, through a *secret*, or coat of linked mail, worn beneath the corslet, had wounded him deep in the bosom, and borne him from his saddle, leaving the truncheon of the lance fixed in his wound. The sponsors, heralds, and Saladin himself, descending from his throne, crowded around the wounded man; while Sir Kenneth, who had drawn his sword ere yet he discovered his antagonist was totally helpless, now commanded him to avow his guilt. The helmet was hastily unclosed, and the wounded man, gazing wildly on the skies, replied,—"What would you more?—God hath decided justly—I am guilty—but there are worse traitors in the camp than I.—In pity to my soul, let me have a confessor!"

He revived as he uttered these words.

"The talisman—the powerful remedy, royal brother!" said King Richard to Saladin.

"The traitor," answered the Soldan, "is more fit to be dragged from the lists to the gallows by the heels, than to profit by its virtues;—and some such fate is in his look," he added, after gazing fixedly upon the wounded man; "for, though his wound may be cured, yet Azrael's seal is on the wretch's brow."

"Nevertheless," said Richard, "I pray you do for him what you may, that he may at least have time for confession—Slay not soul and body! To him one half hour of time may be worth more, by ten

thousand fold, that the life of the oldest patriarch."

"My royal brother's wish shall be obeyed," said Saladin.—"Slaves, bear this wounded man to our tent."

"Do not so, said the Templar, who had hitherto stood gloomily looking on in silence.—"The royal Duke of Austria and myself will not permit this unhappy Christian Prince to be delivered over to the Saracens, that they may try their spells upon him. We are his sponsors, and demand that he be assigned to our care."

"That is, you refuse the certain means offered to recover him?" said Richard.

"Not so," said the Grand Master, recollecting himself.—"If the Soldan useth lawful medicines, he may attend the patient in my tent."

"Do, so, I pray thee, good brother," said Richard to Saladin, "though the permission be ungraciously yielded.—But now to a more glorious work.—Sound, trumpets—shout, England—in honour of England's champion!"

Drum, clarion, trumpet, and cymbal, rung forth at once, and the deep and regular shout which for ages has been the English acclamation, sounded amidst the shrill and irregular yells of the Arabs, like the diapason of the organ amid the howling of a storm. There was silence at length.

"Brave Knight of the Leopard," resumed Cœur de Lion, "thou hast shown that the Ethiopian *may* change his skin, and the leopard his spots, though clerks quote Scripture for the impossibility. Yet I have more to say to you when I have conducted you to the presence of the ladies, the best judges, and best rewarders, of deeds of chivalry."

The Knight of the Leopard bowed assent.

"And thou, princely Saladin, wilt also attend them. I promise thee our Queen will not think herself welcome, if she lacks the opportunity to thank her royal host for her most princely reception."

Saladin bent his head gracefully, but declined the invitation."

"I must attend the wounded man," he said. "The leech leaves not his patient more than the champion the lists, even if he be summoned to a bower like those of Paradise. And farther, royal Richard, know that the blood of the East flows not so temperately in the presence of beauty, as that of your land. What saith the Book itself? 'Her eye is as the edge of the sword of the Prophet, who shall look upon it?' He that would not be burnt avoideth to tread on hot embers—wise men spread not the flax before a bickering torch—He, saith the sage, who hath forfeited a treasure, doth not wisely to turn back his head to gaze at it."

Richard, it may be believed, respected the motives of delicacy which flowed from manners so different from his own, and urged his request no farther.

"At noon," said the Soldan, as he departed, "I trust ye will all accept a collation under the black camel-skin tent of a chief of Curdistan."

The same invitation was circulated among the Christians, comprehending all those of sufficient importance to be admitted to sit at a feast made for princes.

"Hark!" said Richard, "the timbrels announce that our Queen and her attendants are leaving their gallery—and see, the turbans sink on the ground, as if struck down by a destroying angel. All lie prostrate, as if the glance of an Arab's eye could sully the lustre of a lady's cheek! Come, we will to the pavilion, and lead our conqueror thither in triumph.—How I pity that noble Soldan, who knows but of love as it is known to those of inferior nature!"

Blondel tuned his harp to its boldest measure, to welcome the introduction of the victor into the pavilion of Queen Berengaria. He entered, supported on either side by his sponsors, Richard and Thomas Longsword, and knelt gracefully down before the Queen, though more than half the homage was silently rendered to Edith, who sat on her right hand.

"Unarm him, my mistresses," said the King, whose delight was in the execution of such chivalrous usages—"*Let Beauty honour Chivalry!* Undo his spurs, Berengaria; Queen though thou be, thou owes him what marks of favour thou canst give.—Unlace his helmet, Edith—by this hand thou shalt, wert thou the proudest Plantagenet of the line, and he the poorest knight on earth!"

Both ladies obeyed the royal commands,—Berengaria with bustling assiduity, as anxious to gratify her husband's humour, and Edith blushing and growing pale alternately, as slowly and awkwardly she undid, with Longsword's assistance, the fastenings, which secured the helmet to the gorget.

"And what expect you from beneath this iron shell?" said Richard, as the removal of the casque gave to view the noble countenance of Sir Kenneth, his face glowing with recent exertion, and not less so with present emotion, "What think ye of him, gallants and beauties?" said Richard. "Doth he resemble an Ethiopian slave, or doth he present the face of an obscure and nameless adventurer? No, by my good sword!—Here terminate his various disguises. He hath knelt down before you unknown save by his worth—he arises, equally distinguished by birth and by fortune. The adventurous knight, Kenneth, arises David, Earl of Huntingdon, Prince Royal of Scotland!"

There was a general exclamation of surprise, and Edith dropped from her hand the helmet, which she had just received.

"Yes, my masters," said the King, "it is even so. Ye know how Scotland deceived us when she proposed to send this valiant Earl, with a bold company of her best and noblest, to aid our arms in this conquest of Palestine, but failed to comply with her engagements. This noble youth, under whom the Scottish Crusaders were to have been arrayed, thought foul scorn that his arm should be withheld from the holy warfare, and joined us at Sicily with a small train of devoted and faithful attendants, which was augmented by many of his countrymen to whom the rank of their leader was unknown. The confidants of the Royal Prince had all, save one old follower, fallen by death, when his secret, but too well kept, had nearly occasioned my cutting off, in a Scottish adventurer, one of the noblest hopes of Europe.—Why did you not mention your rank, noble Huntingdon, when endangered by my hasty and passionate sentence?—Was it that you thought Richard capable of abusing the advantage I possessed over the heir of a King whom I have so often found hostile?"

"I did you not that injustice, royal Richard," answered the Earl of Huntingdon; "but my pride brooked not that I should avow myself Prince of Scotland in order to save my life, endangered for default of loyalty. And, moreover, I had made my vow to preserve my rank unknown till the Crusade should be accomplished; nor did I mention it save *in articulo mortis*, and under the seal of confession, to yonder reverend hermit."

"It was the knowledge of that secret, then, which made the good man so urgent with me to recall my severe sentence?" said Richard. "Well did he say, that had this good knight fallen by my mandate, I should have wished the deed undone though it had cost me a limb—A limb!—I should have wished it undone had it cost me my life—since the world would have said that Richard had abused the condition in which the heir of Scotland had placed himself, by his confidence in his generosity."

"Yet, may we know of your Grace by what strange and happy chance this riddle was at length read?" said the Queen Berengaria.

"Letters were brought to us from England," said the King, "in which we learnt, among other unpleasant news, that the King of Scotland had seized upon three of our nobles, when on a pilgrimage to Saint Ninian, and alleged as a cause, that his heir, being supposed to be fighting in the ranks of the Teutonic Knights, against the heathen of Borussia, was in fact, in our camp, and in our power; and, therefore, William proposed to hold these nobles as hostages for his safety. This gave me the first light on the real rank of the Knight of the Leopard, and my suspicions were confirmed by De Vaux, who, on his return from Ascalon, brought back with him the Earl

of Huntingdon's sole attendant, a thick-skulled slave, who had gone thirty miles to unfold to De Vaux a secret he should have told to me."

"Old Strauchan must be excused," said the Lord of Gilsland. "He knew from experience that my heart is somewhat softer than if I wrote myself Plantagenet."

"Thy heart soft? thou commodity of old iron—and Cumberland flint, that thou art!" exclaimed the King. —"It is we Plantagenets who boast soft and feeling hearts, Edith," turning to his cousin, with an expression which called the blood into her cheek—"Give me thy hand, my fair cousin, and, Prince of Scotland, thine."

"Forbear, my lord," said Edith, hanging back, and endeavouring to hide her confusion, under an attempt to rally her royal kinsman's credulity. "Remember you not that my hand was to be the signal of converting to the Christian faith the Saracen and Arab, Saladin and all his turbaned host?"

"Ay, but the wind of prophecy hath chopped about, and sits now in another corner," replied Richard.

"Mock not, lest your bonds be made strong," said the Hermit, stepping forward. "The heavenly host write nothing but truth in their brilliant records—it is man's eyes which are too weak to read their characters aright. Know, that when Saladin and Kenneth of Scotland slept in my grotto, I read in the stars that there rested under my roof a prince, the natural foe of Richard, with whom the fate of Edith Plantagenet was to be united. Could I doubt that this must be the Soldan, whose rank was well known to me, as he often visited my cell to converse on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies?—Again, the lights of the firmament proclaimed that this Prince, the husband of Edith Plantagenet, should be a Christian; and I,—weak and wild interpreter!—argued thence the conversion of the noble Saladin, whose good qualities seemed often to incline him towards the better faith. The sense of my weakness hath humbled me to the dust, but in the dust I have found comfort! I have not read aright the fate of others—who can assure me but that I may have miscalculated mine own? God will not have us break into his council-house, or spy out his hidden mysteries. We must wait his time with watching and prayer—with fear and with hope. I came hither the stern seer—the proud prophet—skilled, as I thought, to instruct princes, and gifted even with supernatural powers, but burdened with a weight which I deemed no shoulders but mine could have borne. But my hands have been boken! I go hence humble in mine ignorance, penitent—and not hopeless."

With these words he withdrew from the assembly; and it is recorded, that, from that period, his frenzy fits seldom occurred, and his penances were of a milder character, and accompanied with better hopes of the future. So much is there of self-opinion, even in insanity, that the conviction of his having entertained and expressed an unfounded prediction with so much vehemence, seemed to operate like loss of blood on the human frame, to modify and lower the fever of the brain.

It is needless to follow into farther particulars the conferences at the royal tent or to inquire whether David, Earl of Huntingdon, was as mute in the presence of Edith Plantagenet, as when he was bound to act under the character of an obscure and nameless adventurer. It may be well believed that he there expressed, with suitable earnestness, the passion to which he had so often before found it difficult to give words.

The hour of noon now approached, and Saladin waited to receive the Princes of Christendom in a tent, which, but for its large size, differed little from that of the ordinary shelter of the common Curdman, or Arab; yet, beneath its ample and sable covering, was prepared a banquet after the most gorgeous fashion of the East, extended upon carpets of the richest stuffs, with cushions laid for the guests. But we cannot stop to describe the cloth of gold and silver—the *superb embroidery in Arabesque*—the shawls of Cashmere—*and the muslins of India*, which were here unfolded *in all their splendour*; far less to tell the different sweetmeats, ragouts edged with rice, coloured in various manners, with all the other niceties of Eastern cookery. Lambs roasted whole, and game and poultry dressed in pilaus, were piled in vessels of gold, and silver, and porcelain, and intermixed with large mazers of sherbet, cooled in snow and ice from the caverns of Mount Lebanon. A magnificent pile of cushions at the head of the banquet, seemed prepared for the master of the feast, and such dignitaries as he might call to share that place of distinction, while, from the roof of the tent in all quarters, but over this seat of eminence in particular, waved many a banner and pennon, the trophies of battles won, and kingdoms overthrown. But amongst and above them all, a long lance displayed a shroud, the banner of Death, with this impressive inscription—"SALADIN, KING OF KINGS—SALADIN, VICTOR OF VICTORS—SALADIN MUST DIE." Amid these preparations, the slaves who had arranged the refreshments stood with drooped heads and folded arms, mute and motionless as monumental statuary, or as automata, which waited the touch of the artist to put them in motion.

Expecting the approach of his princely guests, the Soldan, imbued, as most were, with the superstitions of his time, paused over a horoscope and corresponding scroll, which had been sent to him by the Hermit of Engaddi when he departed from the camp.

"Strange and mysterious science," he muttered to himself, "which, pretending to draw the curtain of futurity, misleads those whom it seems to guide, and darkens the scene which it pretends to illuminate! Who would not have said that I was that enemy most dangerous to Richard, whose enmity was to be ended by marriage with his kinswoman? Yet it now appears that a union betwixt this gallant Earl and the lady will bring about friendship betwixt Richard and Scotland, an enemy more dangerous than I, as a wild-cat in a chamber is more to be dreaded than a lion in a distant desert.—But then," he continued to mutter to himself, "the combination intimates, that this husband was to be Christian.—Christian?" he repeated, after a pause,—"That gave the insane fanatic star-gazer hopes that I might renounce my faith! but me, the faithful follower of our Prophet—me it should have undeceived.—Lie there, mysterious scroll," he added, thrusting it under the pile of cushions· "strange are thy bodements and fatal, since, even when true in themselves, they work upon those who attempt to decipher their meaning, all the effects of falsehood.—How now! what means this intrusion?"

He spoke to the dwarf Nectabanus, who rushed into the tent fearfully agitated, with each strange and disproportioned feature wrenched by horror into still more extravagant ugliness,—his mouth open, his eyes staring, his hands, with their shrivelled and deformed fingers, wildly expanded.

"What now?" said the Soldan, sternly.

"*Accipe hoc!*" groaned out the dwarf.

"Ha! sayst thou?" answered Saladin.

"*Accipe hoc!*" replied the panic-struck creature, unconscious, perhaps, that he repeated the same words as before.

"Hence, I am in no vein for foolery," said the Emperor.

"Nor am I further fool," said the dwarf, "than to make my folly help out my wits to earn my bread, poor helpless wretch!—Hear, hear me, great Soldan!"

"Nay, if thou hast actual wrong to complain of," said Saladin, "fool or wise, thou art entitled to the ear of a King.—Retire hither with me," and he led him into the inner tent.

Whatever their conference related to, it was soon broken off by the fanfare of the trumpets, announcing the arrival of the various Christian princes, whom Saladin welcomed to his tent with a royal courtesy well becoming their rank and his own; but chiefly, he saluted the young Earl of Huntingdon, and generously congratulated him upon prospects, which seemed to have interfered with and overclouded those which he had himself entertained.

"But think not," said the Soldan, "thou noble youth, that the Prince of Scotland is more welcome to Saladin, than was Kenneth to the solitary Ilderim when they met in the desert, or the distressed Ethiop

ak:m Adonbec. A brave and generous dis-
like thine hath a value independent of con-
d birth, as the cool draught, which I here
ee, is as delicious from an earthen vessel as
blet of gold."
arl of Huntingdon made a suitable reply,
acknowledging the various important ser-
ad received from the generous Soldan; but
had pledged Saladin in the bowl of sherbet,
s Soldan had proffered to him, he could not
arking with a smile, "The brave cavalier,
knew not of the formation of ice, but
ificent Soldan cools his sherbet with

dst thou have an Arab or a Curdman as wise
im?" said the Soldan. "He who does on
must make the sentiments of his heart and
ng of his head accord with the dress which
es. I desired to see how a brave and single-
avalier of Frangistan would conduct himself
with such a chief as I then seemed; and I
d the truth of a well-known fact, to know
rguments thou wouldst support thy asser-

hey were speaking, the Archduke of Austria,
d a little apart, was struck with the mention
herbet, and took with pleasure and some
the deep goblet, as the Earl of Huntingdon
t to replace it.
delicious!" he exclaimed, after a deep
which the heat of the weather, and the fever-
llowing the debauch of the preceding day,
ered doubly acceptable. He sighed as he
e cup to the Grand Master of the Templars.
ade a sign to the dwarf, who advanced and
d, with a harsh voice, the words, *Accipe*
Templar started, like a steed who sees a
a bush beside the pathway; yet instantly
, and to hide, perhaps, his confusion, raised
to his lips—but those lips never touched that
m. The sabre of Saladin left its sheath as
leaves the cloud. It was waved in the air,
head of the Grand Master rolled to the ex-
the tent, while the trunk remained for a
nding, with the goblet still clenched in its
n fell, the liquor mingling with the blood
ed from the veins.*
vas a general exclamation of treason, and
earest to whom Saladin stood with the
re in his hand, started back as if apprehen-
his turn was to come next. Richard and
hands on their swords.
nothing, noble Austria," said Saladin, as
ly as if nothing had happened, "nor you,
land, be wroth at what you have seen. Not
manifold treasons;—nor for the attempt
may be vouched by his own squire, he in-
gainst King Richard's life;—not that he
he Prince of Scotland and myself in the
ucing us to save our lives by the speed of
;—not that he had stirred up the Maronites
is upon this very occasion, had I not brought
ectedly so many Arabs as rendered the
ortive;—not for any or all of these crimes
w lie there, although each were deserving
m;—but because, scarce half an hour ere
d our presence, as the simoom empoisons
phere, he poniarded his comrade and ac-
Conrade of Montserrat, lest he should con-

mer of the death of the supposed Grand Master of
s, was taken from the real tragedy enacted by Sala-
e person of Arnold or Reginald de Chatillon. This
ldier of fortune, had seized a castle on the verge of
rom whence he made plundering excursions, and
abused the pilgrims who were on their journey to
was chiefly on his account that Saladin declared
Guy de Lusignan, the last Latin King of the Holy
Christian monarch was defeated by Saladin with
30,000 men, and having been made prisoner, with
ad others, was conducted before the Soldan. The
nted to his exhausted captive a cup of sherbet.
ow. Lusignan having drank, was about to hand
hatillon, when the Soldan interfered. "Your per-
d," my royal prisoner, is sacred, but the cup of Sa-
not be profaned by a blasphemous robber and
o saying, he slew the captive knight by a blow of
—*See* GIBBON'S *History.*

fess the infamous plots in which they had both been engaged."

"How! Conrade murdered?—And by the Grand Master, his sponsor and most intimate friend!" exclaimed Richard. "Noble Soldan, I would not doubt thee—yet this must be proved—otherwise"——

"There stands the evidence," said Saladin, pointing to the terrified dwarf. "Alla, who sends the firefly to illuminate the night season, can discover secret crimes by the most contemptible means."

The Soldan proceeded to tell the dwarf's story, which amounted to this.—In his foolish curiosity, or, as he partly confessed, with some thoughts of pilfering, Nectabanus had strayed into the tent of Conrade, which had been deserted by his attendants, some of whom had left the encampment to carry the news of his defeat to his brother, and others were availing themselves of the means which Saladin had supplied for revelling. The wounded man slept under the influence of Saladin's wonderful talisman, so that the dwarf had opportunity to pry about at pleasure, until he was frightened into concealment by the sound of a heavy step, he skulked behind a curtain, yet could see the motions, and hear the words, of the Grand Master, who entered, and carefully secured the covering of the pavilion behind him. His victim started from sleep, and it would appear that he instantly suspected the purpose of his old associate, for it was in a tone of alarm that he demanded wherefore he disturbed him?

"I come to confess and to absolve thee," answered the Grand Master.

Of their further speech the terrified dwarf remembered little, save that Conrade implored the Grand Master not to break a wounded reed, and that the Templar struck him to the heart with a Turkish dagger, with the words *accipe hoc*—words which long afterwards haunted the terrified imagination of the concealed witness.

"I verified the tale," said Saladin, "by causing the body to be examined; and I made this unhappy being, whom Allah hath made the discoverer of the crime, repeat in your own presence the words which the murderer spoke; and you yourselves saw the effect which they produced upon his conscience."

The Soldan paused, and the King of England broke silence:—

"If this be true, as I doubt not, we have witnessed a great act of justice, though it bore a different aspect. But wherefore in this presence? wherefore with thine own hand?"

"I had designed otherwise," said Saladin; "but had I not hastened his doom, it had been altogether averted, since, if I had permitted him to taste of my cup, as he was about to do, how could I, without incurring the brand of inhospitality, have done him to death as he deserved? Had he murdered my father and afterwards partaken of my food and my bowl, not a hair of his head could have been injured by me. But enough of him—let his carcass and his memory be removed from amongst us."

The body was carried away, and the marks of the slaughter obliterated or concealed with such ready dexterity, as showed that the case was not altogether so uncommon as to paralyze the assistants and officers of Saladin's household.

But the Christian princes felt that the scene which they had beheld weighed heavily on their spirits, and although at the courteous invitation of the Soldan, they assumed their seats at the banquet, yet it was with the silence of doubt and amazement. The spirits of Richard alone surmounted all cause for suspicion or embarrassment. Yet he, too, seemed to ruminate on some proposition, as if he were desirous of making it in the most insinuating and acceptable manner which was possible. At length he drank off a large bowl of wine, and, addressing the Soldan, desired to know whether it was not true that he had honoured the Earl of Huntingdon with a personal encounter.

Saladin answered with a smile, that he had proved his horse and his weapons with the heir of Scotland, as cavaliers are wont to do with each other when they meet in the desert—and modestly added, that though

the combat was not entirely decisive, he had not, on his part, much reason to pride himself on the event. The Scot, on the other hand, disclaimed the attributed superiority, and wished to assign it to the Soldan.

"Enough of honour thou hast had in the encounter," said Richard, "and I envy thee more for that, than for the smiles of Edith Plantagenet, though one of them might reward a bloody day's work.—But what say you, noble princes; is it fitting that such a royal ring of chivalry should break up without something being done for future times to speak of? What is the overthrow and death of a traitor, to such a fair garland of honour as is here assembled, and which ought not to part without witnessing something more worthy of their regard? How say you, princely Soldan—What if we two should now, and before this fair company, decide the long-contended question for this land of Palestine, and end at once these tedious wars? Yonder are the lists ready, nor can Paynimrie ever hope a better champion than thou. I, unless worthier offers, will lay down my gauntlet in behalf of Christendom, and, in all love and honour, we will do mortal battle for the possession of Jerusalem."

There was a deep pause for the Soldan's answer. His cheek and brow coloured highly, and it was the opinion of many present, that he hesitated whether he should accept the challenge. At length he said, "Fighting for the Holy City against those whom we regard as idolaters, and worshippers of stocks and stones, and graven images, I might confide that Alla would strengthen my arm; or if I fell beneath the sword of the Melech Ric, I could not pass to Paradise by a more glorious death. But Alla has already given Jerusalem to the true believers, and it were a tempting the God of the Prophet to peril, upon my own personal strength and skill, that which I hold securely by the superiority of my forces."

"If not for Jerusalem, then," said Richard, in the tone of one who would entreat a favour of an intimate friend, "yet, for the love of honour, let us run at least three courses with grinded lances?"

"Even this," said Saladin, half smiling at Cœur de Lion's affectionate earnestness for the combat, "even this I may not lawfully do. The master places the shepherd over the flock, not for the shepherd's own sake, but for the sake of the sheep. Had I a son to hold the sceptre when I fell, I might have had the liberty, as I have the will, to brave this bold encounter; but your own Scripture sayeth, that when the herdsman is smitten, the sheep are scattered."

"Thou hast had all the fortune," said Richard, turning to the Earl of Huntingdon with a sigh. "I would have given the best year in my life for that one half hour beside the Diamond of the Desert!"

The chivalrous extravagance of Richard awakened the spirits of the assembly, and when at length they arose to depart, Saladin advanced and took Cœur de Lion by the hand.

"Noble King of England," he said, "we now part, never to meet again. That your league is dissolved, no more to be reunited, and that your native forces are far too few to enable you to prosecute your enterprise, is as well known to me as to yourself. I may not yield you up that Jerusalem which you so much desire to hold. It is to us, as to you, a Holy City. But whatever other terms Richard demands of Saladin, shall be as willingly yielded as yonder fountain yields its waters. Ay, and the same should be as frankly afforded by Saladin, if Richard stood in the desert with but two archers in his train!"

The next day saw Richard's return to his own camp, and in a short space afterwards, the young Earl of Huntingdon was espoused by Edith Plantagenet. The Soldan sent, as a nuptial present on this occasion, the celebrated TALISMAN; but though many cures were wrought by means of it in Europe, none equalled in success and celebrity those which the Soldan achieved. It is still in existence, having been bequeathed by the Earl of Huntingdon to a brave knight of Scotland, Sir Simon of the Lee, in whose ancient and highly honoured family it is still preserved; and although charmed stones have been dismissed from the modern Pharmacopœia, its virtues are still applied to for stopping blood, and in cases of canine madness.

Our story closes here, as the terms on which Richard relinquished his conquests are to be found in every history of the period.

THE LEE PENNY.—Since the last sheet of this volume was printed off, a kind friend has transmitted the following curious document, by which it would appear that the alleged virtues of the Lee Penny had at one time given uneasiness to our Presbyterian brethren of Clydesdale.

(Copy).

Extract from the Assemblie Books at Glasgow, anent the Le Penny stone.

*Apud Glasgow, 21 of October.**

SYNOD. SESS. 2.

QUHILK day, amongest the referries of the Brethren of the Ministry of Lanark, it was proponed to the Synod that Gavin Hamilton of Raploch had pursuelt an Complaint before them against Sir James Lockhart of Lee, anent the superstitious use of an Stone, set in silver, for the curing of deseased Cattle, qlk the said Gavin affirmed could not be lawfully usit, and that they had deferrit to give ony decisioone thairin till the advice of the Assemblie might be had concerning the same. The Assemblie having inquirit of the manner of using thereof, and particularly understood, be examination of the said Laird of Lee and otherwise, that the custom is only to cast the stone in some water, and give the deseasit Cattle thereof to drink, and that the same is done without using any words, such as Charmers and Sorcereirs use in thair unlawfull practices; and considering that in nature thair are many things seen to work strange effects, where of no human wit can give a reason, it having pleast God to give to stones and herbs a speciall vertue for healing of many infirmities in man and beast, advises the Brethren to surcease thair process, as therein they perceive no ground of Offence, and admonishes the said Laird of Lee, in the using of the said stone, to take heid that it be usit hereafter with the least scandle that possibly maybe. Extract out of the Books of the Assemblie holden at Glasgow, and subscribed at thair command.

M. ROBERT YOUNG, Clerk to the Assemblie at Glasgow.

* The year is unfortunately not given; but the Sir James Lockhart named in the extract was born in 1566, and died in 1674.

THE END OF THE TALISMAN.

WOODSTOCK;

OR,

THE CAVALIER.

INTRODUCTION TO WOODSTOCK.

THE busy period of the great Civil War was one in which the character and genius of different parties were most brilliantly displayed, and, accordingly, the incidents which took place on either side were of a striking and extraordinary character, and afforded ample foundation for fictitious composition. The author had in some measure attempted such in Peveril of the Peak; but the scene was in a remote part of the kingdom, and mingled with other national differences, which left him still at liberty to glean another harvest out of so ample a store.

In these circumstances, some wonderful adventures which happened at Woodstock in the year 1649, occurred to him as something he had long ago read of, although he was unable to tell where, and of which the hint appeared sufficient, although, doubtless, it might have been much better handled if the author had not, in the lapse of time, lost every thing like an accurate recollection of the real story.

It was not until about this period, namely, 1831, that the author, being called upon to write this Introduction, obtained a general account of what really happened upon the marvellous occasion in question, in a work termed "The Every-day Book," published by Mr. Hone, and full of curious antiquarian research, the object being to give a variety of original information concerning manners, illustrated by curious instances, rarely to be found elsewhere. Among other matter, Mr. Hone quotes an article from the British Magazine for 1747, in the following words, and which is probably the document which the author of Woodstock had formerly perused, although he was unable to refer to the source of his information. The tract is entitled, "The Genuine History of the Good Devil of Woodstock, famous in the world, in the year 1649, and never accounted for, or at all understood to this time."

The teller of this "Genuine History" proceeds verbatim as follows:

"Some original papers having lately fallen into my hands, under the name of 'Authentic Memoirs of the Memorable Joseph Collins of Oxford, commonly known by the name of Funny Joe, and now intended for the press,' I was extremely delighted to find in them a circumstantial and unquestionable account of the most famous of all invisible agents, so well known in the year 1649, under the name of the Good Devil of Woodstock, and even adored by the people of that place, for the vexation and distress it occasioned some people they were not much pleased with. As this famous story, though related by a thousand people, and attested in all its circumstances, beyond all possibility of doubt, by people of rank, learning, and reputation, of Oxford and the adjacent towns, has never yet been generally accounted for, or at all understood, and is perfectly explained, in a manner that can admit of no doubt, in these papers, I could not refuse my readers the pleasure it gave me in reading."

There is, therefore, no doubt that, in the year 1649, a number of incidents, supposed to be supernatural, took place at the King's palace of Woodstock, which the Commissioners of Parliament were then and there endeavouring to dilapidate and destroy. The account of this by the Commissioners themselves, or under their authority, was repeatedly published, and in particular, is inserted as relation sixth of Satan's Invisible World Discovered, by George Sinclair, Professor of Philosophy in Glasgow, an approved collector of such tales.

It was the object of neither of the great political parties of that day to discredit this narrative, which gave great satisfaction both to the cavaliers and roundheads; the former conceiving that the license given to the demons, was in consequence of the impious desecration of the King's furniture and apartments, while that the citizens of Woodstock almost adored the supposed spirits, as avengers of the cause of royalty; while the friends of the Parliament, on the other hand, imputed to the malice of the fiend the obstruction of the pious work, as they judged that which they had in hand.

At the risk of prolonging a curious quotation, I include a page or two from Mr. Hone's Every-day Book.

"The honourable the Commissioners arrived at Woodstock manor-house, October 13th, and took up their residence in the King's own rooms. His Majesty's bedchamber they made their kitchen, the council hall their pantry, and the presence-chamber was the place where they sat for dispatch of busines. His Majesty's dining-room they made their wood-yard, and stowed it with no other wood but that of the famous Royal Oak from the High Park, which, that nothing might be left with the name of the King about it, they had dug up by the roots, and bundled up into fagots for their firing.

"October 16th. This day they first sat for the dispatch of business. In the midst of their first debate there entered a large black dog, (as they thought,) which made a terrible howling, overturned two or three of their chairs, and doing some other damage, went under the bed, and there gnawed the cords. The door this while continued constantly shut, when, after some two or three hours, Giles Sharp, their secretary, looking under the bed, perceived that the creature was vanished, and that a plate of meat that the servants had hid there was untouched, and showing them to their honours, they were all convinced there could be no real dog concerned in the case; the said Giles also deposed on oath, *that, to his* certain knowledge, *there was not.*

"*October 17th* As they were this day sitting at dinner in a lower room, they heard plainly the noise of persons walking over head, though they well knew the doors were all locked, and there could be none there. Presently after they heard also all the wood of the King's Oak brought by parcels from the dining-room, and thrown with great violence into the presence-chamber, as also the chairs, stools, tables, and other furniture, forcibly hurled about the room, their own papers of the minutes of their transactions torn, and the ink-glass broken. When all this had some time ceased, the said Giles proposed to enter first into these rooms, and, in presence of the Commissioners, of whom he received the key, he opened the door and entered the room, their honours following him. He there found the wood strewed about the room, the chairs tossed about and broken, the papers torn, and the ink-glass broken over them all, as they had heard, yet no footsteps appeared of any person whatever being there, nor had the doors ever been opened to admit or let out any persons since their honours were last there. It was therefore voted, *nem. con.*, that the person who did this mischief could have entered no other way than at the keyhole of the said doors.

"In the night following this same day, the said Giles, and two other of the Commissioners' servants, as they were in bed in the same room with their honours, had their bed's feet lifted up so much higher than their heads, that they expected to have their necks broken, and then they were let fall at once with such violence as shook them up from the bed to a good distance; and this was repeated many times, their honours being amazed spectators of it. In the morning the bedsteads were found cracked and broken, and the said Giles and his fellows declared they were sore to the bones with the tossing and jolting of the beds.

"October 19th. As they were all in bed together, the candles were all blown out together with a sulphurous smell, and instantly many trenchers of wood were hurled about the room; and one of them putting his head above the clothes, had not less than six thrown at him, which wounded him very grievously. In the morning the trenchers were all found lying about the room, and were observed to be the same they had eaten on the day before, none being found remaining in the pantry.

"October 20th. This night the candles were put out as before; the curtains of the bed in which their honours lay, were drawn to and fro many times with great violence: their honours received many cruel blows, and were much bruised beside, with eight great pewter dishes, and three dozen wooden trenchers, which were thrown on the bed, and afterwards heard rolling about the room.

"Many times also this night they heard the forcible falling of many fagots by their bed-side, but in the morning no fagots were found there, no dishes or trenchers were there seen either; and the aforesaid Giles attests, that by their different arranging in the pantry, they had assuredly been taken thence, and after put there again.

"October 21st. The keeper of their ordinary and his bitch lay with them: This night they had no disturbance.

"October 22d. Candles put out as before. They had the said bitch with them again, but were not by that protected; the bitch set up a very piteous cry; the clothes of their beds were all pulled off, and the bricks, without any wind, were thrown off the chimney tops into the midst.

"October 24th. The candles put out as before. They thought all the wood of the King's Oak was violently thrown down by their bedsides; they counted sixty-four fagots that fell with great violence, and some hit and shook the bed,—but in the morning none were found there, nor the door of the room opened in which the said fagots were.

"October 25th. The candles put out as before. The curtains of the bed in the drawing-room were many times forcibly drawn; the wood thrown out as before; a terrible crack like thunder was heard; and one of the servants, running to see if his master was not killed, found, at his return, three dozen trenchers laid smoothly upon his bed under the quilt.

"October 26th. The beds were shaken as before the windows seemed all broken to pieces, and glass fell in vast quantities all about the room. In the morning they found the windows all whole, but the floor strewed with broken glass, which they gathered and laid by.

"October 29th. At midnight candles went out as before; something walked majestically through the room, and opened and shut the window; great stones were thrown violently into the room, some whereof fell on the beds, others on the floor; and about a quarter after one, a noise was heard as of forty cannon discharged together, and again repeated at about eight minutes' distance. This alarmed and raised all the neighbourhood, who, coming into their honours' room, gathered up the great stones, fourscore in number, many of them like common pebbles and boulters, and laid them by, where they are to be seen to this day, at a corner of the adjoining field. This noise, like the discharge of cannon, was heard throughout the country for sixteen miles round. During these noises, which were heard in both rooms together, both the commissioners and their servants gave one another over for lost, and cried out for help; and Giles Sharp, snatching up a sword, had well nigh killed one of their honours, taking him for the spirit as he came in his shirt into the room. While they were together, the noise

was continued, and part of the tiling of the house, and all the windows of an upper room, were taken away with it.

"October 30th. Something walked into the chamber, treading like a bear; it walked many times about, then threw the warming-pan violently upon the floor, and so bruised it that it was spoiled. Vast quantities of glass were now thrown about the room, and vast numbers of great stones and horses' bones were thrown in; these were all found in the morning, and the floors, beds, and walls were all much damaged by the violence they were thrown in.

"November 1st. Candles were placed in all parts of the room, and a great fire made. At midnight, the candles all yet burning, a noise like the burst of a cannon was heard in the room, and the burning billets were tossed all over the room and about the beds; and had not their honours called in Giles and his fellows, the house had assuredly been burnt. An hour after the candles went out, as usual, the clack of many cannon was heard, and many pailfuls of green stinking water were thrown on their honours in bed; great stones were also thrown in as before, the bed-curtains and bedsteads torn and broken: the windows were now all really broken, and the whole neighbourhood alarmed with the noises; nay, the very rabbit-stealers that were abroad that night in the warren, were so frightened at the dismal thundering, that they fled for fear, and left their ferrets behind them.

"One of their honours this night spoke, and in the name of God asked what it was, and why it disturbed them so? No, answer was given to this; but the noise ceased for a while when the spirit came again, and as they all agreed, brought with it seven devils worse than itself. One of the servants now lighted a large candle, and set it in the doorway between the two chambers, to see what passed; and as he* watched it, he plainly saw a hoof striking the candle and candlestick into the middle of the room, and afterwards making three scrapes over the snuff of the candle, to scrape it out. Upon this, the same person was so bold as to draw a sword; but he had scarce got it out, when he perceived another invisible hand had hold of it too, and pulled with him for it, and at last prevailing, struck him so violently on the head with the pommel, that he fell down for dead with the blow. At this instant was heard another burst like the discharge of the broadside of a ship of war, and at about a minute or two's distance each, no less than nineteen more such, these shook the house so violently, that they expected every moment it would fall upon their heads. The neighbours on this were all alarmed, and, running to the house, they all joined in prayer and psalm-singing, during which the noise continued in the other rooms, and the discharge of cannon without, though nobody was there."

Dr. Plot concludes his relation of this memorable event† with observing, that, though tricks have often been played in affairs of this kind, many of these things are not reconcileable with juggling; such as, 1st, The loud noises beyond the power of man to make, without instruments which were not there: 2d, The tearing and breaking of the beds: 3d, The throwing about the fire: 4th, The hoof treading out the candle; and, 5th, The striving for the sword, and the blow the man received from the pommel of it.

To show how great men are sometimes deceived, we may recur to a tract, entitled "*The Secret History of the Good Devil of Woodstock*," in which we find it, under the author's own hand, that he, Joseph Collins, commonly called Funny Joe, was himself this very devil;—that, under the feigned name of Giles Sharp, he hired himself as a servant to the Commissioners;—that by the help of two friends—an unknown trapdoor in the ceiling of the bedchamber, and a pound of common gunpowder—he played all these extraordinary tricks by himself;—that his fellow-servants, whom he had introduced on purpose to assist him, had lifted up their own beds: and that the candles were contrived, by a common trick of gunpowder, to be extinguished at a certain time.

The dog who began the farce was, as Joe swore, no dog at all, but truly a bitch, who had shortly before whelped in that room, and made all this disturbance in seeking for her puppies: and which, when she had served his purpose, he (Joe Sharp, or Collins,) let out, and then looked for. The story of the hoof and sword he himself bore witness to, and was never suspected as to the truth of them, though mere fictions. By the trapdoor his friends let down stones, facets, glass, water, etc., which they either left there, or drew up again, as best suited his purpose; and by this way let themselves in and out, without opening the doors, or going through the keyholes; and all the noises described, he declares he made by placing quantities of white gunpowder over pieces of burning charcoal, on plates of tin which, as they melted, exploded with a violent noise.

I am very happy in having an opportunity of setting history right about these remarkable events, and would not have the reader disbelieve my author's account of them, from his naming either white gunpowder exploding when melted, or his making the earth about the pot take fire of its own accord; since, however improbable these accounts may appear to some readers, and whatever secrets they might be in Joe's time, they are now well known in chemistry. As to the last, there needs only to mix an equal quantity of iron filings, finely powdered, and powder of pure brimstone, and make them into a paste with fair water. This paste, when it hath lain together about twenty-six hours, will of itself take fire, and burn all the sulphur away with a blue flame and a bad smell. For the others, what he calls white gunpowder, is plainly the thundering powder called by our chemists *pulvis fulminans*. It is composed of three parts of saltpetre, two parts of pearl ashes or salt of tartar, and one part of flower of brimstone, mixed together and beat to a fine powder; a small quantity of this held on the point of a knife over a candle, will not go off till it melt, and then it gives a report like that of a pistol; and this he might easily dispose of in larger quantities, so as to make it explode of itself, while he, the said Joe, was with his masters.

Such is the explanation of the ghostly adventures of Woodstock, as transferred by Mr. Hone from the pages of the old tract, termed the Authentic Memoirs of the memorable Joseph Collins of Oxford, whose courage and loyalty were the only wizards which conjured up those strange and surprising apparitions and works of spirits, which passed as so unquestionable in the eyes of the Parliamentary Commissioners, of Dr. Plot, and other authors of credit. The *pulvis fulminans*, the secret principle he made use of, is now known to every apothecary's apprentice.

If my memory be not treacherous, the actor of these wonders made use of his skill in fire-works upon the following remarkable occasion. The Commissioners had not, in their zeal for the public service, overlooked their own private interests, and a deed was drawn up upon parchment, recording the share and nature of the advantages which they privately agreed to concede to each other; at the same time they were, it seems, loath to intrust to any one of their number the keeping of a document in which all were equally concerned.

They hid the written agreement within a flower-pot, in which a shrub concealed it from the eyes of any chance spectator. But the rumour of the apparitions having gone abroad, curiosity drew many of the neighbours to Woodstock, and some in particular, to whom the knowledge of this agreement would have afforded matter of scandal. As the Commissioners received these guests in the saloon where the flower-pot was placed, a match was suddenly set to some fire-works placed there by Sharp the secretary. The flower-pot burst to pieces with the concussion, or was prepared so as to explode of itself, and the contract of the Commissioners, bearing testimony to their private roguery, was thrown into the midst of the visiters assembled. If I have recollected this incident accurately, for it is more than forty years since I perused the tract, it is probable that in omitting it from the novel, I may also have passed over from want of memory, other matters which might have made an essential addition to the story. Nothing, indeed, is more certain, than that incidents which are real, preserve an infinite advantage in works of this nature over such as are fictitious. The tree, however, must remain where it has fallen.

Having occasion to be in London in October, 1831, I made some researches in the British Museum, and in that rich collection, with the kind assistance of the Keepers, who manage it with so much credit to themselves and advantage to the public, I recovered two original pamphlets, which contain a full account of the phenomena at Woodstock in 1649.‡ The first is a satirical poem, published in that year, which plainly shows that the legend was current among the people in the very shape in which it was afterwards made public. I have not found the explanation of Joe Collins, which, as mentioned by Mr. Hone, resolves the whole into confederacy. It might, however, be recovered by a stricter search than I have leisure for. In the meantime, it may be observed, that neither the name of Joe Collins, nor Sharp, occurs among the *dramatis personæ* given in these tracts, published when he might have been endangered by any thing which directed suspicion towards him, at least in 1649, and perhaps might have exposed him to danger even in 1660, from the malice of a powerful though defeated faction.

1st *August*, 1832.

* Probably this part was also played by Sharp, who was the regular ghost-seer of the party.

† In his Natural History of Oxfordshire.

‡ See Appendix.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

No. I.

THE WOODSTOCK SCUFFLE;

OR,

DREADFUL APPARITIONS THAT WERE LATELY SEENE IN MANNOR-HOUSE OF WOODSTOCK, NEERE OXFORD, TO THE AT TERROR AND WONDERFUL AMAKEMENT OF ALL THERE T DID BEHOLD THEEM.

[Printed in the year 1649. 4to.]

T were a wonder if one unites,
And not of wonders and strange sights;
For ev'ry where such things affrights
Poore people,

That men are ev'n at their wits' end;
God judgments ev'ry where doth send,
And yet we don't our lives amend,
But tipple,

And sweare, and lie, and cheat, and ——,
Because the world shall drown no more,
As if no judgments were in store
But water;

But by the stories which I tell,
You'll heare of terrors come from hell,
And fires, and shapes most terrible
For matter.

It is not long since that a child
Spake from the ground in a large field,
And made the people almost wild
That heard it,

Of which there is a printed book,
Wherein each man the truth may look;
If children speak, the matter's took
For verdict.

But this is stranger than that voice,
The wonder's greater, and the noyse;
And things appeare to men, not boyes,
At *Woodstock*;

Where *Rosamond* had once a bower,
To keep her from Queen *Elinor*,
And had escap'd her poys'nous power
By good-luck,

But fate had otherwise decreed,
And *Woodstock* Mannor saw a deed,
Which in in *Hollinshed* or *Speed*
Chro-nicled;

But neither *Hollinshed* nor *Stow*,
Nor no historians such things show,
Though in them wonders we well know
Are pickled;

For nothing else is history
But pickle of antiquity,
Where things are kept in memory
From stinking,

Which otherwaies would have lain dead,
As in oblivion buried,
Which now you may call into head
With thinking.

The dreadful story, which is true,
And now committed unto view,
By better pen, had it its due,
Should see light;

But I, contented, doe indite,
Net things of wit, but things of right;
You can't expect that things that fright
Should delight.

O hearken, therefore, harke and shake!
My very pen and hand doth quake!
While I the true relation make
O' th' wonder,

Which hath long time, and still appeares
Unto the State's Commissioners,
And puts them in their beds to feares
From sunne.

They come, good men, emploi'd by th' State
To sell the lands of Charles the late,
And there they lay, and long did waite
For chapmen.

You may have easy pen'worths, woods,
Lands, ven'son, householdstuf, and goods;
They little thought of dogs that woo'd
There sneap-men.

But when they'd sup'd, and fully fed,
They set up remnants and to bed,
Where scarce they had laid down a head
To slumber,

But that their beds were heav'd on high;
They thought some dog under did lie,
And meant i' th' chamber (fie, fie, fie,)
To scumber.

Some thought the cunning cur did mean
To eat their mutton (which was lean)
Reserv'd for breakfast, for the men
Were thrifty;

And up one rises in his shirt,
Intending the elle cur to hurt,
And forty thrusts made at him for't,
Or fifty.

But empty came his sword again,
He found hee thrust but all in vain;
The mutton safe, hee went amain
To's fellow.

And now (assured all was well)
The bed again began to swell,
The men were frighted, and did smell
O' th' yellow.

From heaving, now the cloaths it pluckt,
The men, for feare, together stuck,
And in their sweat each other duck't.
They wished

A thousand times that it were day
'Tis sure the divell! Let us pray.
They pray'd again; and, as they say,
* * *

Approach of day did cleere the doubt,
For all devotions were run out,
They now waxt strong and something stout
One peaked.

Under the bed, but nought was there;
He view'd the chamber ev'ry where,
Nothing apear'd but what, for feare,
They leaked.

Their stomachs then return'd apace,
They found the mutton in the place,
And fell unto it with a grace.
They laughed.

Each at the other's pannick feare,
And each his bed-fellow did jeere,
And having sent for ale and beere,
They quaffed.

And then abroad the summons went,
Who'll buy king's-land o' th' Parliament
A paper-book contein'd the rent,
Which lay there,

That did contein the severall farmes
Quit-rents, knight services, and armes;
But that they came not in by swarmes
To pay there.

Night doth invite to bed again,
The grand Commissioners were lain,
But then the thing did heave amain,
It buaied,

And with great clamor fill'd their eares,
The noyse was dounded, and their feares
Nothing was standing but their haires,
They nuzled.

Oft were the blankets pul'd, the sheets
Was closely twin'd betwixt their feets,
It seems the spirit was discreets
And civill.

Which makes the poor Commissioners
Feare they shall get but small arreares,
And that there's yet for cavaliers
One divell.

They cast about what best to doe;
Next day they would to wise men goe,
To neighb'ring towns som cours to know;
For schollars.

Come not to Woodstock, as before,
And Allen's dead as a nayle-doore,
And so's old John (eclep'd the poore)
His follower;

Bake Oxford o're, there's not a man
That reyses or lay a spirit can,
Or use the circle, or the wand,
Or conjure;

Or can say (Boh!) unto a divell,
Or to a goose that is uncivill,
Nor where Keimbolton purg'd out evill
'Tis sin sure.

There were two villages hard by,
With teachers of presbytery,
Who knew the house was hidiously
Be-pestred;

But 'lasse! their new divinity
Is not so deep, or not so high;
Their witts doe (as their meanes did) lie
Sequestred;

But Master Joffman was the wight
Which was to exorcise the spright;
Hee'll preach and pray you day and night
At pleasure.

And by that painfull gainfull trade,
He hath himselfe full wealthy made;
Great store of guilt he hath, 'tis said,
And treasure.

But no intreaty of his friends
Could get him to the house of fiends,
He came not over for such ends
From Dutch-land;

But worse divinity hee brought,
And hath us reformation taught,
And, with our money, he hath bought
Him much land.

Had the old parsons preached still,
The divl should ne'r have had his wil;
But those that had or art or skill
Are outed;

And those to whom the pow'r was giv'n
Of driving spirits, are out-driv'n;
Their colledges dispos'd, and livings,
To grout-heads.

There was a justice who did boast,
Hee had as great a gift almost,
Who did desire him to accost
This evill;

But hee would not employ his gifts,
But found out many sleights and shifts;
Hee had no prayers, nor no snifts,
For th' divell.

Some other way they cast about,
These brought him in, they throw not out;
A woman great with child, will do't;
They got one.

And she i' th' room that night must lie;
But when the thing about did flie,
And broke the windows furiously,
And hot one

Of the contractors o're the head,
Who lay securely in his bed,
The woman, shee-affrighted, fled
* * *

And now they lay the cause on her,
That o're that night the thing did stir,
Because her selfe and grandfather
Wore Papists;

They must be barnes-regenerate,
(A *Hans en Kelder* of the state,
Which was in reformation gatt,)
They said, which

Doth make the divell stand in awe,
Pull in his hornes, his hoof, his claw;
But having none, they did in draw
* * *

But in the night there was such worke,
The spirit swaggered like a Turke;
The bitch had spi'd where it did lurke,
And howled

In such a woful manner, that
Their very hearts went pit a pat
* * * *
* * *

The stately rooms, where kings once lov·
But the contractors shew'd the way.
But mark what now I tell you, pray,
'Tis worth it.

That book I o d you of before,
Wherein were tenants written store,
A register for many more
Not forth yet;

That very book, as it did lie,
Took of a flame, no mortall eye
Seeing one jot of fire thereby,
Or taper;

For all the candles about flew,
And those that burned, burned blew
Never kept soldiers such a doe
Or vapor.

The book thus burnt, and none knew how
The poore contractors made a vow
To worke no more; this spoil'd their plow
In that place.

Some other part o' the house they'll find
To which the devill hath no mind,
But hee, it seems, is not inclin'd
With that grace;

But other prancks it play'd elsewhere.
An oake there was stood many a yeere.
Of goodly growth as any where,
Was hewn down,

Which into fewell-wood was cut,
And some into a wood-pile put,
But it was hurled all about
And thrown down

In sundry formes it doth appeare;
Now like a grasping claw to teare,
Now like a dog, anon a beare,
It tumbles;

And all the windows battered are,
No man the quarter enter dare;
All men (except the glasier)
Doe grumble.

Once in the likenesse of a woman,
Of stature much above the common,
'Twas seene, but spak a word to no man,
And vanish'd.

'Tis thought the ghost of some good wife
Whose husband was depriv'd of life,
Her children cheated, land in strife
She banist.

No man can tell the cause of these
So wondrous dreadfull outrages;
Yet if upon your sinne you please
To discant,

You'le find our actions out doe hell's;
O wring your hands and cease the bells,
Repentance must, or nothing else
Appease can't.

No. II.

THE

JUST DEVIL OF WOODSTOCK;

OR,

A TRUE NARRATIVE OF THE SEVERAL APPARITIONS, THE P AND PUNISHMENTS, INFLICTED UPON THE RUMPISH C SIONERS SENT THITHER TO SURVEY THE MANNORS AND I BELONGING TO HIS MAJESTIE.

[London, printed in the year 1660. 4to.]

The names of the persons in the ensuing Narrative are with others.

Captain Cockaine. Captain Hart.
Captain Crook. Captain Carelesse.
Captain Roe. Mr Crook, the Lawye
Mr. Browne, the Surveyor.

Their three servants. Their Ordinary-keeper, and ot
The Gate-keeper, with the Wife and Servants.
Besides many more, who each night heard the noise
Gerrard Fleetwood and his lady, with his family, Mr.
with his family, and several others, who lodged in th
courts; and during the three last nights, the inhabit
Woodstock town, and other neighbor villages.

And there were many more, both divines and other
came out of the country, and from Oxford, to see the
strange, and other stuffe, the devil had brought who

beat out the Commissioners; the marks upon some walls remain, and many, this to testifie.

THE PREFACE TO THE ENSUING NARRATIVE.

Since it hath pleased the Almighty God, out of his infinite mercy, so to make us happy, by restoring of our native King to us, and us unto our native liberty through him, that now the good may say, *magna temporum felicitas ubi sentire quæ velis, et dicere licet quæ sentias*, we cannot but esteem ourselves engaged, in the highest of degrees, to render unto him the highest thanks we can express, although, surpris'd with joy, we become as lost in the performance; when gladness and admiration strikes us silent, as we look back upon the precipiece of our late condition, and those miraculous deliverances beyond expression; freed from the slavery, and those desperate perils, we daily lived in fear of, during the tyrannical times of that detestable usurper, Oliver Cromwell; he who had raked up such judges, as would wrest the most innocent language into high treason, when he had the cruel conscience to take away our lives, upon no other ground of justice or reason, (the stones of London streets would rise to witness it, if all the citizens were silent.) And with these judges had such councillors, as could advise him unto worse, which will less want of witness. For should the many auditors be silent, the press (as God would have it) hath given it us in print, where one of them (and his conscience-keeper, too,) speaks out, What shall we do with these men? saith he; *Æger intemperans crudelem facit medicum, et immedicabile vulnus ense recidendum*. Who these men are that should be brought to such Scicilian vespers, the former page sets forth—those which conceit *Utopias*, and have their day-dreams of the return of, I know not what golden age, with the old line. What usage, when such a privy councillor had power, could he expect, who then had published this narrative? This much so plainly shows the devil himself dislikit their doings, (so much more bad were they than he would have them be,) severer sure then was the devil to their Commissioners at Woodstock; for he warned them, with dreadful noises, to drive them from their work. This councillor, without more ado, would have all who retain'd conceits of allegiance to their soveraign, to be absolutely cut off by the usurper's sword. A sad sentence for a loyal party, to a lawful king. But Heaven is always just; the party is repriv'd, and do acknowledge the hand of God in it, as is rightly applyed, and as justly sensible of their deliverance: in that the foundation which the councillor saith was already so well laid, is now turned up, and what he calls day-dreams are come to passe. That old line which (as with him) there seemed *aliquid divini* to the contrary, is now restored. And that rock which, as he saith, the prelates and all their adherents, nay, and their master and supporter, too, with all his posterity, have split themselves upon, is nowhere to be heard. And that posterity are safely arrived in their ports, and masters of that mighty navy, their enemies so much increased to keep them out with. The eldest sits upon the throne, his place by birthright and descent.

"Pacatumque regit Patriis virtutibus orbem,"

upon which throne long may he sit, and reign in peace, that by his just government, the enemies of ours, the true Protestant Church, of that glorious martyr, our late soveraign, and of his royal posterity, may be either absolutely converted, or utterly confounded.

If any shall now ask thee why this narrative was not sooner published, as neerer to the times wherein the things were acted, he hath the reason for it in the former lines; which will the more clearly appear unto his apprehension, if he shall perpend how much cruelty is requisite to the maintenance of rebellion; and how great care is necessary in the supporters, to obviate and divert the smallest things that tend to the unblinding of the people; so that it needs will follow, that they must have accounted this amongst the great obstructions to their sales of his majestie's lands, the devil not joining with them in the security; and greater to the pulling down the royal pallaces, when their chapmen should conceit the devil would haunt them in their houses, for building with so ill got materials; as no doubt but that he hath, so numerous and confident are the relations made of the same, though scarce any so totally remarkeable as this, (if it be not that others have been more concealed,) in regard of the strange circumstances as long continuances, but especially the number of the persons together, to whom all things were so visibly both seen and done, so that surely it exceeds any other: for the devils thus manifesting themselves, it appears evidently that there are such things as devils, to persecute the wicked in this world as in the next.

Now, if to these were added the diverse reall phantasms seen at White-Hall in Cromwell's times, which caused him to keep such mighty guards in and about his bedchamber, and yet so oft to change his lodgings; if those things done at Saint James', where the devil so joal'd the centinels against the sides of the queen's chappell doors, that some of them fell sick upon it, and others not taking warning by it, kild one outright, whom they buried in the place, and all other such dreadful things, those that inhabited the royal houses have been affrighted with; and if to these were likewise added, a relation of all those regicides and their abettors the devil hath entred into, as he did the Gadarenes' swine, with so many more of them who hath fallen mad, and dyed in hideous forms of such distractions,—that which hath been of this within these 12 last years in England, should all of this nature our chronicles do tell, with all the superstitious monks have writ, be put together,) would make the greater volume, and of more strange occurrents.

And now as to the penman of this narrative, know that he was a divine, and at the time of those things acted, which are here related, the minister and schoolmaster of Woodstock; a person learned and discreet, not byassed with factious humours, his name Widows, who each day put in writing what he heard from their mouthes, (and such things as they told to have befallen them the night before,) therein keeping to their own words; and, never thinking that what he had writ should happen to be made publick, gave it no better dress to set it forth. And because to do it now shall not be construed to change the story, the reader hath it here accordingly exposed.

THE JUST DEVIL OF WOODSTOCK.

The 16th of October, in the year of our Lord, 1649, the commissioners for surveying and valuing his majestie's mannor house, parks, woods, deer, demesnes, and all things thereunto belonging, by name Captain Crook, Captain Hart, Captain Cockaine, Captain Carelesse, and Captain Roe, their messenger, with Mr. Browne, their secretary, and two or three servants, went from Woodstock town, (where they had lain some nights before,) and took up their lodgings in his majestie's house after this manner:—The bedchamber and withdrawing-room they both lodged in and made their kitchen; the presence-chamber their room for dispatch of their business with all comers; of the council-hall their brew-house, as of the dining-room their wood-house, where they laid in the clefts of that antient standard in the High-Park, for many ages beyond memory known by the name of the King's Oak, which they had chosen out, and caused to be dug up by the roots.

October 17th. About the middle of the night, these new guests were first awaked by a knocking at the presence chamber door, which they also conceived did open, and something to enter, which came through the room, and also walkt about that room with a heavy step during half an hour, then crept under the bed where Captain Hart and Captain Carelesse lay, where it did seem (as it were) to bite and gnaw the mat and bed-coards, as if it would tear and rend the feather beds; which having done a while, then would heave a while, and rest; then heave them up again in the bed more high than it did before, sometime on the one side, sometime on the other, as if it had tried which captain was heaviest. Thus having heaved some half an hour, from thence it walkt out and went under the servants' bed and did the like to them; hence it walkt into a withdrawing room, and there did the same to all who lodged there. Thus having welcomed them for more than two hours' space, it walkt out as it came in, and shut the outer door again, but with a clap of some mightie force. These guests were in a sweat all this while, but out of it falling into a sleep again, it became morning first before they spake their minds: then would they have it to be a dog, yet they described it more to the likeness of a great bear; so fell to the examining under the beds, where, finding only the mats scracht, but the bed-coards whole, and the quarter of beef which lay on the floor untoucht, they entertained other thoughts.

October 18th. They were all awaked as the night before, and now conceived that they heard all the great clefts of the King's Oak brought into the presence-chamber, and there thumpt down, and after roul about the room; they could hear their chairs and stools tost from one side of the room unto the other, and then (as it were) altogether josled. Thus having done an hour together, it walkt into the withdrawing-room, where lodged the two captains, the secretary, and two servants: here stopt the thing a while, as if it did take breath, but raised a hideous one, then walkt into the bed chamber, where lay those as before, and under the bed it went, where it did heave and heave again, that now they in bed were put to catch hold upon the bed-posts, and sometimes one of the other, to prevent their being tumbled out upon the ground; then coming out as from under the bed, and taking hold upon the bed-posts, it would shake the whole bed, almost as if a cradle rocked. Thus having done here for half an hour, it went into the withdrawing-room, where first it came and stood at the bed's feet, and heaving up the bed's feet, flopt down again a while, until at last it heaved the feet so high that those in bed thought to have been set upon their heads; and having thus for two hours entertained them, went out as in the night before, but with a great noise.

October 19th. This night they awaked not until the midst of the night; they perceived the room to shake with something that walkt about the bedchamber, which having done so a while, it walkt into a withdrawing room, where it took up a brasse warming pan, and returning with it into the bedchamber, therein made so loud a noise, in these captains' own words, it was as loud and scurvie as a ring of five untuned bells rung backward; but the captains, not to seem afraid, next day made mirth of what had passed, and jested at the devil in the pan.

October 20th. These captains and their company, still lodging as before, were awakened in this night, with some things flying about the rooms, and out of one room into the other, as thrown with some great force. Captain Hart, being in a slumber, was taken by the shoulder and shaked until he did sit up in his bed, thinking that it had been one of his fellows, when suddenly he was taken on the pate with a trencher, that it made him shrink down into the bed-clothes, and all of them in both rooms kept their heads at least within their sheets, so fiercely did three dozen of trenchers fly about the rooms, yet Captain Hart ventured again to peep out to see what was the matter, and what it was that threw, but then the trenchers came so fast and neer about his ears, that he was fain quickly to couch again. In the morning they found all their trenchers, pots, and spits, upon and about their beds, and all such things as were of common use scattered about the rooms. This night there were also, in several parts of the room and outer rooms, such noises of beating at doors, and on the walls, as if that several smiths had been at work; and yet our captains shrunk not from their work, but went on in that, and lodged as they had done before.

October 21st. About midnight they heard great knocking at every door; after a while the doors flew open, and into the withdrawing-room entered something as of a mighty proportion, the figure of it they knew not how to describe. This walkt awhile about the room shaking the floor at every step, then came it up close to the bedside, where lay Captains Crook

and Careless; and after a little pause, as it were, the bed-curtains, both at sides and feet, were drawn up and down slowly, *then faster again for a quarter of an hour*, then from end to end as fast as imagination can fancie the running of the rings, then shaked it the beds, as if the joints of ... had crackt; then walkt the thing into the bedchamber; ...ated with those beds there; then took up eight pewter gos..s, and bouled them about the room and over the servants in the truckle-beds; then sometimes were the dishes taken up and thrown crosse the high beds and against the walls, and so much battered; but there were more dishes wherein was meat in the same room, that were not at all removed. During this, in the presence-chamber there was stranger noise of weighthie things thrown down, and, as they supposed, the clefts of the King's Oak did roul about the room, yet at the wonted hour went away, and left them to take rest such as they could.

October 22d. Hath mist of being set down; the officers, imployed in their work farther off, came not that day to Woodstock.

October 23d. Those that lodged in the withdrawing-room, in the midst of the night were awakened with the cracking of fire, as if it had been with thorns and sparks of fire burning, whereupon they supposed that the bedchamber had taken fire, and listning to it farther, they heard their fellows in bed sadly groan, which gave them to suppose they might be suffocated; wherefore they called upon their servants to make all possible haste to help them. When the two servants were come in, they found all asleep, and so brought back word, but that there were no bed-clothes upon them; wherefore they were sent back to cover them, and to stir up and mend the fire. When the servants had covered them and were come to the chimney, in the corners they found their wearing apparrel, boots, and stockings, but they had no sooner toucht the embers, when the firebrands flew about their ears so fast, that away ran they into the other room for the shelter of their cover-lids: then after them walkt something that stampt about the room as if it had been exceeding angry, and likewise threw about the trenchers, platters, and all such things in the room—after two hours went out, yet stampt again over their heads.

October 24th. They lodged all abroad.

October 25th. This afternoon was come unto them Mr. Richard Crook the lawyer, brother to Captain Crook, and now deputy-steward of the mannor unto Captain Parsons and Major Butler, who had put out Mr. Hyans, his majestie's officer. To entertain this new guest, the Commissioners caused a very great fire to be made, of neer the chimney-full of wood of the King's oak, and he was lodged in the withdrawing-room with his brother, and his servant in the same room. About the midst of the night a wonderful knocking was heard, and into the room something did rush, which coming to the chimney-side, threw out the fire as with the stamp of some prodigious foot, then threw down such weighthy stuffe, what ere it was, (they took it to be the residue of the clefts and roots of the King's Oak,) close by the bedside, that the house and bed shook with it. Captain Cockaine and his fellow arose, and took their swords to go unto the Crooks. The noise ceased at their rising, so that they came to the door and called. The two brothers, though fully awaked, and heard them call, were so amazed, that they made no answer until Captain Cockaine had recovered the boldness to call very loud, and came unto the bedside; then faintly first, after some more assurance, they came to understand one another, and comforted the lawyer. Whilst this was thus, no noise was heard, which made them think the time was past of that night's trouble, so that, after some little conference, they applied themselves to take some rest. When Captain Cockaine was come to his own bed, which he had left open, he found it closely covered, which he much wondered at; but turning the clothes down, and opening it to get in, he found the lower sheet strewed over with trenchers. Their whole three dozens of trenchers were orderly disposed between the sheets, which he and his fellow endeavouring to cast out, such noise arose about the room, that they were glad to get into bed with some of the trenchers. The noise lasted a full half hour after this. This entertainment so ill did like the lawyer, and being not so well studied in the point as to resolve this the devil's law case, that he next day resolved to be gone; but having not dispatcht all that he came for, profit and perswasions prevailed with him to stay the other hearing, so that he lodged as he did the night before.

October 26th. This night each room was better furnished with fire and candle than before; yet about twelve at night came something in that dasht all out, then did walk about the room, making a noise, not to be set forth by the comparison with any other thing; sometimes came it to the bedsides and drew the curtains to and fro, then twerle them, then walk about again, and return to the bed-posts, shake them with all the bed, so that they in bed were put to hold one upon the other, then walk about the room again, and come to the servants' bed, and gnaw and scratch the wainscot head, and shake altogether in that room; at this time of this being in doing, they in the bedchamber heard such strange dropping down from the roof of the room, that they supposed 'twas like the fall of money by the sound. Captain Cockaine, not frightened with so small a noise, and lying near the chimney,) stept out and made shift to light a candle, by the light of which he perceived the room strewed over with broken glass, green, and some of it as it were pieces of broken bottles: he had not long been considering what it was, when suddenly his candle was hit out, and glass flew about the room, that he made haste to the protection of the coverlets; the noise of thundering rose more hideous then at any time before; yet, at a certain time, all vanisht into calmness. The morning after was the glass about the room, which the maid that came to make clean the rooms swept up into a corner, and many came to see it. But Mr. Richard Crook would stay *no longer, yet as* he stopt, going through Woodstock town, he *was there heard to say*, that he would not lodge amongst them *another night for a fee of L.500.*

October 27th. The Commissioners had not yet done their work, *wherefore they must stay*; and being all men of the sword, they must not seem afraid to encounter with any thing, though it be the devil; therefore, with pistols charged, and drawne swords laied by their bedsides, they applied themselves to take some rest, when something in the midst of night, so opened and shut the window casements with such clape, that it awakened all that slept; some of them peeping out to look what was the matter with the windows, stones flew about the rooms as if hurled with many hands; some hit the walls, and some the beds' heads close above the pillows, the dints of which were then and yet (it is conceived) are to be seen, thus sometime throwing stones, and sometime making thundering noise; for two hours space it ceast, and all was quiet till the morn. After their rising, and the maid come in to make the fire, they lookt about the rooms; they found fourscore stones brought in that night, and going to lay them together in the corner where the glass (before mentioned) had been swept up, they found that every piece of glass had been carried away that night. Many people came next day to see the stones, and all observed that they were not of such kind of stones as are naturall in the countrey thereabout; with these were noise like claps of thunder, or report of cannon planted against the rooms, heard by all that lodged in the outer courts, to their astonishment, as at Woodstock town, taken to be thunder.

October 28th. This night, both strange and differing noise from the former first awakened Captain Hart, who lodged in the bedchamber, who, hearing Roe and Brown to groan, called out to Cockaine and Crook to come and help them, for Hart could not stir himself; Cockaine would faine have answered, but he could not, or look about: something, he thought, stopt both his breath and held down his eyelids. Amazed thus, he struggles and kickt about, till he had awaked Captain Crook, who, half asleep, grew very angry at his kicks, and multiplied words, it began to an appointment in the field; but this fully recovered Cockaine to remember that Captain Hart had called for help, wherefore to them he ran in the other room, whom he found sadly groaning, where, scraping in the chimney, he both found a candle and fire to light it; but had not gone two steps, when something blew the candle out, and threw him in the chair by the bedside, when presently cried out Captain Careless, with a most pitiful voice, "Come hither, O come hither, brother Cockaine, the thing's gone of me." Cockaine, scarce yet himself, helpt to set him up in his bed, and after Captain Hart, and having scarce done that to them, and also to the other two, they heard Captain Crook crying out, as if something had been killing him. Cockaine snatcht up the sword that lay by their bed, and ran into the room to save Crook, but was in much more likelyhood to kill him, for at his coming, the thing that pressed Crook went of him, at which Crook started out of his bed, whom Cockaine thought a spirit, made at him, at which Crook cried out "Lord help, Lord save me;" Cockaine let fall his hand, and Crook, embracing Cockaine, desired his reconcilement, giving him many thanks for his deliverance. Then rose they all and came together, discoursed sometimes godly and sometimes praied, for all this while was there such stamping over the roof of the house, as if 1000 horse had there been trotting; this night all the stones brought in the night before, and laid up in the withdrawing-room, were all caried again away by that which brought them in, which at the wonted time left of, and, as it were, went out, and so away.

October 29th. Their business having now received so much forwardnesse as to be neer dispatcht, they encouraged one the other, and resolved to try further; therefore, they provided more lights and fires, and further, for their assistance, prevailed with their ordinary keeper to lodge amongst them, and bring his mastive bitch; and it was so this night with them, that they had no disturbance at all.

October 30th. So well they had passed the night before, that this night they went to bed, confident and carelesse; untill about twelve of the clock, something knockt at the door as with a smith's great hammer, but with such force as if it had cleft the door: then ont'red something like a bear, but seem'd to swell more big, and walkt about the room, and out of one room into the other, treading so heavily, as the floare had not been strong enough to bear it. When it came into the bedchamber, it dasht against the beds' heads some kind of glass vessell, that broke in sundry pieces, and sometimes would take up those pieces, and hurle them about the room, and into the other room and when it did not hurle the glasse at their heads, it did strike upon the tables, as if many smiths, with their greatest hammers, had been laying on as upon an anvil: sometimes it thumpt against the walls as if it would beat a hole through: then upon their heads, such stamping, as if the roof of the house were beating down upon their heads; and having done thus, during the space (as was conjectured) of two hours, it ceased and vanished, but with a more fierce shutting of the doors than at any time before. In the morning they found the pieces of glasse about the room, and observed, that it was much differing from that glasse brought in three nights before, this being of a much thicker substance, which several persons which came in carried away some pieces of. The Commissioners were in debate of lodging there no more; but all their businesse was not done, and some of them were so conceited as to believe, and to attribute the rest they enjoyed, the night before this last unto the mastive bitch; wherefore, they resolved to get more company, and the mastive bitch, and try another night.

October 31st. This night, the fires and lights prepared, the ordinary keeper and his bitch, with another man perswaded by him, they all took their beds and fell asleep. But about twelve at night, such rapping was on all sides of them, that it wakened all of them; as the doors did seem to open, the mastive bitch fell fearfully a yelling, and presently ran fiercely into the bed to them in the truckle-bed; as the thing came by the table, it struck so fierce a blow on that, as that it made the frame to crack, then took the warming-pan from off the table, and strake it against the walls with so much force as that it was beat flat together, lid and bottom. Now were they hit as they lay covered over head and ears within the bed-clothes. Captain Careless

was taken a sound blow on the head with the shoulder-blade bone of a dead horse, (before they had been but thrown at, when they peept up, and mist;) Browne had a shrewed blow on the leg with the backbone, and another on the head, and every one of them felt severall blows of bones and stones through the bed-clothes, for now these things were thrown as from an angry hand that meant further mischief; the stones flew in at window as shot out of a gun, nor was the bursts lesse (as from without) than of a cannon, and all the windows broken down. Now as the hurling of the things did cease, and the thing walkt up and down, Captain Cockaine and Hart cried out, In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, what are you? What would you have? What have we done that you disturb us thus? No voice replied, (as the Captains said, yet some of the servants have said otherwise,) and the noise ceast. Hereupon Captain Hart and Cockaine rose, who lay in the bedchamber, renewed the fire and lights, and one great candle, in a candlestick, they placed in the door, that might be seen by them in both the rooms. No sooner were they got to bed, but the noise arose on all sides more loud and hideous than at any time before, insomuch as (to use the Captain's own words) it returned and brought seven devils worse than itself; and presently they saw the candle and candlestick in the passage of the door, dasht up to the roof of the room, by a kick of the hinder parts of a horse, and after with the hoof trode out the snuff, and so dasht out the fire in the chimnies. As this was done, there fell, as from the sieling, upon them in the truckle-beds, such quantities of water, as if it had been poured out of buckets, which stunk worse than any earthly stink could make; and as this was a doing, something crept under the high beds, tost them up to the roof of the house, with the Commissioners in them, until the testers of the beds were beaten down upon, and the bedsted-frames broke under them; and here some pause being made, they all, as if with one consent, started up, and ran down the stairs until they came into the Councel Hall, where two sate up a-brewing, but now were fallen asleep: those they scared much with wakening of them, having been much perplext before with the strange noise, which commonly was taken by them abroad for thunder, sometimes for rumbling wind. Here the Captains and their company got fire and candle, and every one carrying something of either, they returned into the Presence-Chamber, where some applied themselves to make the fire, whilst others fell to prayers, and having got some clothes about them, they spent the residue of the night in singing psalms and prayers; during which, no noise was in that room, but most hideously round about, as at some distance.

It should have been told before, how that when Captain Hart first rose this night, (who lay in the bedchamber next the fire,) he found their book of valuations crosse the embers smoaking, which he snacht up and cast upon the table there, which the night before was left upon the table in the presence amongst their other papers: this book was in the morning found a handful burnt, and had burnt the table where it lay; Browne the clerk said, he would not for a 100 and a 100*l.* that it had been burnt a handful further.

This night it happened that there were six cony-stealers, who were come with their nets and ferrets to the cony-burrows by Rosamond's Well, but with the noise this night from the Mannor-house, they were so terrified, that like men distracted away they ran, and left their haies all ready pitched, ready up, and the ferrets in the cony-burrows.

Now the Commissioners, more sensible of their danger, considered more seriously of their safety, and agreed to go and confer with Mr. Hoffman, the minister of Wotton, (a man not of the meanest note for life or learning, by some esteemed more high,) to desire his advice, together with his company and prayers. Mr. Hoffman held it too high a point to resolve on suddenly and by himself, wherefore desired time to consider upon it, which being agreed unto, he forthwith rode to Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Wheat, the two next Justices of Peace, to try what warrant they could give him for it. They both (as 'tis said from themselves) encouraged him to be assisting to the Commissioners, according to his calling.

But certain it is, that when they came to fetch him to go with them, Mr. Hoffman answered, that he would not lodge there one night for 500*l.*, and being asked to pray with them, he held up his hands and said, that he would not meddle upon any terms.

Mr. Hoffman refusing to undertake the quarrel, the Commissioners held it not safe to lodge where they had been thus entertained any longer, but caused all things to be removed into the chambers over the gatehouse, where they staid but one night, and what rest they enjoyed there, we have but an uncertain relation of, for they went away early the next morning; but if it may be held fit to set down what hath been delivered by the report of others, they were also the same night much affrighted with dreadful apparitions, but observing that these passages spread much in discourse, to be also in particulars taken notice of, and that the nature of it made not for their cause, they agreed to the concealing of things for the future: yet this is well-known and certain, that the gate-keeper's wife was in so strange an agony in her bed, and in her bed-chamber such noise, (whilst her husband was above with the Commissioners,) that two maids in the next room to her, durst not venture to assist her, but affrighted ran out to call company, and their master, and found the woman (at their coming in) gasping for breath: and the next day said, that she saw and suffered that, which for all the world she would not be hired to again.

From Woodstock the Commissioners removed unto Euelme, and some of them returned to Woodstock the Sunday se'nnight after, (the book of Valuations wanting something that was for haste left imperfect,) but lodged not in any of those rooms where they had lain before, and yet were not unvisited (as they confess themselves) by the devil, whom they called their nightly guest: Captain Crook came not untill Tuesday night, and how he sped that night the gate-keeper's wife can tell if she dareth, but what she hath whispered to her gossips, shall not be made a part of this our narrative, nor many more particulars which have fallen from the Commissioners themselves and their servants to other persons; they are all or most of them alive, and may add to it when they please, and surely have not a better way to be revenged of him who troubled them, than according to the proverb, tell truth and shame the devil.

There remains this observation to be added, that on a Wednesday morning all these officers went away; and that since then diverse persons of severall qualities, have lodged often and sometimes long in the same rooms, both in the presence, withdrawing-room, and bedchamber belonging unto his sacred Majesty; yet none have had the least disturbance, or heard the smallest noise, for which the cause was not as ordinary as apparent, except the Commissioners and their company, who came in order to the alienating and pulling down the house, which is wellnigh performed.

A SHORT SURVEY OF WOODSTOCK, NOT TAKEN BY ANY OF THE BEFORE-MENTIONED COMMISSIONERS.*

The noble seat, called Woodstock, is one of the ancient honours belonging to the crown. Severall mannors owe suite and service to the place; but the custom of the countrey giving it but the title of a mannor, we shall erre with them to be the better understood.

The mannor-house hath been a large fabrick, and accounted amongst his majestie's standing houses, because there was alwaies kept a standing furniture. This great house was built by King Henry the First, but ampleyfied with the gate-house and outsides of the outer-court, by King Henry the Seventh, the stables by King James.

About a bow-shoot from the gate south-west, remain foundation signs of that structure, erected by King Henry the Second, for the security of Lady Rosamond, daughter of Walter Lord Clifford, which some poets have compared to the Dedalian labyrinth, but the form and circuit both of the place and ruins shew it to have been a house and of one pile, perhaps of strength, according to the fashion of those times, and probably was fitted with secret places of recess, and avenues to hide or convey away such persons as were not willing to be found if narrowly sought after. About the midst of the place ariseth a spring, called at present Rosamond's Well; it is but shallow, and shews to have been paved and walled about, likely contrived for the use of them within the house, when it should be of danger to go out.

A quarter of a mile distant from the King's house, is seated Woodstock town, new and old. This new Woodstock did arise by some buildings which Henry the Second gave leave to be erected, (as received by tradition,) at the suite of the Lady Rosamond, for the use of out-servants upon the wastes of the mannor of Bladon, where is the mother church; this is a hamlet belonging to it, though encreased to a market town by the advantage of the Court residing sometime near, which of late years they have been sensible of the want of; this town was made a corporation in the 11th year of Henry the Sixth, by charter, with power to send two burgesses to parliament or not, as they will themselves.

Old Woodstock is seated on the west side of the brook, named Glyme, which also runneth through the park; the town consists not of above four or five houses, but it is to be conceived that it hath been much larger, (but very anciently so,) for in some old law historians there is mention of the assize at Woodstock, for a law made in a Micelgemote (the name of parliaments before the coming of the Norman) in the days of King Ethelred.

And in like manner, that thereabout was a king's house, if not in the same place where Henry the First built the late standing pile before his: for in such days those great councils were commonly held in the King's palaces. Some of those lands have belonged to the orders of the Knights Templers, there being records which call them, *Terras quas Rex excambiavit cum Templariis.*

But now this late large mannor-house is in a manner almost turned into heaps of rubbish; some seven or eight rooms left for the accommodation of a tenant that should rent the King's meadows, (of those who had no power to let them,) with several high uncovered walls standing, the prodigious spectacles of malice unto monarchy, which ruines still bear semblance of their state, and yet aspire, in spight of envy or of weather, to shew, What kings do build, subjects may sometimes shake, but utterly can never overthrow.

That part of the park called the High-park, hath been lately subdivided by Sir Arthur Haselrig, to make pastures for his breed of colts, and other parts plowed up. Of the whole, saith Roffus Warwicensis, in MS. Hen. I. p. 122. *Fecit iste Rex Parcum de Woodstock, cum Palatio infra predictum Parcum, qui Parcus erat primus Parcus Angliæ, et continet in circuitu septem Milliaria; constructus erat Anno* 14 *hujus Regis, aut parum post.* Without the Park the King's demesne woods were, it cannot well be said now are, the timber being all sold off, and underwoods so cropt and spoiled by that beast the Lord Munson, and other greedy cattle, that they are hardly recoverable. Beyond which lieth Stonefield, and other mannors that hold of Woodstock, with other woods, that have been aliened by former kings, but with reservation of liberty for his majestie's deer, and other beasts of forrest, to harbour in at pleasure, as in due place is to be shewed.

* This survey of Woodstock is appended to the preceding pamphlet

PREFACE TO WOODSTOCK.

It is not my purpose to inform my readers how the manuscripts of that eminent antiquary, the Rev. J. A. ROCHECLIFFE, D. D., came into my possession. There are many ways in which such things happen, and it is enough to say they were rescued from an unworthy fate, and that they were honestly come by. As for the authenticity of the anecdotes which I have gleaned from the writings of this excellent person, and put together with my own unrivalled facility, the name of Doctor Rochecliffe will warrant accuracy, wherever that name happens to be known.

With his history the reading part of the world are well acquainted; and we might refer the tyro to honest Anthony a Wood, who looked up to him as one of the pillars of High Church, and bestows on him the exemplary character in the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, although the Doctor was educated at Cambridge, England's other eye.

It is well known that Doctor Rochecliffe early obtained preferment in the Church, on account of the spirited share which he took in the controversy with the Puritans; and that his work, entitled *Malleus Hæreticorum*, was considered as a knock-down blow by all except those who received it. It was that work which made him, at the early age of thirty, Rector of Woodstock, and which afterwards secured him a place in the Catalogue of the celebrated Century Writers,—and, worse than being shown up by that fanatic, among the catalogues of scandalous and malignant priests admitted into benefices by the prelates, his opinions occasioned the loss of his living of Woodstock by the ascendency of Presbytery. He was chaplain, during most part of the Civil War, to Sir Henry Lee's regiment, levied for the service of King Charles; and it was said he engaged more than once personally in the field. At least it is certain that Doctor Rochecliffe was repeatedly in great danger, as will appear from more passages than one in the following history, which speaks of his own exploits, like Cæsar, in the third person. I suspect, however, some Presbyterian commentator has been guilty of interpolating two or three passages. The manuscript was long in possession of the Everards, a distinguished family of that persuasion.*

During the Usurpation, Doctor Rochecliffe was constantly engaged in one or other of the premature attempts at a restoration of monarchy; and was accounted, for his audacity, presence of mind, and depth of judgment, one of the greatest undertakers for the King in that busy time; with this trifling drawback, that the plots in which he busied himself were almost constantly detected. Nay, it was suspected that Cromwell himself sometimes contrived to suggest to him the intrigues in which he engaged, by which means the wily Protector made experiments on the fidelity of doubtful friends, and became well acquainted with the plots of declared enemies, which he thought it more easy to disconcert and disappoint than to punish severely.

Upon the Restoration, Doctor Rochecliffe regained his living of Woodstock, with other church preferment, and gave up polemics and political intrigues for philosophy. He was one of the constituent members of the Royal Society, and was the person through whom Charles required of that learned body solution of their curious problem, "Why, if a vessel is filled brimful of water, and a large live fish plunged into the water, nevertheless it shall not overflow the pitcher?" Doctor Rochecliffe's exposition of this phenomenon was the most ingenious and instructive of four that were given in; and it is certain the Doctor must have gained the honour of the day, but for the obstinacy of a plain, dull, country gentleman, who insisted that the experiment should be, in the first place, publicly tried. When this was done, the event showed it would have been rather rash to have adopted the facts exclusively on the royal authority; as the fish, however curiously inserted into his native element, splashed the water over the hall, and destroyed the credit of four ingenious essayists, besides a large Turkey carpet.

Doctor Rochecliffe, it would seem, died about 1685, leaving many papers behind him of various kinds, and, above all, many valuable anecdotes of secret history, from which the following Memoirs have been extracted, on which we intend to say only a few words by way of illustration.

The existence of Rosamond's Labyrinth, mentioned in these pages, is attested by Drayton in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

"Rosamond's Labyrinth, whose ruins, together with her Well, being paved with square stones in the bottom, and also her Tower, from which the Labyrinth did run, are yet remaining, being vaults arched and walled with stone and brick, almost incatricably wound within one another, by which, if at any time her lodging were laid about by the Queen, she might easily avoid peril imminent, and, if need be, by secret issues take the air abroad, many furlongs about Woodstock in Oxfordshire."†

It is highly probable, that a singular piece of phantasmagoria which was certainly played off upon the Commissioners of the Long Parliament, who were sent down to dispark and demolish Woodstock, after the death of Charles I., was conducted by means of the secret passages and recesses in the ancient Labyrinth of Rosamond, round which successive Monarchs had erected their hunting-seat or Lodge.

There is a curious account of the disturbances given by the Honourable Commissioners, inserted by Doctor Plot, in his Natural History of Oxfordshire. But as I have not the book at hand, I can only allude to the work of the celebrated Glanvil, on Witches, who has extracted it as an highly accredited narrative of supernatural dealings. The beds of the Commissioners, and their servants, were hoisted up till they were almost inverted, and then let down again so suddenly, as to menace them with bruises. Unusual and horrible noises disturbed those sacrilegious visitors often with royal property. The devil, on one occasion, favoured them a warning-gun; on another, pelted them with assorted horses' bones. Tubs of water were emptied on them in the night; and so many other pranks of the same nature played at their expense, that they broke up housekeeping, and left their ill-gotten spoliation only half completed. The good sense of Doctor Plot suspected, that these feats were wrought by conspiracy and confederation, which Glanville of course endeavours to refute to the best his might; for it could scarce be expected, that he who had found so convenient a solution as that of supernatural agency, should consent to relinquish the service of a key, which will answer any lock, however intricate.

Nevertheless, it was afterwards discovered, that Dr. Plot was perfectly right; and that the only demon who wrought these marvels, was a disguised royalist—a fellow called Trusty Joe, or some such name, formerly in the service of the Keeper of the Park, but who engaged in that of the Commissioners, on purpose to subject them to his persecution. I think I have seen some account of the real state of the transaction, and of the machinery by which the wizard worked his wonders; but whether in a book or pamphlet, I am uncertain. I remember one passage particularly to this purpose. The Commissioners having agreed to retrench articles out of the public account, in order to be divided among themselves, had entered into an indenture for ascertaining their share in the peculation, which they hid in a bow-pot for safety. Now, when an assembly of divines, aided by the most active religious characters in the neighbourhood of Woodstock, were assembled to conjure down the supposed demon, Trusty Joe had contrived a firework, which he let off in the midst of the exercises, which destroyed the bow-pot; and, to the shame and confusion of the Commissioners, threw their secret indenture into the hands of the assembled ghost-seers, who became thus acquainted with their secret schemes of peculation.

It is, however, to little purpose for me to strain my memory about ancient and imperfect recollections concerning the particulars of these fantastic disturbances at Woodstock, since Rochecliffe's papers give such a much more accurate account than could be obtained from any account in existence before publication. Indeed, I might have gone much more fully into part of my subject, for the materials are ample;—but, to the reader a secret, some friendly critics were of opinion that the story hung on hand; and thus I was prevailed on to be concise on the subject than I might otherwise have been.

The impatient reader, perhaps, is by this time accusing me of keeping the sun from him with a candle. Were the sun ever so bright, however, as it is likely to prove; and the flambeau burn but a dozen of times as smoky, my friend must remain in the dark atmosphere a minute longer, while I disclaim the idea of poaching on another's manor. Hawks, we say in Scotland, should not pick out hawks' eyes, or tire upon each other's quarry; and, though I had known that, in its date and its characters, this tale was likely to interfere with that recently published by a distinguished colleague, I should unquestionably have left Doctor Rochecliffe's manuscript in peace for the present season. But before I was aware of the circumstance, this little book was half through the press, and I had only the alternative of avoiding any intentional imitation, and delaying a perusal of the contemporary work in question, or of accidental collision there must be, when works of a similar character are finished on the same general system of historical research, and the same historical personages are introduced. Of course, if such have occurred, I shall be probably the sufferer; for my intentions have been at least innocent, since I look upon one of the advantages attending the conclusion of WOODSTOCK to be that the finishing of my own task will permit me to have the pleasure of reading BRAMBLETYE HOUSE, from which I have conscientiously abstained.

* It is hardly necessary to say, unless to some readers of very literal capacity, that Doctor Rochecliffe and his manuscripts are alike apocryphal.

† Drayton's England's Heroical Epistles, Note A, on the Epistle of Rosamond to King Henry.

WOODSTOCK.

CHAPTER I.

Some were for gospel ministers,
And some for red-coat seculars,
As men most fit t' hold forth the word,
And wield the one and th' other sword.
BUTLER'S *Hudibras.*

THERE is a handsome parish church in the town of Woodstock,—I am told so, at least, for I never saw it, having scarce time, when at the place, to view the magnificence of Blenheim, its painted halls, and tapestried bowers, and then return in due season to dine in hall with my learned friend, the provost of ——; being one of those occasions on which a man wrongs himself extremely, if he lets his curiosity interfere with his punctuality. I had the church accurately described to me, with a view to this work; but, as I have some reason to doubt whether my informant had ever seen the inside of it himself, I shall be content to say that it is now a handsome edifice, most part of which was rebuilt forty or fifty years since, although it still contains some arches of the old chantry, founded, it is said, by King John. It is to this more ancient part of the building that my story refers.

On a morning in the end of September, or beginning of October, in the year 1652, being a day appointed for a solemn thanksgiving for the decisive victory at Worcester, a respectable audience was assembled in the old chantry, or chapel of King John. The condition of the church and character of the audience both bore witness to the rage of civil war, and the peculiar spirit of the times. The sacred edifice showed many marks of dilapidation. The windows, once filled with stained glass, had been dashed to pieces with pikes and muskets, as matters of and pertaining to idolatry. The carving on the reading-desk was damaged, and two fair screens of beautiful sculptured oak had been destroyed, for the same pithy and conclusive reason. The high altar had been removed, and the gilded railing, which was once around it, was broken down and carried off. The effigies of several tombs were mutilated, and now lay scattered about the church,

Torn from their destined niche,—unworthy meed
Of knightly counsel or heroic deed!

The autumn wind piped through empty aisles, in which the remains of stakes and trevisses of roughhewn timber, as well as a quantity of scattered hay and trampled straw, seemed to intimate that the hallowed precincts had been, upon some late emergency, made the quarters of a troop of horse.

The audience, like the building, was abated in splendour. None of the ancient and habitual worshippers during peaceful times, were now to be seen in their carved galleries, with hands shadowing their brows, while composing their minds to pray where their fathers had prayed, and after the same mode of worship. The eye of the yeoman and peasant sought in vain the tall form of old Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, as, wrapped in his laced cloak, and with beard and whiskers duly composed, he moved slowly through the aisles, followed by the faithful mastiff, or bloodhound, which in old time had saved his master by his fidelity, and which regularly followed him to church. Bevis, indeed, fell under the proverb which avers,

He is a good dog which goes to church;" for, bating an occasional temptation to warble along with one accord, he behaved himself as decorously as any of the congregation, and returned as much edified, *perhaps, as most of them.* The damsels of Woodstock *looked as vainly for the* laced cloaks, jingling spurs, slashed boots, and tall plumes, of the young cavaliers of this and other high-born houses, moving through the streets and the churchyard with the careless ease, which indicates perhaps rather an overweening degree of self-confidence, yet shows graceful when mingled with good-humour and courtesy. The good old dames, too, in their white hoods and black velvet gowns—their daughters, "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes,"—where were they all now, who, when they entered the church, used to divide men's thoughts between them and Heaven? "But ah! Alice Lee—so sweet, so gentle, so condescending in thy loveliness—[thus proceeds a contemporary annalist, whose manuscript we have deciphered]—why is my story to turn upon thy fallen fortunes? and why not rather to the period when, in the very dismounting from your palfrey, you attracted as many eyes as if an angel had descended,—as many blessings as if the benignant being had come fraught with good tidings? No creature wert thou of an idle romancer's imagination—no being fantastically bedizened with inconsistent perfections;—thy merits made me love thee well—and for thy faults—so well did they show amid thy good qualities, that I think they made me love thee better."

With the house of Lee had disappeared from the chantry of King John others of gentle blood and honoured lineage,—Freemantles, Winklecombes, Drycotts, &c.; for the air that blew over the towers of Oxford was unfavourable to the growth of Puritanism, which was more general in the neighbouring counties. There were among the congregation, however, one or two that, by their habits and demeanour, seemed country gentlemen of consideration, and there were also present some of the notables of the town of Woodstock, cutlers or glovers chiefly, whose skill in steel or leather had raised them to a comfortable livelihood. These dignitaries wore long black cloaks, plaited close at the neck, and, like peaceful citizens, carried their Bibles and memorandum-books at their girdles, instead of knife or sword.* This respectable, but least numerous part of the audience, were such decent persons as had adopted the Presbyterian form of faith, renouncing the liturgy and hierarchy of the Church of England, and living under the tuition of the Rev. Nehemiah Holdenough, much famed for the length and strength of his powers of predication. With these grave seniors sat their goodly dames in ruff and gorget, like the portraits which in catalogues of paintings are designed "wife of a burgomaster;" and their pretty daughters, whose study, like that of Chaucer's physician, was not always in the Bible, but who were, on the contrary, when a glance could escape the vigilance of their honoured mothers, inattentive themselves, and the cause of inattention in others.

But, besides these dignified persons, there were in the church a numerous collection of the lower orders, some brought thither by curiosity, but many of them unwashed artificers, bewildered in the theological discussions of the time, and of as many various sects as there are colours in the rainbow. The presumption of these learned Thebans being in exact proportion to their ignorance, the last was total, and the first boundless. Their behaviour in the church was any thing but reverential or edifying. Most of them affected a cynical contempt for all that was only held sacred by human sanction—the church was to these men but a steeple-house, the clergyman, an ordinary

* This custom among the Puritans is mentioned often in old plays, and among others in the Widow of Watling Street.

person., her ordinances, dry bran and sapless pottage,* unfitted for the spiritualized palates of the saints, and the prayer, an address to Heaven, to which each acceded or not, as in his too critical judgment he conceived fit.

The elder amongst them sat or lay on the benches, with their high steeple-crowned hats pulled over their severe and knitted brows, waiting for the Presbyterian parson, as mastiffs sit in dumb expectation of the bull that is to be brought to the stake. The younger mixed, some of them, a bolder license of manners with their heresies; they gazed round on the women, yawned, coughed, and whispered, eat apples, and cracked nuts, as if in the gallery of a theatre ere the piece commences.

Besides all these, the congregation contained a few soldiers, some in corslets and steel caps, some in buff, and others in red coats. These men of war had their bandoleers, with ammunition, slung round them, and rested on their pikes and muskets. They too, had their peculiar doctrines on the most difficult points of religion, and united the extravagances of enthusiasm with the most determined courage and resolution in the field. The burghers of Woodstock looked on these military saints with no small degree of awe; for though not often sullied with deeds of plunder or cruelty, they had the power of both absolutely in their hands, and the peaceful citizens had no alternative, save submission to whatever the ill-regulated and enthusiastic imaginations of their martial guides might suggest.

After some time spent in waiting for him, Mr. Holdenough began to walk up the aisles of the chapel, not with the slow and dignified carriage with which the old Rector was of yore wont to maintain the dignity of the surplice, but with a hasty step, like one who arrives too late at an appointment, and bustles forward to make the best use of his time. He was a tall thin man, with an adust complexion, and the vivacity of his eye indicated some irascibility of temperament. His dress was brown, not black, and over his other vestments he wore, in honour of Calvin, a Geneva cloak of a blue colour, which fell backwards from his shoulders as he posted on to the pulpit. His grizzled hair was cut as short as shears could perform the feat, and covered with a black silk scullcap, which stuck so close to his head, that the two ears expanded from under it as if they had been intended as handles by which to lift the whole person. Moreover, the worthy divine wore spectacles, and a long grizzled peaked beard, and he carried in his hand a small pocket-bible with silver clasps. Upon arriving at the pulpit, he paused a moment to take breath, then began to ascend the steps by two at a time.

But his course was arrested by a strong hand, which seized his cloak. It was that of one who had detached himself from the group of soldiery. He was a stout man of middle stature, with a quick eye, and a countenance, which, though plain, had yet an expression that fixed the attention. His dress, though not strictly military, partook of that character. He wore large hose made of calves-leather, and a tuck, as it was then called, or rapier, of tremendous length, balanced on the other side by a dagger. The belt was morocco, garnished with pistols.

The minister thus intercepted in his duty, faced round upon the party who had seized him, and demanded, in no gentle tone, the meaning of the interruption.

"Friend," quoth the intruder, "is it thy purpose to hold forth to these good people?"

"Ay, marry is it," said the clergyman, "and such is my bounden duty. Wo to me if I preach not the gospel—Prithee, friend, let me not in my labour"——

"Nay," said the man of warlike mien, "I am myself minded to hold forth; therefore, do thou desist, or if thou wilt do by mine advice, remain and fructify with those poor goslings, to whom I am presently about to shake forth the crumbs of comfortable doctrine."

"Give place, thou man of Satan," saith the priest, waxing wroth, "respect mine order—my cloth."

"I see no more to respect in the cut of thy cloak, or in the cloth of which it is fashioned," said the other, "than thou didst in the Bishop's rochets—they were black and white, thou art blue and brown. Sleeping dogs every one of you, lying down, loving to slumber—shepherds that starve the flock, but will not watch it, each looking to his own gain—hum."

Scenes of this indecent kind were so common at the time, that no one thought of interfering; the congregation looked on in silence, the better class scandalized, and the lower orders, some laughing, and others backing the soldier or minister as their fancy dictated. Mean time the struggle waxed fiercer; Mr. Holdenough clamoured for assistance.

"Master Mayor of Woodstock," he exclaimed, "wilt thou be among those wicked magistrates who bear the sword in vain?—Citizens, will you not help your pastor?—Worthy Aldermen, will you see me strangled on the pulpit stairs by this man of buff and Belial?—But lo, I will overcome him, and cast his cords from me."

As Holdenough spoke, he struggled to ascend the pulpit stairs, holding hard on the banisters. His tormenter held fast by the skirts of the cloak, which went nigh to the choking of the wearer, until, as he spoke the words last mentioned, in a half-strangled voice, Mr. Holdenough dexterously slipped the string which tied it round his neck, so that the garment suddenly gave way; the soldier fell backwards down the steps, and the liberated divine skipped into the pulpit, and began to give forth a psalm of triumph over his prostrate adversary. But a great hubbub in the church marred his exultation, and although he and his faithful clerk continued to sing the hymn of victory, their notes were only heard by fits, like the whistle of a curlew during a gale of wind.

The cause of the tumult was as follows:—The Mayor was a zealous Presbyterian, and witnessed the intrusion of the soldier with great indignation from the very beginning, though he hesitated to interfere with an armed man while on his legs and capable of resistance. But no sooner did he behold the champion of independency sprawling on his back, with the divine's Geneva cloak fluttering in his hands, than the magistrate rushed forward, exclaiming that such insolence was not to be endured, and ordered his constables to seize the prostrate champion, proclaiming in the magnanimity of wrath, "I will commit every red-coat of them all—I will commit him were he Noll Cromwell himself!"

The worthy Mayor's indignation had overmastered his reason when he made this mistimed vaunt; for three soldiers, who had hitherto stood motionless like statues, made each a stride in advance, which placed them betwixt the municipal officers and the soldier, who was in the act of rising; then making at once the movement of resting arms according to the manual as then practised, their musket-buts rang on the church pavement, within an inch of the gouty toes of Master Mayor. The energetic magistrate, whose efforts in favour of order were thus checked, cast one glance on his supporters, but that was enough to show him that force was not on his side. All had shrunk back on hearing that ominous clatter of stone and iron. He was obliged to descend to expostulation.

"What do you mean, my masters?" he said; "is it like a decent and God-fearing soldiery, who have wrought such things for the land as have never before been heard of, to brawl and riot in the church, or to aid, abet, and comfort a profane fellow, who hath upon a solemn thanksgiving, excluded the minister from his own pulpit?"

"We have naught to do with thy church, as thou call'st it," said he who, by a small feather in front of his morion, appeared to be the corporal of the party; —"we see not why men of gifts should not be heard within these citadels of superstition, as well as the voice of the men of crape of old, and the men of cloak now. Wherefore, we will pluck yon Jack Presbyter out of his wooden sentinel-box, and our own

* See a curious vindication of this indecent simile here for the Common Prayer, in Note, page 13.

nan shall relieve the guard, and mount thereon,
/ aloud and spare not."
y, gentlemen," said the Mayor, "if such be your
s, we have not the means to withstand you,
as you see, peaceful and quiet men—But let me
eak with this worthy minister, Nehemiah
ough, to persuade him to yield up his place for
e without farther scandal."
peace-making Mayor then interrupted the
ng of Holdenough and the clerk, and prayed
reture, else there would, he said, be certainly

fe!" replied the Presbyterian divine, with scorn;
ar of strife, among men that dare not testify
this open profanation of the church, and
display of heresy. Would your neighbours of
y have brooked such an insult?"
ne, come, Master Holdenough," said the May-
it us not to mutiny and cry Clubs. I tell you
ore, we are not men of war or blood."
t more than may be drawn by the point of a
" said the preacher, scornfully.—"Ye tailors
dstock!—for what is a glover but a tailor work-
kid-skin?—I forsake you, in scorn of your faint
and feeble hands, and will seek me elsewhere
which will not fly from their shepherd at the
of the first wild ass which cometh from out
at desert."
aying, the aggrieved divine departed from his
and shaking the dust from his shoes, left the
as hastily as he had entered it, though with a
t reason for his speed. The citizens saw his
with sorrow, and not without a compunctious
as if conscious that they were not playing the
ourageous part in the world. The Mayor him-
d several others left the church, to follow and
him.
Independent orator, late prostrate, was now
ant, and inducting himself into the pulpit
further ceremony, he pulled a Bible from his
and selected his text from the forty-fifth psalm,
d thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty,
y glory and thy majesty: and in thy majesty
sperously."—Upon this theme he commenced
hose wild declamations common at the period,
h men were accustomed to wrest and pervert
guage of Scripture, by adapting it to modern
The language which, in its literal sense,
plied to King David, and typically referred to
ing of the Messiah, was, in the opinion of the
orator, most properly to be interpreted of
Cromwell, the victorious general of the infant
mwealth, which was never destined to come
"Gird on thy sword!" exclaimed the preach-
natically; "and was not that a pretty bit of
ever dangled from a corslet, or rung against
saddle? Ay, ye prick up your ears now, ye
of Woodstock, as if ye should know some-
f a good fox broadsword—Did you forge it,
!—was the steel quenched with water from
ond's well, or the blade blessed by the old
y priest of Godstow? You would have us
warrant me, that you wrought it and welded
ed and polished it, and all the while it never

cation of the Book of Common Prayer, against the con-
s slanders of the Fanatic Party terming it Porridge.—
ior of this singular and rare tract indulges in the alle-
tyle, till he fairly hunts down the allegory.
s for what you call porridge, who hatched the name
ot, neither is it worth the inquiring after, for I hold
good food. It is better to a sick man than meat, for
an will sooner eat pottage than meat. Pottage will
ith him when meat will not; pottage will nourish the
il the veins, run into every part of a man, make him
so will these prayers do, set our soul and body in a
rm our devotion, work fervency in us, lift up our soul
For there be herbs of God's own planting in our pot-
ron call it—the Ten Commandments, dainty herbs to
ny pottage in the world; there is the Lord's Prayer,
it is a most sweet pot-herb cannot be denied; then
also David's herbs, his prayers and psalms, holps to
r pottage relish well; the psalm of the blessed Virgin,
eet-herb. Though they be, as some term them, cock-
ttage, yet they are as sweet, as good, as dainty, and
as they were at the first. The sun hath not made them
h its heat, neither hath the cold water taken away
ver and strength. Compare them with the Scriptures,
they be not as well seasoned and crambed. If you

came on a Woodstock stithy! You were all too busy making whittles for the lazy crape-men of Oxford bouncing priests, whose eyes were so closed up with fat, that they could not see Destruction till she had them by the throat. But I can tell you where the sword was forged, and tempered, and welded, and grinded, and polished. When you were, as I said before, making whittles for false priests, and daggers for dissolute G—d d—n-me cavaliers, to cut the people of England's throats with—it was forged at Long Marston Moor, where blows went faster than ever rung hammer on anvil—and it was tempered at Naseby, in the best blood of the cavaliers—and it was welded in Ireland against the walls of Drogheda—and it was grinded on Scottish lives at Dunbar—and now of late it was polished in Worcester, till it shines as bright as the sun in the middle heaven, and there is no light in England that shall come nigh unto it."

Here the military part of the congregation raised a hum of approbation, which being a sound like the "hear, hear," of the British House of Commons, was calculated to heighten the enthusiasm of the orator, by intimating the sympathy of the audience. "And then," resumed the preacher, rising in energy as he found that his audience partook in these feelings, "what sayeth the text?—Ride on prosperously—do not stop—do not call a halt—do not quit the saddle—pursue the scattered fliers—sound the trumpet—not a levant or a flourish, but a point of war—sound, boot and saddle—to horse and away—a charge!—follow after the young Man!—what part have we in him?—Slay, take, destroy, divide the spoil! Blessed art thou, Oliver, on account of thine honour—thy cause is clear, thy call is undoubted—never has defeat come near thy leading staff, nor disaster attended thy banner. Ride on, flower of England's soldiers! ride on, chosen leader of God's champions! gird up the loins of thy resolution, and be steadfast to the mark of thy high calling!"

Another deep and stern hum, echoed by the ancient embow'd arches of the old chantry, gave him an opportunity of an instant's repose; when the people of Woodstock heard him, and not without anxiety, turn the stream of his oratory into another channel.

"But wherefore, ye people of Woodstock, do I say these things to you, who claim no portion in our David, no interest in England's son of Jesse?—You, who were fighting as well as your might could (and it was not very formidable) for the late Man, under that old blood-thirsty papist Sir Jacob Aston—are you not now plotting, or ready to plot, for the restoring, as ye call it, of the young Man, the unclean son of the slaughtered tyrant—the fugitive after whom the true hearts of England are now following, that they may take and slay him?—'Why should your rider turn his bridle our way?' say you in your hearts; 'we will none of him; if we may help ourselves, we will rather turn us to wallow in the mire of monarchy, with the sow that was washed but newly.' Come, men of Woodstock, I will ask, and do you answer me. Hunger ye still after the flesh-pots of the monks of Godstow? and ye will say, Nay;—but wherefore, except that the pots are cracked and broken,

find any thing in them that is either too salt, too fresh, or too bitter, that herb shall be taken out and better put in, if it can be got, or none. And as in kitchen pottage there are many good herbs, so there is likewise in this church pottage, as you call it. For first, there is in kitchen pottage good water to make them: so, on the contrary, in the other pottage there is the water of life. 2. There is salt to season them: so in the other is a prayer of grace to season their hearts. 3. There is oatmeal to nourish the body, in the other is the bread of life. 4. There is thyme in them to relish them, and it is very wholesome—in the other is the wholesome exhortation not to harden our heart while it is called to-day. This relisheth well. 5. There is a small onion to give it a taste—in the other is a good herb, called Lord have mercy on us. These, and many other holy herbs are contained in it, all boiling in the heart of man, will make as good pottage as the world can afford, especially if you use these herbs for digestion,—the herb repentance, the herb grace, the herb faith, the herb love, the herb hope, the herb good works, the herb feeling, the herb zeal, the herb fervency, the herb ardency, the herb constancy, with many more of this nature, most excellent for digestion."

Oh! jam satis. In this manner the learned divine hunts his metaphor at a very cold scent, through a pamphlet of ten mortal quarto pages.

and the fire is extinguished wherewith thy oven used to boil? And again, I ask, drink ye still of the well of the fornications of the fair Rosamond?—ye will say, Nay;—but wherefore?"—

Here the orator, ere he could answer the question in his own way, was surprised by the following reply, very pithily pronounced by one of the congregation:—"Because you and the like of you, have left us no brandy to mix with it."

All eyes turned to the audacious speaker, who stood beside one of the thick sturdy Saxon pillars, which he himself somewhat resembled, being short of stature, but very strongly made, a squat broad Little John sort of figure, leaning on a quarterstaff, and wearing a jerkin, which, though now sorely stained and discoloured, had once been of the Lincoln green, and showed remnants of having been laced. There was an air of careless good humoured audacity about the fellow; and, though under military restraint, there were some of the citizens who could not help crying out—"Well said, Joceline Joliffe!"

"Jolly Joceline, call ye him?" proceeded the preacher, without showing either confusion or displeasure at the interruption,—"I will make him Joceline of the jail, if he interrupts me again. One of your park-keepers, I warrant, that can never forget they have borne C. R. upon their badges and bugle-horns, even as a dog bears his owner's name on his collar—a pretty emblem for Christian men! But the brute beast hath the better of him,—the brute weareth his own coat, and the caitiff thrall wears his master's. I have seen such a wag make a rope's end wag ere now.—Where was I?—Oh, rebuking you for your backslidings, men of Woodstock.—Yes, then ye will say ye have renounced Popery, and ye have renounced Prelacy, and then ye wipe your mouths like Pharisees as ye are; and who but you for purity of religion! but I tell you, ye are but like Jehu the son of Nimshi, who broke down the house of Baal, yet departed not from the sons of Jeroboam. Even so ye eat not fish on Friday with the blinded Papists, nor minced pies on the twenty-fifth day of December, like the slothful Prelatists; but ye will gorge on sack-possets each night in the year with your blind Presbyterian guide, and ye will speak evil of dignities, and revile the Commonwealth; and ye will glorify yourselves in your park of Woodstock, and say, 'Was it not walled in first of any other in England, and that by Henry, son of William called the Conqueror?' And ye have a princely Lodge therein, and call the same a Royal Lodge; and ye have an oak which ye call the King's Oak; and ye steal and eat the venison of the park; and ye say, 'This is the king's venison, we will wash it down with a cup to the king's health—better we eat it than those round-headed commonwealth knaves.' But listen unto me, and take warning. For these things come we to controversy with you. And our name shall be a cannon-shot, before which your Lodge, in the pleasantness whereof ye take pastime, shall be blown into ruins; and ye will be as a wedge to split asunder the King's oak into billets to heat a brown baker's oven; and we will dispark your park, and slay your deer, and eat them ourselves, neither shall you have any portion thereof, whether in neck or haunch. Ye shall not haft a tenpenny knife with the horns thereof, neither shall ye cut a pair of breeches out of the hide, for all ye be cutlers and glovers; and ye shall have no comfort or support neither from the sequestered traitor Henry Lee, who called himself ranger of Woodstock, nor from any on his behalf; for they are coming hither who shall be called Maher-shalal-hash-baz, because he maketh haste to the spoil."

Here ended this wild effusion, the latter part of which fell heavy on the souls of the poor citizens of Woodstock, as tending to confirm a report of an unpleasing nature which had been lately circulated. The communication with London was indeed slow, and the news which it transmitted were uncertain; no less uncertain were the times themselves, and the *rumours which were circulated*, exaggerated by the *hopes and fears of so many* various factions. But *the general stream of report*, so far as Woodstock *was concerned, had of late run uniformly in one direction*. Day after day they had been informed, that the fatal fiat of Parliament had gone out, for selling the park of Woodstock, destroying its lodge, disparking its forest, and erasing, as far as they could be erased, all traces of its ancient fame. Many of the citizens were likely to be sufferers on this occasion, as several of them enjoyed, either by sufferance or right, various convenient privileges, of pasturage, cutting firewood, and the like, in the royal chase; and all the inhabitants of the little borough were hurt to think, that the scenery of the place was to be destroyed, its edifices ruined, and its honours rent away. This is a patriotic sensation often found in such places, which ancient distinctions and long-cherished recollections of former days, render so different from towns of recent date. The natives of Woodstock felt it in the fullest force. They had trembled at the anticipated calamity; but now, when it was announced by the appearance of those dark, stern, and at the same time omnipotent soldiers—now that they heard it proclaimed by the mouth of one of their military preachers—they considered their fate as inevitable. The causes of disagreement among themselves were for the time forgotten, as the congregation, dismissed without psalmody or benediction, went slowly and mournfully homeward, each to his own place of abode.

CHAPTER II.

Come forth, old man—Thy daughter's side
Is now the fitting place for thee;
When Time hath quell'd the oak's bold pride,
The youthful tendril yet may live
The ruins of the parent tree.

When the sermon was ended, the military orator wiped his brow; for, notwithstanding the coolness of the weather, he was heated with the vehemence of his speech and action. He then descended from the pulpit, and spoke a word or two to the corporal who commanded the party of soldiers, who, replying by a sober nod of intelligence, drew his men together, and marched them in order to their quarters in the town.

The preacher himself, as if nothing extraordinary had happened, left the church and sauntered through the streets of Woodstock, with the air of a stranger who was viewing the town, without seeming to observe that he was himself in his turn anxiously surveyed by the citizens, whose furtive, yet frequent glances seemed to regard him as something alike suspected and dreadful yet on no account to be provoked. He heeded them not, but stalked on in the manner affected by the distinguished fanatics of the day; a stiff solemn pace, a severe and at the same time a contemplative look, like that of a man discomposed at the interruptions which earthly objects forced upon him, obliging him by their intrusion to withdraw his thoughts for an instant from celestial things. Innocent pleasures of what kind soever they held in suspicion and contempt, and innocent mirth they abominated. It was, however, a cast of mind that formed men for great and manly actions, as it adopted principle, and that of an unselfish character, for the ruling motive, instead of the gratification of passion. Some of these men were indeed hypocrites, using the cloak of religion only as a covering for their ambition, but many really possessed the devotional character, and the severe republican virtue, which others only affected. By far the greater number hovered between these extremes, felt to a certain extent the power of religion, and complied with the times in affecting a great deal.

The individual, whose pretensions to sanctity, written as they were upon his brow and gait, have given rise to the above digression, reached at length the extremity of the principal street, which terminates upon the park of Woodstock. A battlemented portal of Gothic appearance defended the entrance to the avenue. It was of mixed architecture, but on the whole, though composed of the styles of the different ages when it had received additions, had a striking and imposing effect. An immense gate composed of rails of hammered iron, with many a flourish and scroll, displaying as its uppermost ornament the ill-

ated cipher of C. R., was now decayed, being partly wasted with rust, partly by violence.

The stranger paused, as if uncertain whether he should demand or essay entrance. He looked through the grating down an avenue skirted by majestic oaks, which led onward with a gentle curve, as if into the depths of some ample and ancient forest. The wicket of the large iron gate being left unwittingly open, the soldier was tempted to enter, yet with some hesitation, as he that intrudes upon ground which he conjectures may be prohibited—indeed his manner showed more reverence for the scene than could have been expected from his condition and character. He slackened his stately and consequential pace, and at length stood still, and looked around him.

Not far from the gate, he saw rising from the trees one or two ancient and venerable turrets, bearing each its own vane of rare device glittering in the autumn sun. These indicated the ancient hunting seat, or Lodge, as it was called, which had, since the time of Henry II., been occasionally the residence of the English monarchs, when it pleased them to visit the woods of Oxford, which then so abounded with game, that, according to old Fuller, huntsmen and falconers were nowhere better pleased. The situation which the Lodge occupied was a piece of flat ground, now planted with sycamores, not far from the entrance to that magnificent spot, where the spectator first stops to gaze upon Blenheim, to think of Marlborough's victories, and to applaud or criticise the cumbrous magnificence of Vanburgh's style.

There, too, paused our military preacher, but with other thoughts, and for other purpose, than to admire the scene around him. It was not long afterwards when he beheld two persons, a male and female, approaching slowly, and so deeply engaged in their own conversation that they did not raise their eyes to observe that there stood a stranger in the path before them. The soldier took advantage of their state of abstraction, and, desirous at once to watch their motions and avoid their observation, he glided beneath one of the huge trees which skirted the path, and whose boughs, sweeping the ground on every side, ensured him against discovery, unless in case of an actual search.

In the mean time, the gentleman and lady continued to advance, directing their course to a rustic seat, which still enjoyed the sunbeams, and was placed adjacent to the tree where the stranger was concealed.

The man was elderly, yet seemed bent more by sorrow and infirmity, than by the weight of years. He wore a mourning cloak, over a dress of the same melancholy colour, cut in that picturesque form which Vandyck has rendered immortal. But although the dress was handsome, it was put on and worn with a carelessness which showed the mind of the wearer ill at ease. His aged, yet still handsome countenance, had the same air of consequence which distinguished his dress and his gait. A striking part of his appearance was a long white beard, which descended far over the breast of his slashed doublet, and looked singular from its contrast in colour with his habit.

The young lady, by whom this venerable gentleman seemed to be in some degree supported as they walked arm in arm, was a slight and sylph-like form, with a person so delicately made, and so beautiful in countenance, that it seemed the earth on which she walked was too grossly massive a support for a creature so aerial. But mortal beauty must share human sorrows. The eyes of the beautiful being showed tokens of tears; her colour was heightened as she listened to her aged companion; and it was plain, from his melancholy yet displeased look, that the conversation was as distressing to himself as to her. When they sat down on the bench we have mentioned, the gentleman's discourse could be distinctly overheard by the eaves-dropping soldier, but the answers of the young lady reached his ear rather less distinctly.

"It is not to be endured!" said the old man, passionately; "it would stir up a paralytic wretch to start up a soldier. My people have been thinned, I grant you, or have fallen off from me in these times—owe them no grudge for it, poor knaves; what should they do waiting on me, when the pantry has no bread and the buttery no ale? But we have still about us some rugged foresters of the old Woodstock breed—old as myself most of them—what of that? old wood seldom warps in the wetting;—I will hold out the old house, and it will not be the first time that I have held it against ten times the strength that we hear of now."

"Alas! my dear father!"—said the young lady, in a tone which seemed to intimate his proposal of defence to be altogether desperate.

"And why, alas?" said the gentleman, angrily "is it because I shut my door against a score or two of these blood-thirsty hypocrites?"

"But their masters can as easily send a regiment or an army, if they will," replied the lady; "and what good would your present defence do, excepting to exasperate them to your utter destruction?"

"Be it so, Alice," replied her father; "I have lived my time, and beyond it. I have outlived the kindest and most princelike of masters. What do I do on the earth since the dismal thirtieth of January? The parricide of that day was a signal to all true servants of Charles Stewart to avenge his death, or die as soon after as they could find a worthy opportunity!"

"Do not speak thus, sir," said Alice Lee; "it does not become your gravity and your worth to throw away that life which may yet be of service to your king and country,—it will not and cannot always be thus. England will not long endure the rulers which these bad times have assigned her. In the mean while —[here a few words escaped the listener's ears]—and beware of that impatience, which makes bad worse."

"Worse?" exclaimed the impatient old man, "*What* can be worse? Is it not at the worst already? Will not these people expel us from the only shelter we have left—dilapidate what remains of royal property under my charge—make the palace of princes into a den of thieves, and then wipe their mouths and thank God, as if they had done an alms-deed?"

"Still," said his daughter, "there is hope behind, and I trust the King is ere this out of their reach—We have reason to think well of my brother Albert's safety."

"Ay, Albert! there again," said the old man, in a tone of reproach; "had it not been for thy entreaties I had gone to Worcester myself; but I must needs lie here like a worthless hound when the hunt is up, when who knows what service I might have shown? An old man's head is sometimes useful when his arm is but little worth. But you and Albert were so desirous that he should go alone—and now, who can say what has become of him?"

"Nay, nay, father," said Alice, "we have good hope that Albert escaped from that fatal day; young Abney saw him a mile from the field."

"Young Abney lied, I believe," said the father, in the same humour of contradiction—"Young Abney's tongue seems quicker than his hands, but far slower than his horse's heels when he leaves the roundheads behind him. I would rather Albert's dead body were laid between Charles and Cromwell, than hear he fled as early as young Abney."

"My dearest father," said the young lady, weeping as she spoke, "what can I say to comfort you?"

"Comfort me, say'st thou, girl? I am sick of comfort—an honourable death, with the ruins of Woodstock for my monument, were the only comfort to old Henry Lee. Yes, by the memory of my fathers! I will make good the Lodge against these rebellious robbers."

"Yet be ruled, dearest father," said the maiden, "and submit to that which we cannot gainsay. My uncle Everard"———

Here the old man caught at her unfinished words. "Thy uncle Everard, wench!—Well, get on.—What of thy precious and loving uncle Everard?"

"Nothing, sir," she said, "if the subject displeases you."

"Displeases me?" he replied, "why should it displease me? or if it did, why shouldst thou, or any one, affect to care about it? What is it that hath happened of late years—what is it can be thought so

happen that astrologer can guess at, which can give pleasure to us?"

"Fate," she replied, "may have in store the joyful restoration of our banished Prince."

"Too late for my time, Alice," said the knight; "if there be such a white page in the heavenly book, it will not be turned until long after my day.—But I see thou wouldst escape me.—In a word, what of thy uncle Everard?"

"Nay, sir," said Alice, "God knows I would rather be silent for ever, than speak what might, as you would take it, add to your present distemperature."

"Distemperature!" said her father; "Oh, thou art a sweet-lipped physician, and wouldst, I warrant me, drop naught but sweet balm, and honey, and oil, on my distemperature—if that is the phrase for an old man's ailment, when he is well nigh heart-broken.—Once more, what of thy uncle Everard?"

His last words were uttered in a high and peevish tone of voice; and Alice Lee answered her father in a trembling and submissive tone.

"I only meant to say, sir, that I am well assured that my uncle Everard, when we quit this place"——

"That is to say, when we are kicked out of it by crop-eared canting villains like himself.—But on with thy bountiful uncle—what will he do? will he give us the remains of his worshipful and economical housekeeping, the fragments of a thrice-sacked capon twice-a-week, and a plentiful fast on the other five days?—Will he give us beds beside his half-starved nags, and put them under a short allowance of straw, that his sister's husband—that I should have called my deceased angel by such a name!—and his sister's daughter, may not sleep on the stones? Or will he send us a noble each, with a warning to make it last, for he had never known the ready-penny so hard to come by? Or what else will your uncle Everard do for us? Get us a furlough to beg? Why, I can do that without him."

"You misconstrue him much," answered Alice, with more spirit than she had hitherto displayed; "and would you but question your own heart, you would acknowledge—I speak with reverence—that your tongue utters what your better judgment would disown. My uncle Everard is neither a miser nor a hypocrite, neither so fond of the goods of this world that he would not supply our distresses amply, nor so wedded to fanatical opinions as to exclude charity for other sects beside his own."

"Ay, ay, the Church of England is a *sect* with him, I doubt not, and perhaps with thee too, Alice," said the knight. "What is a Muggletonian, or a Ranter, or a Brownist, but a sectary? and thy phrase places them all, with Jack Presbyter himself, on the same footing with our learned prelates and religious clergy! Such is the cant of the day thou livest in, and why shouldst thou not talk like one of the wise virgins and psalm-singing sisters, since, though thou hast a profane old cavalier for a father, thou art own niece to pious uncle Everard?"

"If you speak thus, my dear father," said Alice, "what can I answer you? Hear me but one patient word, and I shall have discharged my uncle Everard's commission."

"Oh, it is a commission then? Surely, I suspected so much from the beginning—nay, have some sharp guess touching the ambassador also.—Come, madam the mediator, do your errand, and you shall have no reason to complain of my patience."

"Then, sir," replied his daughter, "my uncle Everard desires you would be courteous to the commissioners, who come here to sequestrate the parks and the property; or, at least, heedfully to abstain from giving them obstacle or opposition: it can, he says, do no good, even on your own principles, and it will give a pretext for proceeding against you as one in the worst degree of malignity, which he thinks may otherwise be prevented. Nay, he has good hope, that if you follow his counsel, the committee may, through the interest he possesses, be inclined to remove the sequestration of your estate on a moderate fine. Thus *says my uncle; and having* communicated his advice, *I have no occasion to urge* your patience with farther *argument.*"

"It is well thou dost not, Alice," answered Sir Henry Lee, in a tone of suppressed anger; "for, by the blessed Rood, thou hast well nigh led me into the heresy of thinking thee no daughter of mine.—Ah! my beloved companion, who art now far from the sorrows and cares of this weary world, couldst thou have thought that the daughter thou didst clasp to thy bosom, would, like the wicked wife of Job, become a temptress to her father in the hour of affliction, and recommend to him to make his conscience truckle to his interest, and to beg back at the bloody hands of his master's, and perhaps his son's murderers, a wretched remnant of the royal property he has been robbed of!—Why, wench, if I must beg, think'st thou I will sue to those who have made me a mendicant? No. I will never show my gray beard, worn in sorrow for my sovereign's death, move the compassion of some proud sequestrator, who perhaps was one of the parricides. No. If Henry Lee must sue for food, it shall be of some sound loyalist like himself, who, having but half a loaf remaining, will not nevertheless refuse to share it with him. For his daughter, she may wander her own way, which leads her to a refuge with her wealthy roundhead kinsfolk; but let her no more call him father, whose honest indigence she has refused to share!"

"You do me injustice, sir," answered the young lady, with a voice animated yet faltering, "cruel injustice. God knows, your way is my way, though it lead to ruin and beggary; and while you tread it, my arm shall support you while you will accept an aid so feeble."

"Thou word'st me girl," answered the old cavalier, "thou word'st me, as Will Shakspeare says—thou speakest of lending me thy arm; but thy secret thought is thyself to hang upon Markham Everard's."

"My father, my father," answered Alice, in a tone of deep grief, "what can thus have altered your clear judgment and kindly heart?—Accursed be these civil commotions! not only do they destroy men's bodies, but they pervert their souls; and the brave, the noble, the generous, become suspicious, harsh, and mean! Why upbraid me with Markham Everard? Have I seen or spoke to him since you forbid him my company, with terms less kind—I will speak it truly—than was due even to the relationship betwixt you? Why think I would sacrifice to that young man my duty to you? Know, that were I capable of such criminal weakness, Markham Everard were the first to despise me for it."

She put her handkerchief to her eyes, but she could not hide her sobs, nor conceal the distress they intimated. The old man was moved.

"I cannot tell," he said, "what to think of it. Thou seem'st sincere, and wert ever a good and kindly daughter—how thou hast let that rebel youth creep into thy heart I wot not; perhaps it is a punishment on me, who thought the loyalty of my house was like undefiled ermine. Yet here is a damned spot, and on the fairest gem of all—my own dear Alice. But do not weep—we have enough to vex us. Where is it that Shakspeare hath it:—

> —'Gentle daughter,
> Give even way unto my rough affairs;
> Put you not on the temper of the times,
> Nor be, like them, to Percy troublesome.'"

"I am glad," answered the young lady, "to hear you quote your favourite again, sir. Our little jars are ever well nigh ended when Shakspeare comes in play."

"His book was the closet-companion of my blessed master," said Sir Henry Lee; "after the Bible, (with reverence for naming them together!) he felt more comfort in it than in any other; and as I have shared his disease, why, it is natural I should take his medicine. Albeit, I pretend not to my master's art in explaining the dark passages; for I am but a rude man, and rustically brought up to arms and hunting."

"You have seen Shakspeare yourself, sir?" said the young lady.

"Silly wench," replied the knight, "he died when I was a mere child—thou hast heard me say so twenty times; but thou wouldst lead the old man away from the tender subject. Well, though I am not blind, I

can shut my eyes and follow. Ben Johnson I knew, and could tell thee many a tale of our meetings at the Mermaid, where, if there was much wine, there was much wit also. We did not sit blowing tobacco in each other's faces, and turning up the whites of our eyes as we turned up the bottom of the wine-pot. Old Ben adopted me as one of his sons in the muses. I have shown you, have I not, the verses, 'To my much beloved son, the worshipful Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, Knight and Baronet?'"

"I do not remember them at present, sir," replied Alice.

"I fear ye lie, wench," said her father; "but no matter—thou canst not get any more fooling out of me just now. The Evil Spirit hath left Saul for the present. We are now to think what is to be done about leaving Woodstock—or defending it?"

"My dearest father," said Alice, "can you still nourish a moment's hope of making good the place?"

"I know not, wench," replied Sir Henry; "I would fain have a parting blow with them, 'tis certain—and who knows where a blessing may alight? But then, my poor knaves that must take part with me in so hopeless a quarrel—that thought hampers me, I confess."

"Oh, let it do so, sir," replied Alice; "there are soldiers in the town, and there are three regiments at Oxford!"

"Ah, poor Oxford!" exclaimed Sir Henry, whose vacillating state of mind was turned by a word to any new subject that was suggested,—"Seat of learning and loyalty! these rude soldiers are unfit inmates for thy learned halls and poetical bowers; but thy pure and brilliant lamp shall defy the foul breath of a thousand churls, were they to blow at it like Boreas. The burning bush shall not be consumed, even by the heat of this persecution."

"True, sir," said Alice, "and it may not be useless to recollect, that any stirring of the royalists at this unpropitious moment will make them deal yet more harshly with the University, which they consider as being at the bottom of every thing which moves for the King in these parts."

"It is true, wench," replied the knight; "and small cause would make the villains sequestrate the poor remains which the civil wars have left to the colleges. That, and the risk of my poor fellows—Well; thou hast disarmed me, girl. I will be as patient and calm as a martyr."

"Pray God you keep your word, sir!" replied his daughter; "but you are ever so much moved at the sight of any of these men, that"——

"Would you make a child of me, Alice?" said Sir Henry. "Why, know you not that I can look upon a viper, or a toad, or a bunch of engendering adders, without any worse feeling than a little disgust? and though a roundhead, and especially a red-coat, are in my opinion more poisonous than vipers, more loathsome than toads, more hateful than knotted adders, yet can I overcome my nature so far, that should one of them appear at this moment, thyself should see how civilly I would entreat him."

As he spoke, the military preacher abandoned his leafy screen, and, stalking forward, stood unexpectedly before the old cavalier, who stared at him, as if he had thought his expressions had actually raised the devil.

"Who art thou?" at length said Sir Henry, in a mised and angry voice, while his daughter clung to his arm in terror, little confident that her father's pacific resolutions would abide the shock of this unwelcome apparition.

"I am one," replied the soldier, "who neither fear nor shame to call myself a poor day-labourer in the great work of England—umph!—Ay, a simple and sincere upholder of the good old cause."

"And what the devil do you seek here?" said the old knight, fiercely.

"The welcome due to the steward of the Lords Commissioners," answered the soldier.

"Welcome art thou as salt would be to sore eyes," said the cavalier; "but who be your Commissioners, man?"

The soldier with little courtesy held out a scroll, which Sir Henry took from him betwixt his finger and thumb, as if it were a letter from a pest-house; and held it at as much distance from his eyes, as his purpose of reading it would permit. He then read aloud, and as he named the parties one by one, he added a short commentary on each name, addressed, indeed, to Alice, but in such a tone as showed he cared not for its being heard by the soldier.

"*Desborough*—the ploughman Desborough—as grovelling a clown as is in England—a fellow that would be best at home, like an ancient Scythian, under the tilt of a wagon—d—n him. *Harrison*, a bloody-minded, ranting enthusiast, who read the Bible to such purpose, that he never lacked a text to justify a murder—d—n him too. *Bletson*—a true-blue Commonwealth's man, one of Harrison's Rota Club, with his noddle full of newfangled notions about government, the clearest object of which is to establish the tail upon the head; a fellow who leaves you the statutes and law of Old England, to prate of Rome and Greece—sees the Areopagus in Westminster-Hall, and takes old Noll for a Roman Consul—Adad, he is like to prove a dictator amongst them instead. Never mind—d—n Bletson too."

"Friend," said the soldier, "I would willingly be civil, but it consists not with my duty to hear these godly men, in whose service I am, spoken of after this irreverent and unbecoming fashion. And albeit I know that you malignants think you have a righ to make free with that damnation, which you seem to use as your own portion, yet it is superfluous to invoke it against others, who have better hopes in their thoughts, and better words in their mouths."

"Thou art but a canting varlet," replied the knight; "and yet thou art right in some sense—for it is superfluous to curse men who already are damned as black as the smoke of hell itself."

"I prithee forbear," continued the soldier, "for manners' sake, if not for conscience—grisly oaths suit ill with gray beards."

"Nay, that is truth, if the devil spoke it," said the knight; "and I thank Heaven I can follow good counsel, though old Nick gives it. And so, friend, touching these same Commissioners, bear them this message; that Sir Henry Lee is keeper of Woodstock Park, with right of wnif and stray, vert and venison, as complete as any of them have to their estate—that is, if they possess any estate but what they have gained by plundering honest men. Nevertheless, he will give place to those who have made their might their right, and will not expose the lives of good and true men, where the odds are so much against them. And his protests that he makes this surrender, neither as acknowledging of these so termed Commissioners, nor as for his own individual part fearing their force, but purely to avoid the loss of English blood, of which so much hath been spilt in these late times."

"It is well spoken," said the steward of the Commissioners; "and therefore, I pray you, let us walk together into the house, that thou mayst deliver up unto me the vessels, and gold and silver ornaments, belonging unto the Egyptian Pharaoh who committed them to thy keeping."

"What vessels?" exclaimed the fiery old knight; "and belonging to whom? Unbaptized dog, speak civil of the Martyr in my presence, or I will do a deed misbecoming of me on that caitiff corpse of thine!"—And shaking his daughter from his right arm, the old man laid his hand on his rapier.

His antagonist, on the contrary, kept his temper completely, and waving his hand to add impression to his speech, he said, with a calmness which aggravated Sir Henry's wrath. "Nay, good friend, I prithee be still, and brawl not—it becomes not gray hairs and feeble arms to rail and rant like drunkards. Put me not to use the carnal weapon in mine own defence, but listen to the voice of reason. Seest thou not that the Lord hath decided this great controversy in favour of us and ours, against thee and thine? Wherefore render up thy stewardship peacefully, and deliver up to me the chattels of the Man, Charles Stewart."

"Patience is a good nag, but she will bolt," said the knight, unable longer to rein in his wrath. He plucked his sheathed rapier from his side, struck the soldier a

severe blow with it, and instantly drawing it, and throwing the scabbard over the trees, placed himself in a posture of defence, with his sword's point within half a yard of the steward's body. The latter stepped back with activity, threw his long cloak from his shoulders, and drawing his long tuck, stood upon his guard. The swords clashed smartly together, while Alice, in her terror, screamed wildly for assistance. But the combat was of short duration. The old cavalier had attacked a man as cunning of fence as he himself, or a little more so, and possessing all the strength and activity of which time had deprived Sir Henry, and the calmness which the other had lost in his passion. They had scarce exchanged three passes ere the sword of the knight flew up in the air, as if it had gone in search of the scabbard; and, burning with shame and anger, Sir Henry stood disarmed, at the mercy of his antagonist. The republican showed no purpose of abusing his victory; nor did he, either during the combat, or after the victory was won, in any respect alter the sour and grave composure which reigned upon his countenance—a combat of life and death seemed to him a thing as familiar, and as little to be feared, as an ordinary bout with foils.

"Thou art delivered into my hands," he said, "and by the law of arms I might smite thee under the fifth rib, even as Asahel was struck dead by Abner, the son of Ner, as he followed the chase on the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah, in the way of the wilderness of Gibeon; but far be it from me to spill thy remaining drops of blood. True it is, thou art the captive of my sword and of my spear; nevertheless, seeing that there may be a turning from thine evil ways, and a returning to those which are good, if the Lord enlarge thy date for repentance and amendment, wherefore should it be shortened by a poor sinful mortal, who is, speaking truly, but thy fellow worm?"

Sir Henry Lee remained still confused, and unable to answer, when there arrived a fourth person, whom the cries of Alice had summoned to the spot. This was Joceline Joliffe, one of the under-keepers of the walk, who, seeing how matters stood, brandished his quarterstaff, a weapon from which he never parted, and having made it describe the figure of eight in a flourish through the air, would have brought it down with a vengeance upon the head of the steward, had not Sir Henry interposed.

"We must trail bats now, Joceline—our time of shouldering them is past. It skills not striving against the stream—the devil rules the roast, and makes our slaves our tutors."

At this moment another auxiliary rushed out of the thicket to the knight's assistance. It was a large wolf-dog, in strength a mastiff, in form and almost in fleetness a greyhound. Bevis was the noblest of the kind which ever pulled down a stag, tawny-coloured like a lion, with a black muzzle and black feet, just edged with a line of white round the toes. He was as tractable as he was strong and bold. Just as he was about to rush upon the soldier, the words, "Peace, Bevis!" from Sir Henry, converted the lion into a lamb, and, instead of pulling the soldier down, he walked round and round, and snuffed, as if using all his sagacity to discover who the stranger could be, towards whom, though of so questionable an appearance, he was enjoined forbearance. Apparently he was satisfied, for he laid aside his doubtful and threatening demonstrations, lowered his ears, smoothed down his bristles, and wagged his tail.

Sir Henry, who had great respect for the sagacity of his favourite, said in a low voice to Alice, "Bevis is of thy opinion, and counsels submission. There is the finger of Heaven in this to punish the pride, ever the fault of our house.—Friend," he continued, addressing the soldier, "thou hast given the finishing touch to a lesson, which ten years of constant misfortune have been unable fully to teach me. Thou hast distinctly shown me the folly of thinking that a good cause can strengthen a weak arm. God forgive me for the thought, but I could almost turn infidel, and believe that Heaven's blessing goes ever with the *longest sword*; but it will not be always thus. God *knows this time.*—Reach me my Toledo, Joceline, *yonder it lies*; and the scabbard, see where it hangs on the tree.—Do not pull at my cloak, Alice, and look so miserably frightened; I shall be in no hurry to betake me to bright steel again, I promise thee.—For thee, good fellow, I thank thee, and will make way for thy masters without farther dispute or ceremony. Joceline Joliffe is nearer thy degree than I am, and will make surrender to thee of the Lodge and household stuff.—Withhold nothing, Joliffe—let them have all. For me, I will never cross the threshold again—but where to rest for a night? I would trouble no one in Woodstock—hum—ay—it shall be so. Alice and I, Joceline, will go down to thy hut by Rosamond's Well; we will borrow the shelter of thy roof for one night at least; thou wilt give us welcome, wilt thou not?—How now—a clouded brow?"

Joceline certainly looked embarrassed, directed first a glance to Alice, then looked to heaven, then to earth, and last to the four quarters of the horizon, and then murmured out, "Certainly—without question—might he but run down to put the house in order."

"Order enough—order enough—for those that may soon be glad of clean straw in a barn," said the knight; "but if thou hast an ill-will to harbour any obnoxious or malignant persons, as the phrase goes, never shame to speak it out, man. 'Tis true, I took thee up when thou wert but a ragged Robin,* made a keeper of thee, and so forth. What of that? Sailors think no longer of the wind than when it forwards them on the voyage—thy betters turn with the tide, why should not such a poor knave as thou?"

"God pardon your honour for your harsh judgment!" said Joliffe. "The hut is yours, such as it is, and should be were it a king's palace, as I wish it were, even for your honour's sake, and Mistress Alice's—only I could wish your honour would condescend to let me step down before, in case any neighbour be there—or—or—just to put matters something into order for Mistress Alice and your honour—just to make things something seemly and shapely."

"Not a whit necessary," said the knight, while Alice had much trouble in concealing her agitation. "If thy matters are unseemly, they are fitter for a defeated knight—if they are unshapely, why, the liker to the rest of a world, which is all unshaped. Go thou with that man.—What is thy name, friend?"

"Joseph Tomkins is my name in the flesh," said the Steward. "Men call me honest Joe, and Trusty Tomkins."

"If thou hast deserved such names, considering what trade thou hast driven, thou art a jewel indeed," said the knight; "yet if thou hast not, never blush for the matter, Joseph, for if thou art not in truth honest, thou hast all the better chance to keep the fame of it—the title and the thing itself have long walked separate ways. Farewell to thee,—and farewell to fair Woodstock!"

So saying, the old knight turned round, and, pulling his daughter's arm through his own, they walked onward into the forest, in the same manner in which they were introduced to the reader.

CHAPTER III.

Now, ye wild blades, that make loose inns your stage,
To vapour forth the acts of this sad age,
Stout Edgehill fight, the Newberries and the West,
And northern clashes, where you still fought best;
Your strange escapes, your dangers void of fear,
When bullets flew between the head and ear,
Whether you fought by Damme or the Spirit,
Of you I speak.

Legend of Captain Jones.

JOSEPH TOMKINS and Joliffe the keeper remained for some time in silence, as they stood together looking along the path in which the figures of the Knight of Ditchley and pretty Mistress Alice had disappeared behind the trees. They then gazed on each other in doubt, as men who scarce knew whether they stood on hostile or on friendly terms together, and were at a loss how to open a conversation. They heard the knight's whistle summon Bevis; but though the good hound turned his head and pricked his ears at the

* The keeper's followers in the New Forest are called in popular language ragged Robbins.

sound, yet he did not obey the call, but continued to snuff around Joseph Tomkins's cloak.

"Thou art a rare one, I fear me," said the keeper, looking to his new acquaintance. "I have heard of men who have charms to steal both dogs and deer."

"Trouble not thyself about my qualities, friend," said Joseph Tomkins, "but bethink thee of doing thy master's bidding."

Joceline did not immediately answer, but at length, as if in sign of truce, stuck the end of his quarterstaff upright in the ground, and leant upon it as he said gruffly,—"So, my tough old knight and you were at drawn bilbo, by way of afternoon service, sir preacher —Well for you I came not up till the blades were done jingling, or I had rung even-song upon your pate."

The Independent smiled grimly as he replied, "Nay, friend, it is well for thyself, for never should sexton have been better paid for the knell he tolled. Nevertheless, why should there be war betwixt us, or my hand be against thee? Thou art but a poor knave, doing thy master's order, nor have I any desire that my own blood or thine should be shed touching this matter. Thou art, I understand, to give me peaceful possession of the Palace of Woodstock, so called—though there is now no palace in England, no, nor shall be in the days that come after, until we shall enter the palace of the New Jerusalem, and the reign of the Saints shall commence on earth."

"Pretty well begun already, friend Tomkins," said the keeper; "you are little short of being kings already upon the matter as it now stands; and for your Jerusalem I wot not, but Woodstock is a pretty nest-egg to begin with.—Well, will you shog—will you on —will you take sasine and livery?—you heard my orders."

"Umph—I know not," said Tomkins. "I must beware of ambuscades, and I am alone here. Moreover it is the High Thanksgiving appointed by Parliament, and owned to by the army—also the old man and the young woman may want to recover some of their clothes and personal property, and I would not that they were balked on my account. Wherefore, if thou wilt deliver me possession to-morrow morning, it shall be done in personal presence of my own followers, and of the Presbyterian man the Mayor, so that the transfer may be made before witnesses; whereas, were there none with us but thou to deliver, and I to take possession, the men of Belial might say, Go to, Trusty Tomkins hath been an Edomite—Honest Joe hath been as an Ishmaelite, rising up early and dividing the spoil with them that served the Man —yea, they that wore beards and green jerkins, as in remembrance of the Man and of his government."

Joceline fixed his keen dark eyes upon the soldier as he spoke, as if in design to discover whether there was fair play in his mind or not. He then applied his five fingers to scratch a large shock head of hair, as if that operation was necessary to enable him to come to a conclusion. "This is all fair sounding, brother," said he; "but I tell you plainly, there are some silver mugs, and platters, and flagons, and so forth, in yonder house, which have survived the general sweep that sent all our plate to the smelting-pot, to put our knight's troop on horseback. Now, if thou takest not these off my hand, I may come to trouble, since it may be thought I have minished their numbers.—Whereas, I being as honest a fellow"——

"As ever stole venison," said Tomkins—"nay, I do owe thee an interruption."

"Go to, then," replied the keeper; "if a stag may have come to mischance in my walk, it was no way in the course of dishonesty, but merely to keep my old dame's pan from rusting; but for silver porringers, tankards, and such like, I would as soon have drunk the melted silver, as stolen the vessel made out of it. So that I would not wish blame or suspicion fell on me in this matter. And therefore, if you will have the things rendered even now,—why so—and if not, hold me blameless."

"Ay, truly?" said Tomkins; "and who is to hold me blameless, if they should see cause to think any thing minished? Not the right worshipful Commissioners, *to whom the property of the estate* is as their own; therefore, as thou say'st, we must walk warily in the matter. To lock up the house and leave it, were but the work of simple ones. What say'st thou to spend the night there, and then nothing can be touched without the knowledge of us both?"

"Why, concerning that," answered the keeper, "I should be at my hut to make matters somewhat conformable for the old knight and Mistress Alice, for my old dame Joan is something dunny, and will scarce know how to manage—and yet, to speak the truth, by the mass I would rather not see Sir Henry to-night, since what has happened to-day hath roused his spleen, and it is a peradventure he may have met something at the hut which will scarce tend to cool it."

"It is a pity," said Tomkins, "that, being a gentleman of such grave and goodly presence, he should be such a malignant cavalier, and that he should, like the rest of that generation of vipers, have clothed himself with curses as with a garment."

"Which is as much as to say, the tough old knight hath a habit of swearing," said the keeper, grinning at a pun, which has been repeated since his time; "but who can help it? it comes of use and wont. Were you now, in your bodily self, to light suddenly on a Maypole, with all the blithe morris-dancers prancing around it to the merry pipe and tabor, with bells jingling, ribands fluttering, lads frisking and laughing, lasses leaping till you might see where the scarlet garter fastened the light-blue hose, I think some feeling, resembling either natural sociality, or old use and wont, would get the better, friend, even of thy gravity, and thou wouldst fling thy cuckoldy steeple-hat one way, and that blood-thirsty long sword another, and trip, like the noodles of Hogs-Norton, when the pigs play on the organ."

The Independent turned fiercely round on the keeper, and replied, "How now, Mr. Green Jerkin? what language is this to one whose hand is at the plough? I advise thee to put curb on thy tongue, lest thy ribs pay the forfeit."

"Nay, do not take the high tone with me, brother," answered Joceline; "remember thou hast not the old knight of sixty-five to deal with, but a fellow as bitter and prompt as thyself—it may be a little more so younger, at all events—and prithee, why shouldst thou take such umbrage at a Maypole? I would thou hadst known one Phil Hazeldine of these parts —He was the best morris-dancer betwixt Oxford and Burford."

"The more shame to him," answered the Independent; "and I trust he has seen the error of his ways, and made himself (as, if a man of action, he easily might) fit for better company than woodhunters, deer-stealers, Maid Marions, swash-bucklers, deboshed revellers, bloody brawlers, maskers and mummers, lewd men and light women, fools and fiddlers, and carnal self-pleasers of every description."

"Well," replied the keeper, "you are out of breath in time; for here we stand before the famous Maypole of Woodstock."

They paused in an open space of meadow-land, beautifully skirted by large oaks and sycamores, one of which, as king of the forest, stood a little detached from the rest, as if scorning the vicinity of any rival. It was scathed and gnarled in the branches, but the immense trunk still showed to what gigantic size the monarch of the forest can attain in the groves of merry England.

"That is called the King's oak," said Joceline; "the oldest men of Woodstock know not how old it is; they say Henry used to sit under it with fair Rosamond, and see the lasses dance, and the lads of the village run races, and wrestle for belts or bonnets."

"I nothing doubt it, friend," said Tomkins; "a tyrant and a harlot were fitting patron and patroness for such vanities."

"Thou mayst say thy say, friend," replied the keeper, "so thou lettest me say mine. There stands the Maypole, as thou seest, half a flight-shot from the King's Oak in the midst of the meadow. The King gave ten shillings from the customs of Woodstock to make a new one yearly, besides a tree fitted for the purpose out of the forest. Now it is warped, and

withered, and twisted, like a wasted brier-rod. The groom, too, used to be close-shaved, and rolled till it was smooth as a velvet mantle—now it is rough and overgrown."

"Well, well, friend Joceline," said the Independent, "but where was the edification of all this—what use of doctrine could be derived from a pipe and tabor? or was there ever aught like wisdom in a bag-pipe?"

"You may ask better scholars that," said Joceline; "but methinks men cannot be always grave and with the hat over their brow. A young maiden will laugh as a tender flower will blow—ay, and a lad will like her the better for it; just as the same blithe Spring that makes the young birds whistle, bids the blithe fawns skip. There have come worse days since the jolly old times have gone by:—I tell thee, that in the holydays which you, Mr. Longsword, have put down, I have seen this greensward alive with merry maidens and manly fellows. The good old rector himself thought it was no sin to come for a while and look on, and his goodly cassock and scarf kept us all in good order, and taught us to limit our mirth within the bounds of discretion. We might, it may be, crack a broad jest, or pledge a friendly cup a turn too often, but it was in mirth and good neighbourhood—Ay, and if there was a bout at single-stick, or a belly-ful of boxing, it was all for love and kindness; and better a few dry blows in drink, than the bloody doings we have had in sober earnest, since the presbyter's cap got above the bishop's mitre, and we exchanged our goodly rectors and learned doctors, whose sermons were all bolstered up with as much Greek and Latin as might have confounded the devil himself, for weavers and cobblers, and such other pulpit volunteers, as—as we heard this morning—It will out."

"Well, friend," said the Independent, with patience, scarcely to have been expected, "I quarrel not with thee for nauseating my doctrine. If thine ear is so much tickled with tabor tunes and morris tripping, truly it is not likely thou shouldst find pleasant savour in more wholesome and sober food.—But let us to the Lodge, that we may go about our business there before the sun sets."

"Troth, and that may be advisable for more reasons than one," said the keeper; "for there have been tales about the Lodge which have made men afeard to harbour there after nightfall."

"Were not yon old knight, and yonder damsel his daughter, wont to dwell there?" said the Independent. "My information said so."

"Ay, truly did they," said Joceline; "and while they kept a jolly household, all went well enough; for nothing banishes fear like good ale. But after the best of our men went to the wars, and were slain at Naseby fight, they who were left found the Lodge more lonesome, and the old knight has been much deserted of his servants:—marry, it might be, that he has lacked silver of late to pay groom and lackey."

"A potential reason for the diminution of a household," said the soldier.

"Right, sir, even so," replied the keeper. "They spoke of steps in the great gallery, heard by dead of the night, and voices that whispered at noon in the matted chambers; and the servants pretended that these things scared them away; but in my poor judgment, when Martinmas and Whitsuntide came round without a penny-fee, the old blue-bottles of serving-men began to think of creeping elsewhere before the frost chilled them—No devil so frightful as that which dances in the pocket where there is no cross to keep him out.

"You were reduced, then, to a petty household?" said the Independent.

"Ay, marry, were we," said Joceline; "but we kept some half-score together, what with blue-bottles in the Lodge, what with green caterpillars of the chase, like him who is yours to command; we stuck together till we found a call to take a morning's ride somewhere or other."

"*To the town of* Worcester," said the soldier, *where you were crushed* like vermin and palmer worms, *as you are?*"

"You may say your pleasure," replied the keeper; "I'll never contradict a man who has got my head under his belt. Our backs are at the wall, or you would not be here."

"Nay, friend," said the Independent, "thou riskest nothing by thy freedom and trust in me. I can be *bon camarado* to a good soldier, although I have striven with him even to the going down of the sun.—But here we are in front of the Lodge."

They stood accordingly in front of the old Gothic building, irregularly constructed, and at different times, as the humour of the English monarchs led them to taste the pleasures of Woodstock Chase, and to make such improvements for their own accommodation as the increasing luxury of each age required. The oldest part of the structure had been named by tradition Fair Rosamond's Tower; it was a small turret of great height, with narrow windows, and walls of massive thickness. The tower had no opening to the ground, or means of descending, a great part of the lower portion being solid mason-work. It was traditionally said to have been accessible only by a sort of small drawbridge, which might be dropped at pleasure from a little portal near the summit of the turret, to the battlements of another tower of the same construction, but twenty feet lower, and containing only a winding staircase, called in Woodstock Love's Ladder; because it is said, that by ascending this staircase to the top of the tower, and then making use of the drawbridge, Henry obtained access to the chamber of his paramour.

This tradition had been keenly impugned by Dr. Rochecliffe, the former rector of Woodstock, who insisted, that what was called Rosamond's Tower, was merely an interior keep, or citadel, to which the lord or warden of the castle might retreat, when other points of safety failed him; and either protract his defence, or at the worst, stipulate for reasonable terms of surrender. The people of Woodstock, jealous of their ancient traditions, did not relish this new mode of explaining them away; and it is even said, that the Mayor, whom we have already introduced, became Presbyterian in revenge of the doubts cast by the rector upon this important subject, rather choosing to give up the Liturgy than his fixed belief in Rosamond's Tower, and Love's Ladder.

The rest of the Lodge was of considerable extent, and of different ages; comprehending a nest of little courts, surrounded by buildings which corresponded with each other, sometimes within-doors, sometimes by crossing the courts, and frequently in both ways. The different heights of the buildings announced that they could only be connected by the usual variety of staircases, which exercised the limbs of our ancestors in the sixteenth and earlier centuries, and seem sometimes to have been contrived for no other purpose.

The varied and multiplied fronts of this irregular building were, as Dr. Rochecliffe was wont to say, an absolute banquet to the architectural antiquary, as they certainly contained specimens of every style which existed, from the pure Norman of Henry of Anjou, down to the composite, half Gothic half classical architecture of Elizabeth and her successor. Accordingly, the rector was himself as much enamoured of Woodstock as ever was Henry of Fair Rosamond; and as his intimacy with Sir Henry Lee permitted him entrance at all times to the Royal Lodge, he used to spend whole days in wandering about the antique apartments, examining, measuring, studying, and finding out excellent reasons for architectural peculiarities, which probably only owed their existence to the freakish fancy of a Gothic artist. But the old antiquarian had been expelled from his living by the intolerance and troubles of the times, and his successor, Nehemiah Holdenough, would have considered an elaborate investigation of the profane sculpture and architecture of blinded and blood-thirsty Papists, together with the history of the dissolute amours of old Norman monarchs, as little better than a bowing down before the calves of Bethel, and a drinking of the cup of abominations.—We return to the course of our story.

"There is," said the Independent Tomkins, after he had carefully perused the front of the building, "many a rare monument of olden wickedness about his miscalled Royal Lodge; verily, I shall rejoice much to see the same destroyed, yea, burned to ashes, and the ashes thrown into the brook Kedron, or any other brook, that the land may be cleansed from the memory thereof, neither remember the iniquity with which their fathers have sinned."

The keeper heard him with secret indignation, and began to consider with himself, whether, as they stood but one to one, and without chance of speedy interference, he was not called upon, by his official duty, to castigate the rebel who used language so defamatory. But he fortunately recollected, that the strife must be a doubtful one—that the advantage of arms was against him—and that, in especial, even if he should succeed in the combat, it would be at the risk of severe retaliation. It must be owned, too, that there was something about the Independent so dark and mysterious, so grim and grave, that the more open spirit of the keeper felt oppressed, and, if not overawed, at least kept in doubt concerning him; and he thought it wisest, as well as safest, for his master and himself, to avoid all subjects of dispute, and know better with whom he was dealing, before he made either friend or enemy of him.

The great gate of the Lodge was strongly bolted, but the wicket opened on Joceline's raising the latch. There was a short passage of ten feet, which had been formerly closed by a portcullis at the inner end, while three loopholes opened on either side, through which any daring intruder might be annoyed, who, having surprised the first gate, must be thus exposed to a severe fire before he could force the second. But the machinery of the portcullis was damaged, and it now remained a fixture, brandishing its jaw, well furnished with iron fangs, but incapable of dropping it across the path of invasion.

The way, therefore, lay open to the great hall or outer vestibule of the Lodge. One end of this long and dusky apartment was entirely occupied by a gallery, which had in ancient times served to accommodate the musicians and minstrels. There was a clumsy staircase at either side of it, composed of entire logs of a foot square; and in each angle of the ascent was placed, by way of sentinel, the figure of a Norman foot-soldier, having an open casque on his head, which displayed features as stern as the painter's genius could devise. Their arms were buff-jackets, or shirts of mail, round bucklers, with spikes in the centre, and buskins which adorned and defended the feet and ankles, but left the knees bare. These wooden warders held great swords, or maces, in their hands, like military guards on duty. Many an empty hook and brace, along the walls of the gloomy apartment, marked the spots from which arms, long preserved as trophies, had been, in the pressure of the war, once more taken down to do service in the field, like veterans whom extremity of danger recalls to battle. On other rusty fastenings were still displayed the hunting trophies of the monarchs to whom the Lodge belonged, and of the silvan knights to whose care it had been from time to time confided.

At the nether end of the hall, a huge, heavy, stone-wrought chimney-piece projected itself ten feet from the wall, adorned with many a cipher, and many a cutcheon of the Royal House of England. In its present state, it yawned like the arched mouth of a funeral vault, or perhaps might be compared to the crater of an extinguished volcano. But the sable complexion of the massive stone-work, and all around it, showed that the time had been when it sent its huge fires blazing up the huge chimney, besides puffing many a volume of smoke over the heads of the jovial guests, whose royalty or nobility did not render them sensitive enough to quarrel with such slight inconvenience. On these occasions, it was the tradition of the house, that two cart-loads of wood was the regular allowance for the fire between noon and curfew, and the andirons, or dogs, as they were termed, constructed for retaining the blazing firewood on the earth, were wrought in the shape of lions of such gigantic size, as might well warrant the legend. There were long seats of stone within the chimney, where, in despite of the tremendous heat, monarchs were sometimes said to have taken their station, and amused themselves with broiling the *umbles*, or *doucets*, of the deer, upon the glowing embers, with their own royal hands, when happy the courtier who was invited to taste the royal cookery. Tradition was here also ready with her record, to show what merry gibes, such as might be exchanged between prince and peer, had flown about at the jolly banquet which followed the Michaelmas hunt. She could tell, too, exactly, where King Stephen sat when he darned his own princely hose, and knew most of the old tricks he had put upon little Winkin, the tailor of Woodstock.

Most of this rude revelry belonged to the Plantagenet times. When the house of Tudor acceded to the throne, they were more chary of their royal presence, and feasted in halls and chambers far within, abandoning the outmost hall to the yeomen of the guard, who mounted their watch there, and passed away the night with wassail and mirth, exchanged sometimes for frightful tales of apparitions and sorceries, which made some of those grow pale, in whose ears the trumpet of a French foeman would have sounded as jollily as a summons to the woodland chase.

Joceline pointed out the peculiarities of the place to his gloomy companion more briefly than we have detailed them to the reader. The Independent seemed to listen with some interest at first, but, flinging it suddenly aside, he said, in a solemn tone, "Perish, Babylon, as thy master Nebuchadnezzar hath perished! He is a wanderer, and thou shalt be a waste place—yea, and a wilderness—yea, a desert of salt, in which there shall be thirst and famine."

"There is like to be enough of both to-night," said Joceline, "unless the good knight's larder be somewhat fuller than it is wont."

"We must care for the creature comforts," said the Independent, "but in due season, when our duties are done.—Whither lead these entrances?"

"That to the right," replied the keeper, "leads to what are called the state-apartments, not used since the year sixteen hundred and thirty-nine, when his blessed Majesty"——

"How, sir!" interrupted the Independent, in a voice of thunder, "dost thou speak of Charles Stewart as blessing, or blessed?—beware the proclamation to that effect."

"I meant no harm," answered the keeper, suppressing his disposition to make a harsher reply, "My business is with bolts and bucks, not with titles and state affairs. But yet, whatever may have happed since, that poor King was followed with blessings enough from Woodstock; for he left a glove full of broad pieces for the poor of the place"——

"Peace, friend," said the Independent; "I will think thee else one of those besotted and blinded Papists, who hold, that bestowing of alms is an atonement and washing away of the wrongs and oppressions which have been wrought by the almsgiver. Thou sayest, then, these were the apartments of Charles Stewart?"

"And of his father, James, before him, and Elizabeth, before *him*, and bluff King Henry, who builded that wing, before them all."

"And there, I suppose, the knight and his daughter dwelt?"

"No," replied Joceline; "Sir Henry Lee had too much reverence for—for things which are now thought worth no reverence at all—Besides, the state-rooms are unaired, and in indifferent order, since, of late years. The Knight Ranger's apartment lies by that passage to the left."

"And whither goes yonder stair, which seems both to lead upwards and downwards?"

"Upwards," replied the keeper, "it leads to many apartments, used for various purposes, of sleeping, and other accommodation. Downwards, to the kitchen, offices and vaults of the castle, which, at this time of the evening, you cannot see without lights."

"We will to the apartments of your knight, then,

said the Independent. "Is there fitting accommodation there?"

"Such as has served a person of condition, whose lodging is now worse appointed," answered the honest keeper, his bile rising so fast that he added, in a muttering and inaudible tone, "so it may well serve a crop-eared knave like thee."

He acted as the usher, however, and led on towards the ranger's apartments.

This suite opened by a short passage from the hall, secured at time of need by two oaken doors, which could be fastened by large bars of the same, that were drawn out of the wall, and entered into square holes, contrived for their reception on the other side of the portal. At the end of this passage, a small anteroom received them, into which opened the sitting apartment of the good knight—which, in the style of the times, might have been termed a fair summer parlour—lighted by two oriel windows, so placed as to command each of them a separate avenue, leading distant and deep into the forest. The principal ornament of the apartment, besides two or three family portraits of less interest, was a tall full-length picture, that hung above the chimney-piece, which, like that in the hall, was of heavy stone-work, ornamented with carved scutcheons, emblazoned with various devices. The portrait was that of a man about fifty years of age, in complete plate armour, and painted in the harsh and dry manner of Holbein—probably, indeed, the work of that artist, as the dates corresponded. The formal and marked angles, points, and projections of the armour, were a good subject for the harsh pencil of that early school. The face of the knight was, from the fading of the colours, pale and dim, like that of some being from the other world, yet the lines expressed forcibly pride and exultation.

He pointed with his leading-staff, or truncheon, to the background, where, in such perspective as the artist possessed, were depicted the remains of a burning church, or monastery, and four or five soldiers, in red cassocks, bearing away in triumph what seemed a brazen font or laver. Above their heads might be traced in scroll, "*Lee victor sic voluit.*" Right opposite to the picture, hung, in a niche in the wall, a complete set of tilting armour, the black and gold colours, and ornaments of which, exactly corresponded with those exhibited in the portrait.

The picture was one of those which, from something marked in the features and expression, attract the observation even of those who are ignorant of art. The Independent looked at it until a smile passed transiently over his clouded brow. Whether he smiled to see the grim old cavalier employed in desecrating a religious house—(an occupation much conforming to the practice of his own sect)—whether he smiled in contempt of the old painter's harsh and dry mode of working—or whether the sight of this remarkable portrait revived some other ideas, the under-keeper could not decide.

The smile passed away in an instant, as the soldier looked to the oriel windows. The recesses within them were raised a step or two from the wall. In one was placed a walnut-tree reading-desk, and a huge stuffed arm-chair, covered with Spanish leather. A little cabinet stood beside, with some of its shuttles and drawers open, displaying hawk-bells, dog-whistles, instruments for trimming falcon's feathers, bridle-bits of various constructions, and other trifles connected with silvan sport.

The other little recess was differently furnished. There lay some articles of needle work on a small table, beside a lute, with a book having some airs written down in it, and a frame for working embroidery. Some tapestry was displayed around the recess, with more attention to ornament than was visible in the rest of the apartment; the arrangement of a few bow-pots, with such flowers as the fading season afforded, showed also the superintendence of female taste.

Tomkins cast an eye of careless regard upon these *subjects of female occupation*, then stepped into the *farther window, and began* to turn the leaves of a *folio, which lay open on the reading-desk*, apparently with some interest. Joceline, who had determined to watch his motions without interfering with them, was standing at some distance in dejected silence, when a door behind the tapestry suddenly opened, and a pretty village maid tripped out with a napkin in her hand, as if she had been about some house hold duty.

"How now, Sir Impudence?" she said to Joceline, in a smart tone; "what do you here prowling about the apartments when the master is not at home?"

But instead of the answer which perhaps she expected, Joceline Joliffe cast a mournful glance towards the soldier in the oriel window, as if to make what he said fully intelligible, and replied with a dejected appearance and voice, "Alack, my pretty Phœbe, there come those here that have more right or might than any of us, and will use little ceremony in coming when they will, and staying while they please."

He darted another glance at Tomkins, who still seemed busy with the book before him, then sidled close to the astonished girl, who had continued looking alternately at the keeper and at the stranger, as if she had been unable to understand the words of the first, or to comprehend the meaning of the second being present.

"Go," whispered Joliffe, approaching his mouth so near her cheek, that his breath waved the curls of her hair; "go, my dearest Phœbe, trip it as fast as a fawn down to my lodge—I will soon be there, and"——

"Your lodge, indeed!" said Phœbe; "you are very bold, for a poor killbuck that never frightened any thing before save a dun deer—*Your* lodge, indeed!—I am like to go there, I think."

"Hush, hush! Phœbe—here is no time for jesting. Down to my hut, I say, like a deer, for the knight and Mrs. Alice are both there, and I fear will not return hither again.—All's naught, girl—and our evil days are come at last with a vengeance—we are fairly at bay and fairly hunted down."

"Can this be, Joceline?" said the poor girl, turning to the keeper with an expression of fright in her countenance, which she had hitherto averted in rural coquetry.

"As sure, my dearest Phœbe, as"——

The rest of the asseveration was lost in Phœbe's ear, so closely did the keeper's lips approach it; and if they approached so very near as to touch her cheek, grief, like impatience, hath its privileges, and poor Phœbe had enough of serious alarm to prevent her from demurring upon such a trifle.

But no trifle was the approach of Joceline's lips to Phœbe's pretty though sunburnt cheek, in the estimation of the Independent, who, a little before the object of Joceline's vigilance, had been more lately in his turn the observer of the keeper's demeanour, so soon as the interview between Phœbe and him had become so interesting. And when he remarked the closeness of Joceline's argument, he raised his voice to a pitch of harshness that would have rivalled that of an ungreased and rusty saw, and which at once made Joceline and Phœbe spring six feet apart, each in contrary directions, and if Cupid was of the party, must have sent him out at the window like a wild-duck flying from a culverin. Instantly throwing himself into the attitude of a preacher and a reprover of vice, "How now!" he exclaimed, "shameless and impudent as you are!—What—chambering and wantoning in our very presence!—How—would you play your pranks before the steward of the Commissioners of the High Court of Parliament, as ye would in a booth at the fulsome fair, or amidst the trappings and tracings of a profane dancing-school, where the scoundrel minstrels make their ungodly weapons to squeak, 'Kiss and be kind, the fiddler's blind?'—But here," he said, dealing a perilous thump upon the volume—"Here is the King and high priest of those vices and follies!—Here is he, whom men of folly profanely call nature's miracle!—Here is he, whom princes choose for their cabinet-keeper, and whom maids of honour take for their bedfellow!—Here is the prime teacher of fine words, fingers

and folly—Here!"—(dealing another thump upon the volume—and oh! revered of the Roxburghe, it was the first folio—beloved of the Bannatyne, it was Hemmings and Condel—it was the *editio princeps*,) —"On thee," he continued—"on thee, William Shakspeare, I charge whate'er of such lawless idleness and immodest folly hath defiled the land since thy day!"

"By the mass, a heavy accusation," said Joceline, the bold recklessness of whose temper could not be long overawed; "Odds pithikins, is our master's old favourite, Will of Stratford, to answer for every buss that has been snatched since James's time?—a perilous reckoning truly—but I wonder who is sponsible for what lads and lasses did before his day?"

"Scoff not," said the soldier, "lest I, being called thereto by the voice within me, do deal with thee as a scorner. Verily I say, that since the devil fell from Heaven, he never lacked agents on earth; yet no where hath he met with a wizard having such infinite power over men's souls as this pestilent fellow Shakspeare. Seeks a wife a foul example for adultery, here she shall find it—Would a man know how to train his fellow to be a murderer, here shall he find tutoring—Would a lady marry a heathen negro, she shall have chronicled example for it—Would any one scorn at his Maker, he shall be furnished with a jest in this book—Would he defy his brother in the flesh, he shall be accommodated with a challenge—Would you be drunk, Shakspeare will cheer you with a cup —Would you plunge in sensual pleasures, he will soothe you to indulgence, as with the lascivious sounds of a lute. This, I say, this book is the well head and source of all those evils which have overrun the land like a torrent, making men scoffers, doubters, deniers, murderers, makebates, and lovers of the wine-pot, haunting unclean places, and sitting long at the evening-wine. Away with him, away with him, men of England! to Tophet with his wicked book, and to the vale of Hinnom with his accursed bones! Verily but that our march was hasty when we passed Stratford, in the year 1643, with Sir William Waller; but that our march was hasty"———

"Because Prince Rupert was after you with his cavaliers," muttered the incorrigible Joceline.

"I say," continued the zealous trooper, raising his voice and extending his arm—"but that our march was by command hasty, and that we turned not aside in our riding, closing our ranks each one upon the other as becomes men of war, I had torn on that day the bones of that preceptor of vice and debauchery from the grave, and given them to the next dunghill. I would have made his memory a scoff and a hissing!"

"That is the bitterest thing he has said yet," observed the keeper. "Poor Will would have liked the hissing worse than all the rest."

"Will the gentleman say any more?" inquired Phœbe in a whisper. "Lack-a-day, he talks brave words, if one knew but what they meant. But it is a mercy our good knight did not see him ruffle the book at that rate—Mercy on us, there would certainly have been bloodshed.—But oh the father—see how he is twisting his face about!"—Is he ill of the colic, think'st thou, Joceline? Or, may I offer him a glass of strong waters?"

"Hark thee hither, wench!" said the keeper, "he is but loading his blunderbuss for another volley; and while he turns up his eyes, and twists about his face, and clences his fist, and shuffles and tramples with his feet in that fashion, he is bound to take no notice of any thing. I would be sworn to cut his purse, if he had one, from his side, without his feeling it."

"La! Joceline," said Phœbe, "and if he abides here in this turn of times, I dare say the gentleman will be easily served."

"Care not thou about that," said Joliffe; "but tell me softly and hastily, what is in the pantry?"

"Small housekeeping enough," said Phœbe; "a cold capon and some comfits, and the great standing venison pasty, with plenty of spice—a manchet or two besides, and that is all."

"Well, it will serve for a pinch—wrap thy cloak round thy comely body—get a basket and a brace of trenchers and towels, they are heinously impoverished down yonder—carry down the capon and the manchets—the pasty must abide with this same soldier and me, and the pie-crust will serve us for bread."

"Rarely," said Phœbe; "I made the pasty myself —it is as thick as the walls of Fair Rosamond's Tower."

"Which two pairs of jaws would be long in gnawing through, work hard as they might," said the keeper. "But what liquor is there?"

"Only a bottle of Alicant, and one of sack, with the stone jug of strong waters," answered Phœbe.

"Put the wine-flasks into thy basket," said Joceline, "the knight must not lack his evening draught—and down with thee to the hut like a lapwing. There is enough for supper, and to-morrow is a new day.—Ha! by heaven I thought yonder man's eye watched us—No—he only rolled it round him in a brown study —Deep enough doubtless, as they all are.—But d—n him, he must be bottomless if I cannot sound him before the night's out.—Hie thee away, Phœbe."

But Phœbe was a rural coquette, and, aware that Joceline's situation gave him no advantage of avenging the challenge in a fitting way, she whispered in his ear, "Do you think our knight's friend, Shakspeare, really found out all these naughty devices the gentleman spoke of?"

Off she darted while she spoke, while Joliffe menaced future vengeance with his finger, as he muttered, "Go thy way, Phœbe Mayflower, the lightest-footed and lightest-hearted wench that ever tripped the sod in Woodstock-park!—After her, Bevis, and bring her safe to our master at the hut."

The large greyhound arose like a human servitor who had received an order, and followed Phœbe through the hall, first licking her hand to make her sensible of his presence, and then putting himself to a slow trot, so as best to accommodate himself to the light pace of her whom he convoyed, whom Joceline had not extolled for her activity without due reason. While Phœbe and her guardian thread the forest glades, we return to the Lodge.

The Independent now seemed to start as if from a reverie. "Is the young woman gone?" said he.

"Ay, marry is she," said the keeper; "and if your worship hath farther commands, you must rest contented with male attendance."

"Commands—umph—I think the damsel might have tarried for another exhortation," said the soldier—"truly, I profess my mind was much inclined toward her for her edification."

"Oh, sir," replied Joliffe, "she will be at church next Sunday, and if your military reverence is pleased again to hold forth amongst us, she will have use of the doctrine with the rest. But young maidens of these parts hear no private homilies.—And what is now your pleasure? Will you look at the other rooms, and at the few plate articles which have been left?"

"Umph—no," said the Independent—"it wears late, and gets dark—thou hast the means of giving us beds, friend?"

"Better you never slept in," replied the keeper.

"And wood for a fire, and a light, and some small pittance of creature-comforts for refreshment of the outward man?" continued the soldier.

"Without doubt," replied the keeper, displaying a prudent anxiety to gratify this important personage.

In a few minutes a great standing candlestick was placed on an oaken table. The mighty venison pasty, adorned with parsley, was placed on the board on a clean napkin; the stone bottle of strong waters with a blackjack full of ale, formed comfortable appendages; and to this meal sat down in social manner the soldier occupying a great elbow-chair, and the keeper, at his invitation, using the more lowly accommodation of a stool, at the opposite side of the table. Thus agreeably employed, our history leaves them for the present.

CHAPTER IV.

——— Yon path of greensward
Winds round by sparry grot and gay pavilion;
There is no flint to gall thy tender foot,
There's ready shelter from each breeze, or shower.
But duty guides not that way—see her stand,
With wand entwined with amaranth, near yon cliffs.
Oft where she leads thy blood must mark thy footsteps,
Oft where she leads thy head must bear the storm,
And thy shrunk form endure heat, cold, and hunger;
But she will guide thee up to noble heights,
Which he who gains seems native of the sky,
While earthly things lie stretch'd beneath his feet,
Diminish'd, shrunk, and valueless— *Anonymous.*

The reader cannot have forgotten that after his scuffle with the commonwealth soldier, Sir Henry Lee, with his daughter Alice, had departed to take refuge in the hut of the stout keeper Joceline Joliffe. They walked slow, as before, for the old knight was at once oppressed by perceiving these last vestiges of royalty fall into the hands of republicans, and by the recollection of his recent defeat. At times he paused, and, with his arms folded on his bosom, recalled all the circumstances attending his expulsion from a house so long his home. It seemed to him that, like the champions of romance of whom he had sometimes read, he himself was retiring from the post which it was his duty to guard, defeated by a Paynim knight, for whom the adventure had been reserved by fate. Alice had her own painful subjects of recollection, nor had the tenor of her last conversation with her father been so pleasant as to make her anxious to renew it until his temper should be more composed; for with an excellent disposition, and much love to his daughter, age and misfortunes, which of late came thicker and thicker, had given to the good knight's passions a wayward irritability unknown to his better days. His daughter, and one or two attached servants, who still followed his decayed fortunes, soothed his frailty as much as possible, and pitied him even while they suffered under its effects.

It was a long time ere he spoke, and then he referred to an incident already noticed. "It is strange," he said, "that Bevis should have followed Joceline and that fellow rather than me."

"Assure yourself, sir," replied Alice, "that his sagacity saw in this man a stranger, whom he thought himself obliged to watch circumspectly, and therefore he remained with Joceline."

"Not so, Alice," answered Sir Henry; "he leaves me because my fortunes have fled from me. There is a feeling in nature, affecting even the instinct, as it is called, of dumb animals, which teaches them to fly from misfortune. The very deer there will butt a sick or wounded buck from the herd; hurt a dog, and the whole kennel will fall on him and worry him; fishes devour their own kind when they are wounded with a spear; cut a crow's wing, or break its leg, the others will buffet it to death."

"That may be true of the more irrational kinds of animals among each other," said Alice, "for their whole life is well nigh a warfare; but the dog leaves his own race to attach himself to ours; forsakes, for his master, the company, food, and pleasure of his own kind; and surely the fidelity of such a devoted and voluntary servant as Bevis hath been in particular, ought not to be lightly suspected."

"I am not angry with the dog, Alice; I am only sorry," replied her father. "I have read, in faithful chronicles, that when Richard II. and Henry of Bolingbroke were at Berkeley Castle, a dog of the same kind deserted the King, whom he had always attended upon, and attached himself to Henry, whom he then saw for the first time. Richard foretold, from the desertion of his favourite, his approaching deposition.* The dog was afterwards kept at Woodstock, and Bevis is said to be of his breed, which was heedfully kept up. What I might foretell of mischief from his desertion, I cannot guess, but my mind assures me it bodes no good."

There was a distant rustling among the withered leaves, a bouncing or galloping sound on the path, and the favourite dog instantly joined his master.

"*Come into court, old* knave," said Alice, cheerfully, "*and defend thy character*, which is well nigh endangered by this absence." But the dog only paid her courtesy by gambolling around them, and instantly plunged back again, as fast as he could scamper.

"How now, knave?" said the knight; "thou art too well trained, surely, to take up the chase without orders?" A minute more showed them Phœbe Mayflower approaching, her light pace so little impeded by the burden which she bore, that she joined her master and young mistress just as they arrived at the keeper's hut, which was the boundary of their journey. Bevis, who had shot a-head to pay his compliments to Sir Henry his master, had returned again to his immediate duty, the escorting Phœbe and her cargo of provisions. The whole party stood presently assembled before the door of the keeper's hut.

In better times, a substantial stone habitation, fit for the yeoman-keeper of a royal walk, had adorned this place. A fair spring gushed out near the spot, and once traversed yards and courts, attached to well-built and convenient kennels and mews. But in some of the skirmishes which were common during the civil wars, this little silvan dwelling had been attacked and defended, stormed and burnt. A neighbouring squire, of the Parliament side of the question, took advantage of Sir Henry Lee's absence, who was then in Charles's camp, and of the decay of the royal cause, and had, without scruple, carried off the hewn stones, and such building materials as the fire left unconsumed, and repaired his own manor-house with them. The yeoman-keeper, therefore, our friend Joceline, had constructed, for his own accommodation, and that of the old woman he called his dame, a wattled hut, such as his own labour, with that of a neighbour or two, had erected in the course of a few days. The walls were plastered with clay, whitewashed, and covered with vines and other creeping plants; the roof was neatly thatched, and the whole, though merely a hut, had, by the neat-handed Joliffe, been so arranged as not to disgrace the condition of the dweller.

The knight advanced to the entrance; but the ingenuity of the architect, for want of a better lock to the door, which itself was but of wattles curiously twisted, had contrived a mode of securing the latch on the inside with a pin, which prevented it from rising; and in this manner it was at present fastened. Conceiving that this was some precaution of Joliffe's old housekeeper, of whose deafness they were all aware, Sir Henry raised his voice to demand admittance, but in vain. Irritated at this delay, he pressed the door at once with foot and hand, in a way which the frail barrier was unable to resist; it gave way accordingly, and the knight thus forcibly entered the kitchen, or outward apartment, of his servant. In the midst of the floor, and with a posture which indicated embarrassment, stood a youthful stranger, in a riding-suit.

"This may be my last act of authority here," said the knight, seizing the stranger by the collar, "but I am still Ranger of Woodstock for this night at least —Who, or what art thou?"

The stranger dropped the riding-mantle in which his face was muffled, and at the same time fell on one knee.

"Your poor kinsman, Markham Everard," he said, "who came hither for your sake, although he fears you will scarce make him welcome for his own."

Sir Henry started back, but recovered himself in an instant, as one who recollected that he had a part of dignity to perform. He stood erect, therefore, and replied, with considerable assumption of stately ceremony:

"Fair kinsman, it pleases me that you are come to Woodstock upon the very first night that, for many years which have past, is likely to promise you a worthy or a welcome reception."

"Now God grant it be so, that I rightly hear and duly understand you!" said the young man; while Alice, though she was silent, kept her looks fixed on her father's face, as if desirous to know whether his meaning was kind towards his nephew, which her knowledge of his character inclined her greatly to doubt.

The knight mean while darted a sardonic look, from

* *The story occurs, I think,* in Froissart's Chronicles.

on his nephew, then on his daughter, and proceeded —"I need not, I presume, inform Mr. Markham Everard, that it cannot be our purpose to entertain him, or even to offer him a seat in this poor hut."

"I will attend you most willingly to the Lodge," said the young gentleman. "I had, indeed, judged you were already there for the evening, and feared to intrude upon you. But if you would permit me, my dearest uncle, to escort my kinswoman and you back to the Lodge, believe me, amongst all which you have so often done of good and kind, you never conferred benefit that will be so dearly prized."

"You mistake me greatly, Mr. Markham Everard," replied the knight. "It is not our purpose to return to the Lodge to-night, nor, by Our Lady, to-morrow neither. I meant but to intimate to you in all courtesy, that at Woodstock Lodge you will find those for whom you are fitting society, and who, doubtless, will afford you a willing welcome; which I, sir, in this my present retreat, do not presume to offer to a person of your consequence."

"For Heaven's sake," said the young man, turning to Alice, "tell me how I am to understand language so mysterious!"

Alice, to prevent his increasing the restrained anger of her father, compelled herself to answer, though it was with difficulty, "We are expelled from the Lodge by soldiers."

"Expelled—by soldiers!" exclaimed Everard, in surprise—"there is no legal warrant for this."

"None at all," answered the knight, in the same tone of cutting irony which he had all along used, "and yet as lawful a warrant, as for aught that has been wrought in England this twelvemonth and more. You are, I think, or were, an Inns-of-Court-man—marry, sir, your enjoyment of your profession is like that lease which a prodigal wishes to have of a wealthy widow. You have already survived the law which you studied, and its expiry doubtless has not been without a legacy—some decent pickings, some merciful increases, as the phrase goes. You have deserved it two ways—you wore buff and bandoleer, as well as wielded pen and ink—I have not heard if you held forth too."

"Think of me and speak of me as harshly as you will, sir," said Everard, submissively. "I have but, in this evil time, guided myself by my conscience, and my father's commands."

"O, an you talk of conscience," said the old knight, "I must have mine eye upon you, as Hamlet says. Never yet did Puritan cheat so grossly as when he was appealing to his conscience; and as for thy *father*"——

He was about to proceed in a tone of the same invective, when the young man interrupted him, by saying, in a firm tone, "Sir Henry Lee, you have ever been thought noble—Say of me what you will, but speak not of my father what the ear of a son should not endure, and which yet his arm cannot resent. To do me such wrong is to insult an unarmed man, or to beat a captive."

Sir Henry paused, as if struck by the remark. "Thou hast spoken truth in that, Mark, wert thou the blackest Puritan whom hell ever vomited, to distract an unhappy country."

"Be that as you will to think it," replied Everard; "but let me not leave you to the shelter of this wretched hovel. The night is drawing to storm—let me but conduct you to the Lodge, and expel those intruders, who can, as yet at least, have no warrant for what they do. I will not linger a moment behind them, save just to deliver my father's message.—Grant me but this much, for the love you once bore me!"

"Yes, Mark," answered his uncle, firmly, but sorrowfully, "thou speakest truth—I did love thee once. The bright-haired boy whom I taught to ride, to shoot, to hunt—whose hours of happiness were spent with me, wherever those of graver labours were employed—I did love that boy—ay, and I am weak enough to love even the memory of what he was.—But he is gone, Mark—he is gone; and in his room I only behold an avowed and determined rebel to his religion and to his *King—a rebel more detestable* on account of his success, the more infamous through the plundered wealth with which he hopes to gild his villany.—But I am poor, thou think'st, and should hold my peace, lest men say, 'Speak, sirrah, when you should.'—Know, however, that, indigent and plundered as I am, I feel myself dishonoured in holding even but this much talk with the tool of usurping rebels.—Go to the Lodge, if thou wilt—yonder lies the way—but think not that, to regain my dwelling there, or all the wealth I ever possessed in my wealthiest days, I would willingly accompany thee three steps on the greensward. If I must be thy companion, it shall be only when thy red-coats have tied my hands behind me, and bound my legs beneath my horse's belly. Thou mayst be my fellow traveller then, I grant thee, if thou wilt, but not sooner."

Alice, who suffered cruelly during this dialogue, and was well aware that further argument would only kindle the knight's resentment still more highly, ventured at last, in her anxiety, to make a sign to her cousin to break off the interview, and to retire, since her father commanded his absence in a manner so peremptory. Unhappily she was observed by Sir Henry, who, concluding that what he saw was evidence of a private understanding betwixt the cousins, his wrath acquired new fuel, and it required the utmost exertion of self-command, and recollection of all that was due to his own dignity, to enable him to veil his real fury under the same ironical manner which he had adopted at the beginning of this angry interview.

"If thou art afraid," he said, "to trace our forest glades by night, respected stranger, to whom I am perhaps bound to do honour as my successor in the charge of these walks, here seems to be a modest damsel, who will be most willing to wait on thee, and be thy bow-bearer.—Only, for her mother's sake, let there pass some slight form of marriage between you—Ye need no license or priest in these happy days, but may be buckled like beggars in a ditch, with a hedge for a church-roof, and a tinker for a priest. I crave pardon of you for making such an officious and simple request—perhaps you are a Ranter—or one of the family of Love, or hold marriage rights as unnecessary, as Knipperdoling, or Jack of Leyden?"

"For mercy's sake, forbear such dreadful jesting, my father! and do you, Markham, begone, in God's name, and leave us to our fate—Your presence makes my father rave."

"Jesting!" said Sir Henry, "I was never more serious—Raving!—I was never more composed—I could never brook that falsehood should approach me—I would no more bear by my side a dishonoured daughter than a dishonoured sword; and this unhappy day hath shown that both can fail."

"Sir Henry," said young Everard, "load not your soul with a heavy crime, which be assured you do, in treating your daughter thus unjustly. It is long now since you denied her to me, when we were poor and you were powerful. I acquiesced in your prohibition of all suit and intercourse. God knoweth what I suffered—but I acquiesced. Neither is it to renew my suit that I now come hither, and have, I do acknowledge, sought speech of her—not for her own sake only, but for yours also. Destruction hovers over you, ready to close her pinions to stoop, and her talons to clutch—Yes, sir, look contemptuous as you will, such is the case! and it is to protect both you and her that I am here."

"You refuse then my free gift," said Sir Henry Lee; "or perhaps you think it loaded with too hard conditions?"

"Shame, shame on you, Sir Henry!" said Everard, waxing warm in his turn; "have your political prejudices so utterly warped every feeling of a father, that you can speak with bitter mockery and scorn of what concerns your own daughter's honour?—Hold up your head, fair Alice, and tell your father he has forgotten nature in his fantastic spirit of loyalty.—Know, Sir Henry, that though I would prefer your daughter's hand to every blessing which Heaven could bestow on me, I would not accept it—my conscience would not permit me to do so—when I knew it must withdraw her from her duty to you."

"Your conscience a over scrupulous, young man!—

carry it to some dissenting rabbi, and he who takes all that comes to net, will teach thee it is sinning against our mercies to refuse any good thing that is freely offered to us."

"When it is freely offered, and kindly offered—not when the offer is made in irony and insult.—Fare thee well, Alice—if aught could make me desire to profit by thy father's wild wish to cast thee from him in a moment of unworthy suspicion, it would be that while indulging in such sentiments, Sir Henry Lee is tyrannically oppressing the creature, who of all others is most dependent on his kindness—who of all others will most feel his severity, and whom, of all others, he is most bound to cherish and support."

"Do not fear for me, Mr. Everard," exclaimed Alice, aroused from her timidity by a dread of the consequences not unlikely to ensue, where civil war set relations, as well as fellow citizens, in opposition to each other. "Oh, begone, I conjure you, begone!—Nothing stands betwixt me and my father's kindness, but these unhappy family divisions—but your ill-timed presence here—For Heaven's sake, leave us!"

"Soh, mistress!" answered the hot old cavalier, "you play lady paramount already; and who but you! you would dictate to our train, I warrant, like Goneril and Regan! But I tell thee, no man shall leave my house—and humble as it is, *this* is now my house—while he has aught to say to me that is to be spoken, as this young man now speaks, with a bent brow and a lofty tone.—Speak out, sir, and say your worst!"

"Fear not my temper, Mrs. Alice," said Everard, with equal firmness and placidity of manner; "and you, Sir Henry, do not think that if I speak firmly, I mean therefore to speak in anger, or officiously. You have taxed me with much, and, were I guided by the wild spirit of romantic chivalry, much which, even from so near a relative, I ought not, as being by birth, and in the world's estimation, a gentleman, to pass over without reply. Is it your pleasure to give me [illegible]"

"If you stand on your defence," answered the stout old knight, "[illegible] that you should not challenge a [illegible] were two [illegible]"

"[illegible] Sir Henry [illegible]

[illegible]

as if ashamed of the tenderness which had mingled with his accents, the young commonwealth's-man turned and walked sternly and resolvedly forth into the moonlight, which now was spreading its broad light and autumnal shadows over the woodland.

So soon as he departed, Alice, who had been during the whole scene in the utmost terror that her father might have been hurried, by his natural heat of temper, from violence of language into violence of action, sunk down upon a settle twisted out of willow-boughs, like most of Joceline's few movables, and endeavoured to conceal the tears which accompanied the thanks she rendered in broken accents to Heaven, that notwithstanding the near alliance and relationship of the parties, some fatal deed had not closed an interview so perilous and so angry. Phœbe Mayflower blubbered heartily for company, though she understood but little of what had passed; just, indeed enough to enable her afterwards to report to some half-dozen particular friends, that her old master Sir Henry, had been perilous angry, and almost fought with young Master Everard, because he had well nigh carried away her young mistress.—"And what could he have done better?" said Phœbe, "seeing the old man had nothing left either for Mrs. Alice or himself; and as for Mr. Mark Everard, and our young lady, oh! they had spoken such loving things to each other, as are not to be found in the history of Argalus and Parthenia, who, as the story-book tells, were the truest pair of lovers in all Arcadia, and Oxfordshire to boot."

Old Goody Jellycot had popped her scarlet hood into the kitchen more than once while the scene was proceeding; but, as the worthy dame was [illegible] and more than parcel deaf, knowledge was [illegible] by two principal entrances; and though she comprehended, by a sort of general instinct, that the gentlefolk were at high words, yet why they [illegible] but for the scene of their dispute was as [illegible] tery as the subject of the quarrel.

But what was the state of the old cavalier's [illegible] thus contradicted, as his most [illegible] been, by the last words of his [illegible] The truth is that he was less [illegible] his daughter expected; and in all [illegible] phew's bold defence of his religious [illegible] [illegible] than aggravated [illegible] Although [illegible] impatient of [illegible] evasion and subterfuge were more [illegible] old Ranger's nature than [illegible]

[illegible]

"Mark," he said, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

to comprehend the extent of her distress, could afford her material assistance, in lack of mere sympathy.

With great readiness and address, the damsel set about every thing that was requisite for preparing the supper, and the beds; now screaming into Dame Jellycot's ear, now whispering into her mistress's, and artfully managing, as if she was merely the agent, under Alice's orders. When the cold viands were set forth, Sir Henry Lee kindly pressed his daughter to take refreshments, as if to make up, indirectly, for his previous harshness towards her; while he himself, like an experienced campaigner, showed, that neither the mortifications nor brawls of the day, nor the thoughts of what was to come to-morrow, could diminish his appetite for supper, which was his favourite meal. He ate up two-thirds of the capon, and, devoting the first bumper to the happy restoration of Charles, second of the name, he finished a quart of wine; for he belonged to a school accustomed to feed the flame of their loyalty with copious brimmers. He even sang a verse of "The King shall enjoy his own again," in which Phœbe, half-sobbing, and Dame Jellycot, screaming against time and tune, were contented to lend their aid, to cover Mistress Alice's silence.

At length the jovial knight betook himself to his rest on the keeper's straw pallet, in a recess adjoining to the kitchen, and, unaffected by his change of dwelling, slept fast and deep. Alice had less quiet rest in old Goody Jellicot's wicker couch, in the inner apartment; while the dame and Phœbe slept on a mattrass, stuffed with dry leaves, in the same chamber, soundly as those whose daily toil gains their daily bread, and whom morning calls up only to renew the toils of yesterday.

CHAPTER V.

> My tongue pads slowly under this new language,
> And starts and stumbles at these uncouth phrases.
> They may be great in worth and weight, but hang
> Upon the native glibness of my speech,
> Like Saul's plate-armour on the shepherd boy,
> Encumbering and not arming him.—J. B.

As Markham Everard pursued his way towards the Lodge, through one of the long sweeping glades which traversed the forest, varying in breadth, till the trees were now so close that the boughs made darkness over his head, then receding farther to let in glimpses of the moon, and anon opening yet wider into little meadows or savannahs, on which the moonbeams lay in silvery silence; as he thus proceeded on his lonely course, the various effects produced by that delicious light on the oaks, whose dark leaves, gnarled branches, and massive trunks it gilded, more or less partially, might have drawn the attention of a poet or a painter.

But if Everard thought of any thing saving the painful scene in which he had just played his part, and of which the result seemed the destruction of all his hopes, it was of the necessary guard to be observed in his night-walk. The times were dangerous and unsettled; the ronds full of disbanded soldiers, and especially of royalists, who made their political opinions a pretext for disturbing the country with marauding parties and robberies. Deer-stealers also, who are ever a desperate banditti, had of late infested Woodstock Chase. In short, the dangers of the place and period were such, that Markham Everard wore his loaded pistols at his belt, and carried his drawn sword under his arm, that he might be prepared for whatever peril should cross his path.

He heard the bells of Woodstock Church ring curfew, just as he was crossing one of the little meadows we have described, and they ceased as he entered an overshadowed and twilight part of the path beyond. It was there that he heard some one whistling; and, as the sound became clearer, it was plain the person was advancing towards him. This could hardly be a friend; for the party to which he belonged rejected, generally speaking, all music, unless psalmody. "If a man is *merry, let him sing psalms*," was a text *which they were pleased to interpret* as literally and to as little purpose as they did some others; yet it was too continued a sound to be a signal amongst night-walkers, and too light and cheerful to argue any purpose of concealment on the part of the traveller, who presently exchanged his whistling for singing and trolled forth the following stanza to a jolly tune, with which the old cavaliers were wont to wake the night owl:

> Hey for cavaliers! Ho for cavaliers!
> Pray for cavaliers!
> Rub a dub—rub a dub!
> Have at old Beelzebub—
> Oliver smokes for fear.

"I should know that voice," said Everard, uncocking the pistol which he had drawn from his belt, but continuing to hold it in his hand. Then came another fragment:

> Hash them—slash them—
> All to pieces dash them.

"So ho!" cried Markham, "who goes there, and for whom?"

"For Church and King," answered a voice, which presently added, "No, d—n me—I mean *against* Church and King, and for the people that are uppermost—I forget which they are."

"Roger Wildrake, as I guess?" said Everard.

"The same—Gentleman; of Squattlesea-mere, in the moist county of Lincoln."

"Wildrake!" said Markham—"Wildgoose you should be called. You have been moistening your own throat to some purpose, and using it to gabble tunes very suitable to the times, to be sure!"

"Faith, the tune's a pretty tune enough, Mark, only out of fashion a little—the more's the pity."

"What could I expect," said Everard, but to meet some ranting, drunken cavalier, as desperate and dangerous as night and sack usually make them? What if I had rewarded your melody by a ball in the gullet?"

"Why, there would have been a piper paid—that's all," said Wildrake.—"But wherefore come you this way now?—I was about to seek you at the hut."

"I have been obliged to leave it—I will tell you the cause hereafter," replied Markham.

"What! the old play-hunting cavalier was cross, or Chloe was unkind?"

"Jest not, Wildrake—it is all over with me," said Everard.

"The devil it is," exclaimed Wildrake, "and you take it thus quietly!—Zounds! let us back together—I'll plead your cause for you—I know how to tickle up an old knight and a pretty maiden—Let me alone for putting you *rectus in curia*, you canting rogue.—D—n me, Sir Henry Lee, says I, your nephew is a piece of a Puritan—it won't deny—but I'll uphold him a gentleman and a pretty fellow, for all that.—Madam, says I, you may think your cousin looks like a psalm-singing weaver, in that bare felt, and with that rascally brown cloak; that band, which looks like a baby's clout, and those loose boots, which have a whole calf-skin in each of them,—but let him wear on the one side of his head a castor, with a plume befitting his quality; give him a good Toledo by his side, with a broidered belt and an inlaid hilt, instead of the ton of iron contained in that basket-hilted black Andrew Ferrara; put a few smart words in his mouth—and, blood and wounds! madam, says I"——

"Prithee, truce with this nonsense, Wildrake," said Everard, "and tell me if you are sober enough to hear a few words of sober reason?"

"Pshaw! man, I did but crack a brace of quarts with yonder puritanic, roundheaded soldiers, up yonder at the town; and rat me but I passed myself for the best man of the party; twanged my nose, and turned up my eyes, as I took my can—Pah! the very wine tasted of hypocrisy. I think the rogue corporal smoked something at last—as for the common fellows, never stir, but they asked me to say grace over another quart!"

"This is just what I wished to speak with you about, Wildrake," said Markham—"You hold me, I am sure, for your friend?"

"True as steel.—Chums at College and at Lincoln's-Inn—we have been Nisus and Euryalus, Theseus

scus and Pirithous, Orestes and Pylades; and, to sum up the whole with a puritanic touch, David and Jonathan, all in one breath. Not even politics, the wedge that rends families and friendships asunder, as iron rives oak, have been able to split us."

"True," answered Markham; "and when you followed the King to Nottingham; and I enrolled under Essex, we swore, at our parting, that which ever side was victorious, he of us who adhered to it, should protect his less fortunate comrade."

"Surely, man, surely; and have you not protected me accordingly? Did you not save me from hanging? and am I not indebted to you for the bread I eat?"

"I have but done that, which, had the times been otherwise, you, my dear Wildrake, would, I am sure, have done for me. But, as I said, that is just what I wished to speak to you about. Why render the task of protecting you more difficult than it must necessarily be at any rate? Why thrust thyself into the company of soldiers, or such like, where thou art sure to be warmed into betraying thyself? Why come hollowing and whooping out cavalier ditties, like a drunken trooper of Prince Rupert, or one of Wilmot's swaggering body-guards?"

"Because I may have been both one and t'other in my day, for aught that you know," replied Wildrake. "But, oddsfish! is it necessary I should always be reminding you, that our obligation of mutual protection, our league of offensive and defensive, as I may call it, was to be carried into effect without reference to the politics or religion of the party protected, or the least obligation on him to conform to those of his friend?"

"True," said Everard; "but with this most necessary qualification, that the party should submit to such outward conformity to the times as should make it more easy and safe for his friend to be of service to him. Now, you are perpetually breaking forth, to the hazard of your own safety and my credit."

"I tell you, Mark, and I would tell your namesake the apostle, that you are hard on me. You have practised sobriety and hypocrisy from your hanging sleeves till your Geneva cassock—from the cradle to this day,—and it is a thing of nature to you; and you are surprised that a rough, rattling, honest fellow, accustomed to speak truth all his life, and especially when he found it at the bottom of a flask, cannot be so perfect a prig as thyself!—Zooks! there is no equality betwixt us—A trained diver might as well, because he can retain his breath for ten minutes without inconvenience, upbraid a poor devil for being like to burst in twenty seconds, at the bottom of ten fathoms' water—And, after all, considering the guise is so new to me, I think I bear myself indifferently well—try me!"

"Are there any more news from Worcester fight?" asked Everard, in a tone so serious that it imposed on his companion, who replied in his genuine character—

"Worse!—d—n me, worse a hundred times than reported—totally broken. Noll hath certainly sold himself to the devil, and his lease will have an end one day—that is all our present comfort."

"What! and would this be your answer to the first red-coat who asked the question?" said Everard. "Methinks you would find a speedy passport to the next corps de garde."

"Nay, nay," answered Wildrake, "I thought you asked me in your own person.—Lack-a-day! a great mercy—a glorifying mercy—a crowning mercy—a vouchsafing—an uplifting I profess the malignants are scattered from Dan to Bersheba—smitten, hip and thigh, even until the going down of the sun!"

"Hear you aught of Colonel Thornhaugh's wounds?"

"He is dead,' answered Wildrake, "that's one comfort—the roundheaded rascal!—Nay, hold! it was but a trip of the tongue—I meant, the sweet godly youth."

"And hear you aught of the young man, King of Scotland, as they call him?" said Everard.

'*Nothing, but that he is* hunted like a partridge on *the mountains. May God* deliver him, and confound *his enemies!*'—*Zooms.* Mark Everard, can fool it no longer. Do you not remember, that at the Lincoln's-Inn gambols—though you did not mingle much in them, I think—I used always to play as well as any of them, when it came to the action, but they could never get me to rehearse conformably. It's the same at this day. I hear your voice, and I answer to it in the true tone of my heart; but when I am in the company of your snuffling friends, you have seen me act my part indifferent well."

"But indifferent, indeed," replied Everard; "however, there is little call on you to do aught, save to be modest and silent. Speak little, and lay aside, if you can, your big oaths and swaggering looks—set your hat even on your brows."

"Ay, that is the curse! I have been always noted for the jaunty manner in which I wear my castor—Hard when a man's merits become his enemies!"

"You must remember you are my clerk."

"Secretary," answered Wildrake; "let it be secretary, if you love me."

"It must be clerk, and nothing else—plain clerk—and remember to be civil and obedient," replied Everard.

"But you should not lay on your commands with so much ostentatious superiority, Master Markham Everard. Remember I am your senior of three years' standing. Confound me, if I know how to take it!"

"Was ever such a fantastic wronghead!—For my sake, if not for thine own, bend thy freakish folly to listen to reason. Think that I have incurred both risk and shame on thy account."

"Nay, thou art a right good fellow, Mark," replied the cavalier, "and for thy sake I will do much—but remember to cough, and cry hem! when thou seest me like to break bounds—And now tell me whither we are bound for the night?"

"To Woodstock Lodge, to look after my uncle's property," answered Markham Everard: "I am informed that soldiers have taken possession—Yet how could that be, if thou foundest the party drinking in Woodstock?"

"There was a kind of commissary or steward, or some such rogue, had gone down to the Lodge," replied Wildrake; "I had a peep at him."

"Indeed!" replied Everard.

"Ay, verily," said Wildrake, "to speak your own language. Why, as I passed through the park in quest of you, scarce half an hour since, I saw a light in the Lodge—Step this way, you will see it yourself."

"In the north-west angle?" returned Everard—"It is from a window in what they call Victor Lee's apartment."

"Well," resumed Wildrake, "I had been long one of Lundsford's lads, and well used to patrolling duty—So, rat me, says I, if I leave a light in my rear, without knowing what it means. Besides, Mark, thou hadst said so much to me of thy pretty cousin, I thought I might as well have a peep, if I could."

"Thoughtless, incorrigible man! to what dangers do you expose yourself and your friends, in mere wantonness!—But go on."

"By this fair moonshine, I believe thou art jealous, Mark Everard!" replied his gay companion; "there is no occasion; for, in any case, I, who was to see the lady, was steeled by honour against the charms of my friend's Chloe—Then the lady was not to see me, so could make no comparisons to thy disadvantage, thou knowest—Lastly, as it fell out, neither of us saw the other at all."

"Of that I am well aware. Mrs. Alice left the Lodge long before sunset, and never returned. What *did* thou see to introduce with such preface?"

"Nay, no great matter," replied Wildrake; "only getting upon a sort of buttress, (for I can climb like any cat that ever mewed in any gutter,) and holding on by the vines and creepers which grew around, I obtained a station where I could see into the inside of that same parlour thou spokest of just now."

"And what saw'st thou there?" once more demanded Everard.

"Nay no great matter, as I said before," replied

the cavalier; "for in these times it is no new thing to see churls carousing in royal or noble chambers. I saw two rascallions engaged in emptying a solemn stoup of strong waters, and despatching a huge venison pasty, which greasy mess, for their convenience, they had placed on a lady's work-table—One of them was trying an air on a lute."

"The profane villains!" exclaimed Everard, "it was Alice's."

"Well said, comrade—I am glad your phlegm can be moved. I did but throw in these incidents of the lute and the table, to try if it were possible to get a spark of human spirit out of you, be-sanctified as you are."

"What like were the men?" said young Everard.

"The one a slouch-hatted, long-cloaked, sour-faced fanatic, like the rest of you, whom I took to be the steward or commissary I heard spoken of in the town; the other was a short sturdy fellow, with a wood-knife at his girdle, and a long quarterstaff lying beside him—a black-haired knave, with white teeth and a merry countenance—one of the under-rangers or bow-bearers of these walks, I fancy."

"They must have been Desborough's favourite, trusty Tomkins," said Everard, "and Joceline Joliffe, the keeper. Tomkins is Desborough's right hand—an Independent, and hath pourings forth, as he calls them. Some think that his gifts have the better of his grace. I have heard of his abusing opportunities."

"They were improving them when I saw them," replied Wildrake, "and made the bottle smoke for it—when, as the devil would have it, a stone, which had been dislodged from the crumbling buttress, gave way under my weight. A clumsy fellow like thee would have been so long thinking what was to be done, that he must needs have followed it before he could make up his mind; but I, Mark, I hopped like a squirrel to an ivy twig, and stood fast—was well nigh shot, though, for the noise alarmed them both. They looked to the oriel, and saw me on the outside; the fanatic fellow took out a pistol—as they have always such texts in readiness hanging beside the little clasped Bible, thou know'st—the keeper seized his hunting-pole—I treated them both to a roar and a grin—thou must know I can grimace like a baboon—I learned the trick from a French player, who could twist his jaws into a pair of nut-crackers—and therewithal I dropped myself sweetly on the grass, and ran off so rippingly, keeping the dark side of the wall as long as I could, that I am well nigh persuaded they thought I was their kinsman, the devil, came among them uncalled. They were abominably startled."

"Thou art most fearfully rash, Wildrake," said his companion; "we are now bound for the house—what if they should remember thee?"

"Why, it is no treason, is it? No one has paid for peeping since Tom of Coventry's days; and if he came in for a reckoning, belike it was for a better treat than mine. But trust me, they will no more know me, than a man who had only seen your friend Noll at a conventicle of saints, would know the same Oliver on horseback, and charging with his lobster-tailed squadron; or the same Noll cracking a jest and a bottle with wicked Waller the poet."

"Hush! not a word of Oliver, as thou dost value thyself and me. It is ill jesting with the rock you may split on.—But here is the gate—we will disturb these honest gentlemen's recreations."

As he spoke, he applied the large and ponderous knocker to the hall door.

"Rat-tat-tat-too!" said Wildrake; "there is a fine alarm to you cuckolds and roundheads!" He then half-mimicked, half-sung the march so called:—

> "Cuckolds, come dig, cuckolds, come dig;
> Round about cuckolds, come dance to my jig!"

"By Heaven! this passes midsummer frenzy," said Everard, turning angrily on him.

"Not a bit, not a bit," replied Wildrake; "it is but a slight expectoration, just like what one makes before beginning a long speech. I will be grave for an hour together, now I have got that point of war out of my head."

As he spoke, steps were heard in the hall, and the wicket of the great door was partly opened, but secured with a chain in case of accidents. The visage of Tomkins, and that of Joceline beneath it, appeared at the chink, illuminated by the lamp which the latter held in his hand, and Tomkins demanded the meaning of this alarm.

"I demand instant admittance!" said Everard. "Joliffe, you know me well?"

"I do, sir," replied Joceline, "and could admit you with all my heart; but, alas! sir, you see I am not key-keeper. Here is the gentleman whose warrant I must walk by—The Lord help me, seeing times are such as they be!"

"And when that gentleman, who I think may be Master Desborough's valet" ——

"His honour's unworthy secretary, an it please you," interposed Tomkins; while Wildrake whispered in Everard's ear, "I will be no longer secretary. Mark, thou wert quite right—the clerk must be the more gentlemanly calling."

"And if you are Master Desborough's secretary, I presume you know me and my condition well enough," said Everard, addressing the Independent, "not to hesitate to admit me and my attendant to a night's quarters in the Lodge?"

"Surely not, surely not," said the Independent—"that is, if your worship thinks you would be better accommodated here than up at the house of entertainment in the town, which men unprofitably call Saint George's Inn. There is but confined accommodation here, your honour—and we have been frayed out of our lives already by the visitation of Satan—albeit his fiery dart is now quenched."

"This may be all well in its place, Sir Secretary," said Everard; "and you may find a corner for it when you are next tempted to play the preacher. But I will take it for no apology for keeping me here in the cold harvest wind; and if not presently received, and suitably too, I will report you to your master for insolence in your office."

The secretary of Desborough did not dare offer farther opposition; for it is well known that Desborough himself only held his consequence as a kinsman of Cromwell; and the Lord General, who was well nigh paramount already, was known to be strongly favourable both to the elder and younger Everard. It is true, they were Presbyterians and he an Independent; and that, though sharing those sentiments of correct morality and more devoted religious feeling, by which, with few exceptions, the Parliamentarian party were distinguished, the Everards were not disposed to carry these attributes to the extreme of enthusiasm, practised by so many others at the time. Yet it was well known that whatever might be Cromwell's own religious creed, he was not uniformly bounden by it in the choice of his favourites, but extended his countenance to those who could serve him, even although, according to the phrase of the time, they came out of the darkness of Egypt. The character of the elder Everard stood very high for wisdom and sagacity; besides, being of a good family and competent fortune, his adherence would lend a dignity to any side he might espouse. Then his son had been a distinguished and successful soldier, remarkable for the discipline he maintained among his men, the bravery which he showed in the time of action, and the humanity with which he was always ready to qualify the consequences of victory. Such men were not to be neglected, when many signs combined to show that the parties in the state, who had successfully accomplished the deposition and death of the king, were speedily to quarrel among themselves about the division of the spoils. The two Everards were therefore much courted by Cromwell, and their influence with him was supposed to be so great, that trusty Master Secretary Tomkins cared not to expose himself to risk, by contending with Colonel Everard for such a trifle as a night's lodging, or a greater thing.

Joceline was active on his side—more lights were obtained—more wood thrown on the fire—and the two newly-arrived strangers were introduced into Victor Lee's parlour, as it was called, from the pic-

ture over the chimney-piece, which we have already described. It was several minutes ere Colonel Everard could recover his general stoicism of deportment, so strongly was he impressed by finding himself in the apartment, under whose roof he had passed so many of the happiest hours of his life. There was the cabinet, which he had seen opened with such feelings of delight when Sir Henry Lee deigned to give him instructions in fishing, and to exhibit hooks and lines, together with all the materials for making the artificial fly, then little known. There hung the ancient family picture, which, from some odd mysterious expressions of his uncle relating to it, had become to his boyhood, nay, his early youth, a subject of curiosity and of fear. He remembered how, when left alone in the apartment, the searching eye of the old warrior seemed always bent upon his, in whatever part of the room he placed himself, and how his childish imagination was perturbed at a phenomenon, for which he could not account.

With these came a thousand dearer and warmer recollections of his early attachment to his pretty cousin Alice, when he assisted her at her lessons, brought water for her flowers, or accompanied her while she sung; and he remembered that while her father looked at them with a good-humoured and careless smile, he had once heard him mutter, "And if it should turn out so—why it might be best for both," and the theories of happiness he had reared on these words. All these visions had been dispelled by the trumpet of war, which called Sir Henry Lee and himself to opposite sides; and the transactions of this very day had shown, that even Everard's success as a soldier and a statesman seemed absolutely to prohibit the chance of their being revived.

He was waked out of this unpleasing reverie by the approach of Joceline, who, being possibly a seasoned toper, had made the additional arrangements with more expedition and accuracy, than could have been expected from a person engaged as he had been since nightfall.

He now wished to know the Colonel's directions for the night.

"Would he eat any thing?"

"No."

"Did his honour choose to accept Sir Henry Lee's bed, which was ready prepared?"

"Yes."

"That of Mistress Alice Lee should be prepared for the Secretary."

"On pain of thine ears—No," replied Everard.

"Where then was the worthy Secretary to be quartered?"

"In the dog-kennel, if you list," replied Colonel Everard; "but," added he, stepping to the sleeping apartment of Alice, which opened from the parlour, locking it, and taking out the key, "no one shall profane this chamber."

"Had his honour any other commands for the night?"

"None save to clear the apartment of yonder man.—My clerk will remain with me—I have orders which must be written out.—Yet stay—Thou gavest my letter this morning to Mistress Alice?"

"I did."

"Tell me, good Joceline, what she said when she received it?"

"She seemed much concerned, sir; and indeed I think that she wept a little—but indeed she seemed very much distressed."

"And what message did she send to me?"

"None, may it please your honour—She began to say, 'Tell my cousin Everard that I will communicate my uncle's kind purpose to my father, if I can get fitting opportunity—but that I greatly fear'—and there checked herself, as it were, and said, 'I will write to my cousin; and as it may be late ere I have an opportunity of speaking with my father, do thou come for my answer after service.'—So I went to church myself, to while away the time; but when I returned to the Chase, I found this man had summoned my master to surrender, and, right or wrong, *I must put him in possession* of the Lodge. I would *fain have given your honour* a hint that the old knight and my young mistress were like to take you on the form, but I could not mend the matter."

"Thou hast done well, good fellow, and I will remember thee.—And now, my masters," he said, advancing to the brace of clerks or secretaries, who had in the mean while sat quietly down beside the stone bottle, and made up acquaintance over a glass of its contents—"Let me remind you, that the night wears late."

"There is something cries tinkle, tinkle, in the bottle yet," said Wildrake, in reply.

"Hem! hem! hem!" coughed the Colonel of the Parliament service; and if his lips did not curse his companion's imprudence, I will not answer for what arose in his heart.—"Well!" he said, observing that Wildrake had filled his own glass and Tomkins's, "take that parting glass and begone."

"Would you not be pleased to hear first," said Wildrake, "how this honest gentleman saw the devil to-night look through a pane of yonder window, and how he thinks he had a mighty strong resemblance to your worship's humble slave and varlet scribbler? Would you but hear this, sir, and just sip a glass of this very recommendable strong waters?"

"I will drink none, sir," said Colonel Everard sternly; "and I have to tell *you*, that you have drunken a glass too much already.—Mr. Tomkins, sir, I wish you good-night."

"A word in season at parting," said Tomkins, standing up behind the long leathern back of a chair, hemming and snuffling as if preparing for an exhortation.

"Excuse me, sir," replied Markham Everard; "you are not now sufficiently yourself to guide the devotion of others."

"Wo be to them that reject!" said the Secretary of the Commissioners, stalking out of the room—the rest was lost in shutting the door, or suppressed for fear of offence.

"And now, fool, Wildrake, begone to thy bed—yonder it lies, pointing to the knight's apartment.

"What, thou hast secured the lady's for thyself? I saw thee put the key in thy pocket."

"I would not—indeed, I could not sleep in that apartment—I can sleep nowhere—but I will watch in this arm-chair. I have made him place wood for repairing the fire.—Good now, go to bed thyself, and sleep off thy liquor."

"Liquor!—I laugh thee to scorn, Mark—thou art a milksop, and the son of a milksop, and know'st not what a good fellow can do in the way of crushing an honest cup."

"The whole vices of his faction are in this poor fellow individually," said the Colonel to himself, eyeing his protegé askance, as the other retreated into the bedroom, with no very steady pace—"He is reckless, intemperate, dissolute; and if I cannot get him safely shipped for France, he will certainly be both his own ruin and mine.—Yet, withal, he is kind, brave, and generous, and would have kept the faith with me which he now expects from me; and in what consists the merit of our truth, if we observe not our plighted word when we have promised to our hurt? I will take the liberty, however, to secure myself against farther interruption on his part."

So saying, he locked the door of communication betwixt the sleeping-room, to which the cavalier had retreated, and the parlour;—and then, after pacing the floor thoughtfully, returned to his seat, trimmed the lamp, and drew out a number of letters,—"I will read these over once more," he said, "that, if possible, the thought of public affairs may expel this keen sense of personal sorrow. Gracious Providence, where is this to end! We have sacrificed the peace of our families, the warmest wishes of our young hearts, to right the country in which we were born, and to free her from oppression; yet it appears, that every step we have made towards liberty, has but brought us in view of new and more terrific perils, as he who travels in a mountainous region, is, by every step which elevates him higher, placed in a situation of more imminent hazard."

He read long and attentively, various tedious and embarrassed letters, in which the writers, placing be-

fore him the glory of God, and the freedom and liberties of England, as their supreme ends, could not, by all the ambagitory expressions they made use of, prevent the shrewd eye of Markham Everard from seeing, that self-interest and views of ambition were the principal moving-springs at the bottom of their plots.

CHAPTER VI.

Sleep steals on us even like his brother Death—
We know not when it comes—we know it must come—
We may affect to scorn and to contemn it,
For 'tis the highest pride of human misery,
To say it knows not of an opiate:
Yet the reft parent, the despairing lover,
Even the poor wretch who waits for execution,
Feels this oblivion, against which he thought
His woes had arm'd his senses, steal upon him,
And through the fenceless citadel—the body—
Surprise that haughty garrison—the mind.—HERBERT.

COLONEL EVERARD experienced the truth contained in the verses of the quaint old bard whom we have quoted above. Amid private grief, and anxiety for a country long a prey to civil war, and not likely to fall soon under any fixed or well-established form of government, Everard and his father had, like many others, turned their eyes to General Cromwell, as the person whose valour had made him the darling of the army, whose strong sagacity had hitherto predominated over the high talents by which he had been assailed in Parliament, as well as over his enemies in the field, and who was alone in the situation to *settle the nation*, as the phrase then went; or, in other words, to dictate the mode of government. The father and son were both reputed to stand high in the General's favour. But Markham Everard was conscious of some particulars, which induced him to doubt whether Cromwell actually, and at heart, bore either to his father or to himself that good-will which was generally believed. He knew him for a profound politician, who could veil for any length of time his real sentiments of men and things, until they could be displayed without prejudice to his interest. And he moreover knew that the General was not likely to forget the opposition which the Presbyterian party had offered to what Oliver called the Great Matter—the trial, namely and execution of the King. In this opposition, his father and he had anxiously concurred, nor had the arguments, nor even the half-expressed threats of Cromwell, induced them to flinch from that course, far less to permit their names to be introduced into the commission nominated to sit in judgment on that memorable occasion.

This hesitation had occasioned some temporary coldness between the General and the Everards, father and son. But as the latter remained in the army, and bore arms under Cromwell, both in Scotland, and finally at Worcester, his services very frequently called forth the approbation of his commander. After the fight of Worcester, in particular, he was among the number of those officers on whom Oliver, rather considering the actual and practical extent of his own power, than the name under which he exercised it, was with difficulty withheld from imposing the dignity of Knights-Bannerets at his own will and pleasure. It therefore seemed, that all recollection of former disagreement was obliterated, and that the Everards had regained their former stronghold in the General's affections. There were, indeed, several who doubted this, and who endeavoured to bring over this distinguished young officer to some other of the parties which divided the infant Commonwealth. But to these proposals he turned a deaf ear. Enough of blood, he said, had been spilled—it was time that the nation should have repose under a firmly established government, of strength sufficient to protect property, and of lenity enough to encourage the return of tranquillity. This, he thought, could only be accomplished by means of Cromwell, and the greater part of England was of the same opinion. It is true, that, in thus submitting to the domination of a successful soldier, those who did so, forgot the principles upon which they had drawn the sword against the late King. But in revolutions, *stern and high principles are often obliged to give* way to the current of existing circumstances; and in many a case, where wars have been waged for points of metaphysical right, they have been at last gladly terminated, upon the mere hope of obtaining general tranquillity, as, after many a long siege, a garrison is often glad to submit on mere security for life and limb.

Colonel Everard, therefore, felt that the support which he afforded Cromwell, was only under the idea, that, amid a choice of evils, the least was likely to ensue from a man of the General's wisdom and valour being placed at the head of the state; and he was sensible, that Oliver himself was likely to consider his attachment as lukewarm and imperfect, and measure his gratitude for it upon the same limited scale.

In the mean while, however, circumstances compelled him to make trial of the General's friendship. The sequestration of Woodstock, and the warrant to the Commissioners to dispose of it as national property, had been long granted, but the interest of the elder Everard had for weeks and months deferred its execution. The hour was now approaching when the blow could be no longer parried, especially as Sir Henry Lee, on his side, resisted every proposal of submitting himself to the existing government, and was therefore, now that his hour of grace was passed, enrolled in the list of stubborn and irreclaimable malignants, with whom the Council of State was determined no longer to keep terms. The only mode of protecting the old knight and his daughter, was to interest, if possible, the General himself in the matter; and revolving all the circumstances connected with their intercourse, Colonel Everard felt that a request, which would so immediately interfere with the interests of Desborough, the brother-in-law of Cromwell, and one of the present Commissioners, was putting to a very severe trial the friendship of the latter. Yet no alternative remained.

With this view, and agreeably to a request from Cromwell, who at parting had been very urgent to have his written opinion upon public affairs, Colonel Everard passed the earlier part of the night in arranging his ideas upon the state of the Commonwealth, in a plan which he thought likely to be acceptable to Cromwell, as it exhorted him, under the aid of Providence, to become the saviour of the state, by convoking a free Parliament, and by their aid placing himself at the head of some form of liberal and established government, which might supersede the state of anarchy, in which the nation was otherwise likely to be merged. Taking a general view of the totally broken condition of the Royalists, and of the various factions which now convulsed the state, he showed how this might be done without bloodshed or violence. From this topic he descended to the propriety of keeping up the becoming state of the Executive Government, in whose hands soever it should be lodged, and thus showed Cromwell, as the future Stadtholder, or Consul, or Lieutenant-General of Great Britain and Ireland, a prospect of demesne and residences becoming his dignity. Then he naturally passed to the disparking and destroying of the royal residences of England, made a woful picture of the demolition which impended over Woodstock, and interceded for the preservation of that beautiful seat, as a matter of personal favour, in which he found himself deeply interested.

Colonel Everard, when he had finished his letter, did not find himself greatly risen in his own opinion. In the course of his political conduct, he had till that hour avoided mixing up personal motives with his public grounds of action, and yet he now felt himself making such a composition. But he comforted himself, or at least silenced this unpleasing recollection, with the consideration, that the weal of Britain, studied under the aspect of the times, absolutely required that Cromwell should be at the head of the government; and that the interest of Sir Henry Lee, or rather his safety and his existence, no less emphatically demanded the preservation of Woodstock, and his residence there. Was it a fault of his, that the same road should lead to both these ends, or that his private interest, and that of the country, should hap-

pen to mix in the same letter? He hardened himself, therefore, to the act, made up and addressed his packet to the Lord General, and then sealed it with his seal of arms. This done, he lay back in his chair; and, in spite of his expectations to the contrary, fell asleep in the course of his reflections, anxious and harassing as they were, and did not awaken until the cold gray light of dawn was peeping through the eastern oriel.

He started at first, rousing himself with the sensation of one who awakes in a place unknown to him; but the localities instantly forced themselves on his recollection. The lamp burning dimly in the socket, the wood fire almost extinguished in its own white embers, the gloomy picture over the chimney-piece, the sealed packet on the table—all reminded him of the events of yesterday, and his deliberations of the succeeding night.

"There is no help for it," he said; "it must be Cromwell or anarchy. And probably the sense that his title, as head of the Executive Government, is derived merely from popular consent, may check the too natural proneness of power to render itself arbitrary. If he govern by Parliaments, and with regard to the privileges of the subject, wherefore not Oliver as well as Charles? But I must take measures for having this conveyed safely to the hands of this future sovereign prince. It will be well to take the first word of influence with him, since there must be many who will not hesitate to recommend councils more violent and precipitate."

He determined to intrust the important packet to the charge of Wildrake, whose rashness was never so distinguished, as when by any chance he was left idle and unemployed; besides, even if his faith had not been otherwise unimpeachable, the obligations which he owed to his friend Everard must have rendered it such.

These conclusions passed through Colonel Everard's mind, as, collecting the remains of wood in the chimney, he gathered them into a hearty blaze, to remove the uncomfortable feeling of chilliness which pervaded his limbs; and by the time he was a little more warm, again sunk into a slumber, which was only dispelled by the beams of morning peeping into his apartment.

He arose, roused himself, walked up and down the room, and looked from the large oriel window on the nearest objects, which were the untrimmed hedges and neglected walks of a certain wilderness, as it is called in ancient treatises on gardening, which, kept of yore well ordered, and in all the pride of the topiary art, presented a succession of yew-trees cut into fantastic forms, of close alleys, and of open walks, filling about two or three acres of ground on that side of the Lodge, and forming a boundary between its immediate precincts and the open Park. Its enclosure was now broken down in many places, and the hinds with their fawns fed free and unstartled up to the very windows of the silvan palace.

This had been a favourite scene of Markham's sports when a boy. He could still distinguish, though now grown out of shape, the verdant battlements of a Gothic castle, all created by the gardener's shears, at which he was accustomed to shoot his arrows; or, stalking before it like the knight-errants of whom he read, was wont to blow his horn, and bid defiance to the supposed giant or Paynim knight, by whom it was garrisoned. He remembered how he used to train his cousin, though several years younger than himself, to bear a part in those revels of his boyish fancy, and to play the character of an elfin page, or a fairy, or an enchanted princess. He remembered, too, many particulars of their later acquaintance, from which he had been almost necessarily led to the conclusion, that from an early period their parents had entertained some idea, that there might be a well-fitted match betwixt his fair cousin and himself. A thousand visions, formed in so bright a prospect, had vanished along with it, but now returned like shadows, to remind him of all he had lost—and for what?—"For the sake of England," his proud consciousness replied,—"Of *England, in danger of becoming the prey at once of bigotry and tyranny.*" And he strengthened himself with the recollection, "If I have sacrificed my private happiness, it is that my country may enjoy liberty of conscience, and personal freedom; which, under a weak prince and usurping statesman, she was but too likely to have lost."

But the busy fiend in his breast would not be repulsed by the bold answer. "Has thy resistance," it demanded, "availed thy country, Markham Everard? Lies not England, after so much bloodshed, and so much misery, as low beneath the sword of a fortunate soldier, as formerly under the sceptre of an encroaching prince? Are Parliament, or what remains of them, fitted to contend with a leader, master of his soldiers' hearts, as bold and subtle as he is impenetrable in his designs? This General, who holds the army, and by that the fate of the nation, in his hand, will he lay down his power because philosophy would pronounce it his duty to become a subject?"

He dared not answer that his knowledge of Cromwell authorized him to expect any such act of self-denial. Yet still he considered that in times of such infinite difficulty, that must be the best government, however little desirable in itself, which should most speedily restore peace to the land, and stop the wounds which the contending parties were daily inflicting on each other. He imagined that Cromwell was the only authority under which a steady government could be formed, and therefore had attached himself to his fortune, though not without considerable and recurring doubts, how far serving the views of this impenetrable and mysterious General was consistent with the principles under which he had assumed arms.

While these things passed in his mind, Everard looked upon the packet which lay on the table addressed to the Lord General, and which he had made up before sleep. He hesitated several times, when he remembered its purport, and in what degree he must stand committed with that personage, and bound to support his plans of aggrandizement, when once that communication was in Oliver Cromwell's possession.

"Yet it must be so," he said at last, with a deep sigh. "Among the contending parties, he is the strongest—the wisest and most moderate—and ambitious though he be, perhaps not the most dangerous. Some one must be trusted with power to preserve and enforce general order, and who can possess or wield such power like him that is head of the victorious armies of England? Come what will in future, peace and the restoration of law ought to be our first and most pressing object. This remnant of a parliament cannot keep their ground against the army, by mere appeal to the sanction of opinion. If they design to reduce the soldiery, it must be by actual warfare, and the land has been too long steeped in blood. But Cromwell may, and I trust will, make a moderate accommodation with them, on grounds by which peace may be preserved; and it is this to which we must look and trust for a settlement of the kingdom, alas! and for the chance of protecting my obstinate kinsman from the consequences of his honest though absurd pertinacity."

Silencing some internal feelings of doubt and reluctance by such reasoning as this, Markham Everard continued in his resolution to unite himself with Cromwell in the struggle which was evidently approaching betwixt the civil and military authorities; not as the course which, if at perfect liberty, he would have preferred adopting, but as the best choice between two dangerous extremities to which the times had reduced him. He could not help trembling, however, when he recollected that his father, though hitherto the admirer of Cromwell, as the implement by whom so many marvels had been wrought in England, might not be disposed to unite with his interest against that of the Long Parliament, of which he had been, till partly laid aside by continued indisposition, an active and leading member. This doubt also he was obliged to swallow, or strangle, as he might; but consoled himself with the ready argument, that it was impossible his father could see matters in another light than that in which they occurred to himself.

CHAPTER VII.

MINED at length to despatch his packet to
ral without delay, Colonel Everard approach-
oor of the apartment, in which, as was evi-
n the heavy breathing within, the prisoner
enjoyed a deep slumber, under the influence
at once and of fatigue. In turning the key,
which was rather rusty, made a resistance
as partly to attract the sleeper's attention,
ot to awake him. Everard stood by his bed-
e heard him mutter, "Is it morning already,
Why, you dog, an you had but a cast of hu-
you, you would qualify your vile news with
sack;—hanging is sorry work, my masters—
w's dry."
Wildrake—up, thou ill-omened dreamer!" said
, shaking him by the collar.
's off!" answered the sleeper.—"I can climb
without help, I trow."—He then sat up in the
opening his eyes, stared around him, and
d, "Zounds! Mark, is it only thou? I thought
over with me—fetters were struck from my
e drawn round my gullet—irons knocked off
s—all ready for a dance in the open element
ht footing."
with thy folly, Wildrake! Sure the devil of
whom thou hast, I think, sold thyself"——
hogshead of sack," interrupted Wildrake;
gain was made in a cellar in the Vintry."
as mad as thou art, to trust any thing to
id Markham; "I scarce believe thou hast
s yet."
t should ail me?" said Wildrake—"I trust I
tasted liquor in my sleep, saving that I dream-
nking small-beer with Old Noll, of his own
But do not look so glum, man—I am the
ger Wildrake that I ever was; as wild as a
but as true as a game-cock. I am thine own
an—bound to thee by thy kind deeds—*de-
eneficio*—there is Latin for it; and where is
thou wilt charge me with, that I will not, or
execute, were it to pick the devil's teeth with
er, after he had breakfasted upon round-

will drive me mad," said Everard.—"When
out to intrust all I have most valuable on
your management, your conduct and lan-
s those of a mere Bedlamite. Last night I
owance for thy drunken fury; but who can
ny morning madness?—it is unsafe for thy-
me, Wildrake—it is unkind—I might say un-

do not say *that*, my friend," said the cava-
some show of feeling, "and do not judge
th a severity that cannot apply to such as I
who have lost our all in these sad jars, who
elled to shift for our living, not from day to
from meal to meal—we whose only hiding-
he jail, whose prospect of final repose is the
what canst thou expect from us, but to bear
t with a light heart, since we should break
der it with a heavy one?"
as spoken in a tone of feeling which found a
ng string in Everard's bosom. He took his
and, and pressed it kindly.
if I seemed harsh to thee, Wildrake, I pro-
as for thine own sake more than mine. I
ou hast at the bottom of thy levity, as deep a
of honour and feeling as ever governed a
heart. But thou art thoughtless—thou art
d I protest to thee, that wert thou to betray
n this matter in which I trust thee, the evil
nces to myself would not afflict me more
thought of putting thee into such danger."
if you take it on that tone, Mark," said the
making an effort to laugh, evidently that he
nceal a tendency to a different emotion, "thou
e children of us both—babes and sucklings,
ilt of this bilbo.—Come, trust me; I can be
when time requires it—no man ever saw me
ien an alert was expected—and not one poor
vine will I taste until I have managed this
or *thee*. *Well, I am thy secretary*—clerk—I had forgot—and carry thy despatches to Cromwell taking good heed not to be surprised or choused out of my lump of loyalty, [striking his finger on the packet,] and I am to deliver it to the most loyal hands to which it is most humbly addressed—Adzooks, Mark, think of it a moment longer—Surely thou wilt not carry thy perverseness so far, as to strike in with this bloody-minded rebel?—Bid me give him three inches of my dudgeon-dagger, and I will do it much more willingly than present him with thy packet."

"Go to," replied Everard, "this is beyond our bargain. If you will help me, it is well; if not, let me lose no time in debating with thee, since I think every moment an age till the packet is in the General's possession. It is the only way left me to obtain some protection, and a place of refuge, for my uncle and his daughter."

"That being the case," said the cavalier, "I will not spare the spur. My nag up yonder at the town will be ready for the road in a trice, and thou mayst reckon on my being with Old Noll—thy General, I mean—in as short time as man and horse may consume betwixt Woodstock and Windsor, where I think I shall for the present find thy friend keeping possession where he has slain."

"Hush, not a word of that. Since we parted last night, I have shaped thee a path which will suit thee better than to assume the decency of language, and of outward manner, of which thou hast so little. I have acquainted the General that thou hast been by bad example and bad education"——

"Which is to be interpreted by contraries, I hope," said Wildrake; "for sure I have been as well born and bred up as any lad of Leicestershire might desire."

"Now, I prithee hush—thou hast, I say, by bad example, become at one time a malignant, and mixed in the party of the late King. But seeing what things were wrought in the nation by the General, thou hast come to a clearness touching his calling to be a great implement in the settlement of these distracted kingdoms. This account of thee will not only lead him to pass over some of thy eccentricities, should they break out in spite of thee, but will also give thee an interest with him as being more especially attached to his own person."

"Doubtless," said Wildrake, "as every fisher loves best the trouts that are of his own tickling."

"It is likely, I think, he will send thee hither with letters to me," said the Colonel, "enabling me to put a stop to the proceedings of these sequestrators, and to give poor old Sir Henry Lee permission to linger out his days among the oaks he loves to look upon. I have made this my request to General Cromwell, and I think my father's friendship and my own may stretch so far on his regard without risk of cracking, especially standing matters as they now do—thou dost understand?"

"Entirely well," said the cavalier; "stretch, quotha!—I would rather stretch a rope than hold commerce with the old King-killing ruffian. But I have said I will be guided by thee, Markham, and rat me but I will."

"Be cautious then," said Everard, "mark well what he does and says—more especially what he does; for Oliver is one of those whose mind is better known by his actions than by his words—and stay—I warrant thee thou wert setting off without a cross in thy purse?"

"Too true, Mark," said Wildrake, "the last noble melted last night among yonder blackguard troopers of yours."

"Well, Roger," replied the Colonel, "that is easily mended." So saying, he slipped his purse into his friend's hand. "But art thou not an inconsiderate weather-brained fellow, to set forth, as thou wert about to do, without any thing to bear thy charges—what couldst thou have done?"

"Faith, I never thought of that—I must have cried *Stand*, I suppose, to the first pursy townsman, or greasy grazier, that I met o' the heath—it is many a good fellow's shift in these bad times."

"Go to," said Everard; "be cautious—use more of your loose acquaintance—rule your tongue—beware of the wine-pot—for there is little danger if thou [illegible]

only but keep thyself sober—Be moderate in speech, and forbear oaths and vaunting."

"In short, metamorphose myself into such a prig as thou art, Mark?—Well," said Wildrake, "so far as outside will go, I think I can make a *Hope-on-high Bomby** as well as thou canst. Ah! those were merry days when we saw Mills present Bomby at the Fortune playhouse, Mark, ere I had lost my laced cloak and the jewel in my ear, or thou hadst gotten the wrinkle on thy brow, and the puritanic twist of thy mustache!"

"They were like most worldly pleasures, Wildrake," replied Everard, "sweet in the mouth and bitter in digestion.—But away with thee; and when thou bring'st back my answer, thou wilt find me either here or at Saint George's Inn, at the little borough.—Good luck to thee—Be but cautious how thou bearest thyself."

The Colonel remained in deep meditation.—"I think," he said, "I have not pledged myself too far to the General. A breach between him and the Parliament seems inevitable, and would throw England back into civil war, of which all men are wearied. He may dislike my messenger—yet that I do not greatly fear. He knows I would choose such as I can myself depend on, and hath dealt enough with the stricter sort to be aware that there are among them, as well as elsewhere, men who can hide two faces under one hood."

CHAPTER VIII.

For there in lofty air was seen to stand
The stern Protector of the conquer'd land;
Drawn in that look with which he wept and swore,
Turn'd out the members, and made fast the door,
Ridding the house of every knave and drone,
Forced—though it grieved his soul—to rule alone.
The Frank Courtship.—CRABBE.

LEAVING Colonel Everard to his meditations, we follow the jolly cavalier, his companion, who, before mounting at the George, did not fail to treat himself to his morning draught of eggs and muscadine, to enable him to face the harvest wind.

Although he had suffered himself to be sunk in the extravagant licence which was practised by the cavaliers, as if to oppose their conduct in every point to the preciseness of their enemies, yet Wildrake, well-born and well-educated, and endowed with good natural parts, and a heart which even debauchery, and the wild life of a roaring cavalier, had not been able entirely to corrupt, moved on his present embassy with a strange mixture of feelings, such as perhaps he had never in his life before experienced.

His feelings as a loyalist led him to detest Cromwell, whom in other circumstances he would scarce have wished to see, except in a field of battle, where he could have had the pleasure to exchange pistol-shots with him. But with this hatred there was mixed a certain degree of fear. Always victorious wherever he fought, the remarkable person whom Wildrake was now approaching had acquired that influence over the minds of his enemies, which constant success is so apt to inspire—they dreaded while they hated him—and joined to these feelings, was a restless meddling curiosity, which made a particular feature in Wildrake's character, who, having long had little business of his own, and caring nothing about that which he had, was easily attracted by the desire of seeing whatever was curious or interesting around him.

"I should like to see the old rascal after all," he said, "were it but to say that I *had* seen him."

He reached Windsor in the afternoon, and felt on his arrival the strongest inclination to take up his residence at some of his old haunts, when he had occasionally frequented that fair town in gayer days. But resisting all temptations of this kind, he went courageously to the principal inn, from which its ancient emblem, the Garter, had long disappeared. The master, too, whom Wildrake, experienced in his *knowledge of landlords* and hostelries, had remembered a dashing Mine Host of Queen Bess's school, had now sobered down to the temper of the times, shook his head when he spoke of the Parliament, wielded his spigot with the gravity of a priest conducting a sacrifice, wished England a happy issue out of all her afflictions, and greatly lauded his Excellency the Lord General. Wildrake also remarked that his wine was better than it was wont to be, the Puritans having an excellent gift at detecting every fallacy in that matter; and that his measures were less and his charges larger—circumstances which he was induced to attend to, by mine host talking a good deal about his conscience.

He was told by this important personage, that the Lord General received frankly all sorts of persons; and that he might obtain access to him next morning, at eight o'clock, for the trouble of presenting himself at the Castle-gate, and announcing himself as the bearer of despatches to his Excellency.

To the Castle the disguised cavalier repaired at the hour appointed. Admittance was freely permitted to him by the red-coated soldier, who, with austere looks, and his musket on his shoulder, mounted guard at the external gate of that noble building. Wildrake crossed through the under ward, or court, gazing as he passed upon the beautiful Chapel, which had but lately received, in darkness and silence, the unhonoured remains of the slaughtered King of England. Rough as Wildrake was, the recollection of this circumstance affected him so strongly, that he had nearly turned back in a sort of horror, rather than face the dark and daring man, to whom, amongst all the actors in that melancholy affair, its tragic conclusion was chiefly to be imputed. But he felt the necessity of subduing all sentiments of this nature, and compelled himself to proceed in a negotiation intrusted to his conduct by one to whom he was so much obliged as Colonel Everard. At the ascent which passed by the Round Tower, he looked to the ensign-staff, from which the banner of England was wont to float. It was gone, with all its rich emblazonry, its gorgeous quarterings, and splendid embroidery; and in its room waved that of the Commonwealth, the cross of Saint George, in its colours of blue and red, not yet intersected by the diagonal cross of Scotland, which was soon after assumed, as if in evidence of England's conquest over her ancient enemy. This change of ensigns increased the train of his gloomy reflections, in which, although contrary to his wont, he became so deeply wrapped, that the first thing which recalled him to himself was the challenge from the sentinel, accompanied with a stroke of the butt of his musket on the pavement with an emphasis which made Wildrake start.

"Whither away, and who are you?"

"The bearer of a packet," answered Wildrake, "to the worshipful the Lord General."

"Stand till I call the officer of the guard."

The corporal made his appearance, distinguished above those of his command by a double quantity of band round his neck, a double height of steeple-crowned hat, a larger allowance of cloak, and a treble proportion of sour gravity of aspect. It might be read on his countenance, that he was one of those resolute enthusiasts to whom Oliver owed his conquests, whose religious zeal made them even more than a match for the high-spirited and high-born cavaliers, that exhausted their valour in vain defence of their sovereign's person and crown. He looked with grave solemnity at Wildrake, as if he was making in his own mind an inventory of his features and dress; and having fully perused them, he required "to know his business."

"My business," said Wildrake, as firmly as he could—for the close investigation of this man had given him some unpleasant nervous sensation—"my business is with your General."

"With his Excellency the Lord General, thou wouldst say?" replied the corporal. "Thy speech, my friend, savours too little of the reverence due to his Excellency."

"D—n his Excellency!" was at the lips of the cavalier; but prudence kept guard, and permitted not the offensive words to escape the barrier. He only bowed, and was silent.

* A *puritanic character* in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays.

"Follow me," said the starched figure whom he addressed; and Wildrake followed him accordingly into the guard-house, which exhibited an interior characteristic of the times, and very different from what such military stations present at the present day.

By the fire sat two or three musketeers, listening to one who was expounding some religious mystery to them. He began half beneath his breath, but in tones of great volubility, which tones, as he approached the conclusion, became sharp and eager, as challenging either instant answer or silent acquiescence. The audience seemed to listen to the speaker with immovable features, only answering him with clouds of tobacco-smoke, which they rolled from under their thick mustaches. On a bench lay a soldier on his face; whether asleep, or in a fit of contemplation, it was impossible to decide. In the midst of the floor stood an officer, as he seemed by his embroidered shoulder-belt and scarf round his waist, otherwise very plainly attired, who was engaged in drilling a stout bumpkin, lately enlisted, to the manual, as it was then used. The motions and words of command were twenty at the very least; and until they were regularly brought to an end, the corporal did not permit Wildrake either to sit down, or move forward beyond the threshold of the guard-house. So he had to listen in succession to—Poise your musket—Rest your musket—Cock your musket—Handle your primers—and many other forgotten words of discipline, until at length the words, "Order your musket," ended the drill for the time.

"Thy name, friend?" said the officer to the recruit, when the lesson was over.

"Ephraim," answered the fellow, with an affected twang through the nose.

"And what besides Ephraim?"

"Ephraim Cobb, from the godly city of Gloucester, where I have dwelt for seven years, serving apprentice to a praiseworthy cordwainer."

"It is a goodly craft," answered the officer; "but casting in thy lot with ours, doubt not that thou shalt be set beyond thine awl, and thy last to boot."

A grim smile of the speaker accompanied this poor attempt at a pun; and then turning round to the corporal, who stood two paces off, with the face of one who seemed desirous of speaking, said, "How now, corporal, what tidings?"

"Here is one with a packet, an please your Excellency," said the corporal—"Surely my spirit doth not rejoice in him, seeing I esteem him as a wolf in sheep's clothing."

By these words, Wildrake learned that he was in the actual presence of the remarkable person to whom he was commissioned; and he paused to consider in what manner he ought to address him.

The figure of Oliver Cromwell was, as is generally known, in no way prepossessing. He was of middle stature, strong, and coarsely made, with harsh and severe features, indicative, however, of much natural sagacity and depth of thought. His eyes were gray and piercing; his nose too large in proportion to his other features, and of a reddish hue.

His manner of speaking, when he had the purpose to make himself distinctly understood, was energetic and forcible, though neither graceful nor eloquent. No man could on such occasions put his meaning into fewer and more decisive words. But when, as it often happened, he had a mind to play the orator, for the benefit of people's ears, without enlightening their understanding, Cromwell was wont to invest his meaning, or that which seemed to be his meaning, in such a mist of words, surrounding it with so many exclusions and exceptions, and fortifying it with such a labyrinth of parentheses, that though one of the most shrewd men in England, he was, perhaps, the most unintelligible speaker that ever perplexed an audience. It has been long since said by the historian, that a collection of the Protector's speeches would make, with a few exceptions, the most nonsensical book in the world; but he ought to have added, that nothing could be more nervous, concise, and intelligible, than what he really intended *should be understood*.

It was also remarked of Cromwell, that though born of a good family, both by father and mother, and although he had the usual opportunities of education and breeding connected with such an advantage, the fanatic democratic ruler could never acquire, or else disdained to practise, the courtesies usually exercised among the higher classes in their intercourse with each other. His demeanour was so blunt as sometimes might be termed clownish, yet there was in his language and manner a force and energy corresponding to his character, which impressed awe, if it did not impose respect; and there were even times when that dark and subtle spirit expanded itself, so as almost to conciliate affection. The turn for humour, which displayed itself by fits, was broad, and of a low, and sometimes practical character. Something there was in his disposition congenial to that of his countrymen; a contempt of folly, a hatred of affectation, and a dislike of ceremony, which, joined to the strong intrinsic qualities of sense and courage, made him in many respects not an unfit representative of the democracy of England.

His religion must always be a subject of much doubt, and probably of doubt which he himself could hardly have cleared up. Unquestionably there was a time in his life when he was sincerely enthusiastic, and when his natural temper, slightly subject to hypochondria, was strongly agitated by the same fanaticism which influenced so many persons of the time. On the other hand, there were periods during his political career, when we certainly do him no injustice in charging him with a hypocritical affectation. We shall probably judge him, and others of the same age, most truly, if we suppose that their religious professions were partly influential in their own breast, partly assumed in compliance with their own interest. And so ingenious is the human heart in deceiving itself as well as others, that it is probable neither Cromwell himself, nor those making similar pretensions to distinguished piety, could exactly have fixed the point at which their enthusiasm terminated and their hypocrisy commenced; or rather, it was a point not fixed in itself, but fluctuating with the state of health, of good or bad fortune, of high or low spirits, affecting the individual at the period.

Such was the celebrated person, who, turning round on Wildrake, and scanning his countenance closely, seemed so little satisfied with what he beheld, that he instinctively hitched forward his belt, so as to bring the handle of his tuck-sword within his reach. But yet, folding his arms in his cloak, as if upon second thoughts laying aside suspicion, or thinking precaution beneath him, he asked the cavalier what he was, and whence he came?

"A poor gentleman, sir,—that is, my lord,"—answered Wildrake; "last from Woodstock."

"And what may your tidings be, sir *gentleman?*" said Cromwell, with an emphasis. "Truly I have seen those most willing to take upon them that title, bear themselves somewhat short of wise men, and good men, and true men, with all their gentility: Yet gentleman was a good title in old England, when men remembered what it was construed to mean."

"You say truly, sir," replied Wildrake, suppressing, with difficulty, some of his usual wild expletives; "formerly gentlemen were found in gentlemen's places, but now the world is so changed, that you shall find the broidered belt has changed place with the under spur-leather."

"Say'st thou me?" said the General; "I profess thou art a bold companion, that can bandy words so wantonly;—thou ring'st somewhat too loud to be good metal, methinks: And once again what are thy tidings with me?"

"This packet," said Wildrake, "commended to your hands by Colonel Markham Everard."

"Alas, I must have mistaken thee," answered Cromwell, mollified at the mention of a man's name whom he had a great desire to make his own; "forgive us, good friend, for such, we doubt not, thou art. Sit thee down, and commune with thyself as thou mayst, until we have examined the contents of thy packet. Let him be looked to, and have what he lacks." So saying, the General left the guard-house.

where Wildrake took his seat in the corner, and awaited with patience the issue of his mission.

The soldiers now thought themselves obliged to treat him with more consideration, and offered him a pipe of Trinidado, and a black jack filled with October. But the look of Cromwell, and the dangerous situation in which he might be placed by the least chance of detection, induced Wildrake to decline these hospitable offers, and stretching back in his chair, and affecting slumber, he escaped notice or conversation, until a sort of aide-de-camp, or military officer in attendance, came to summon him to Cromwell's presence.

By this person he was guided to a postern-gate, through which he entered the body of the Castle, and penetrating through many private passages and staircases, he at length was introduced into a small cabinet or parlour, in which was much rich furniture, some bearing the royal cipher displayed, but all confused and disarranged, together with several paintings in massive frames, having their faces turned towards the wall, as if they had been taken down for the purpose of being removed.

In this scene of disorder, the victorious General of the Commonwealth was seated in a large easy chair, covered with damask, and deeply embroidered, the splendour of which made a strong contrast with the plain, and even homely character of his apparel; although in look and action he seemed like one who felt that the seat which might have in former days held a prince, was not too much distinguished for his own fortunes and ambition. Wildrake stood before him, nor did he ask him to sit down.

"Pearson," said Cromwell, addressing himself to the officer in attendance, "wait in the gallery, but be within call." Pearson bowed, and was retiring. "Who are in the gallery besides?"

"Worthy Mr. Gordon, the chaplain, was holding forth but now to Colonel Overton, and four captains of your Excellency's regiment."

"We would have it so," said the General; "we would not there were any corner in our dwelling where the hungry soul might not meet with manna. Was the good man carried onward in his discourse?"

"Mightily borne through," said Pearson; "and he was touching the rightful claims which the army, and especially your Excellency, hath acquired, by becoming the instruments in the great work;—not instruments to be broken asunder and cast away when the day of their service is over, but to be preserved and held precious, and prized for their honourable and faithful labours, for which they have fought and marched, and fasted and prayed, and suffered cold and sorrow; while others, who would now gladly see them disbanded, and broken, and cashiered, eat of the fat and drink of the strong."

"Ah, good man!" said Cromwell, "and did he touch upon this so feelingly? I could say something —but not now. Begone, Pearson, to the gallery. Let not our friends lay aside their swords, but watch as well as pray."

Pearson retired; and the General, holding the letter of Everard in his hand, looked again for a long while fixedly at Wildrake, as if considering in what strain he should address him.

When he did speak, it was, at first, in one of those ambiguous discourses which we have already described, and by which it was very difficult for any one to understand his meaning, if, indeed he knew it himself. We shall be as concise in our statement as our desire to give the very words of a man so extraordinary will permit.

"This letter," he said, "you have brought us from your master, or patron, Markham Everard; truly an excellent and honourable gentleman as ever bore a sword upon his thigh, and one who hath ever distinguished himself in the great work of delivering these three poor and unhappy nations. Answer me not: I know what thou wouldst say.—And this letter he hath sent to me by thee, his clerk, or secretary, in *whom he hath confidence*, and in whom he prays me *to have trust, that there may be a careful messenger between us. And lastly*, he hath sent thee to me—*Do not answer—I know* what thou wouldst say—to me, who, albeit I am of that small consideration, that it would be too much honour for me even to bear a halberd in this great and victorious army of England, am nevertheless exalted to the rank of holding the guidance and the leading-staff thereof.—Nay, do not answer, my friend—I know what thou wouldst say. Now, when communing thus together, our discourse taketh, in respect to what I have said, a threefold argument, or division: First, as it concerneth thy master; secondly, as it concerneth us and our office: thirdly and lastly, as it toucheth thyself.—Now, as concerning this good and worthy gentleman, Colonel Markham Everard, truly he hath played the man from the beginning of these unhappy buffetings, not turning to the right or to the left, but holding ever in his eye the mark at which he aimed. Ay, truly, a faithful, honourable gentleman, and one who may well call me friend; and truly I am pleased to think that he doth so. Nevertheless, in this vale of tears, we must be governed less by our private respects and partialities, than by those higher principles and points of duty, whereupon the good Colonel Markham Everard hath ever framed his purposes, as, truly, I have endeavoured to form mine, that we may all act as becometh good Englishmen and worthy patriots. Then, as for Woodstock, it is a great thing which the good Colonel asks, that it should be taken from the spoil of the godly, and left in keeping of the men of Moab, and especially of the malignant, Henry Lee, whose hand hath been ever against us when he might find room to raise it; I say, he hath asked a great thing, both in respect of himself and me. For we of this poor but godly army of England, are holden, by those of the Parliament, as men who should render in spoil for them, but be no sharer of it ourselves; even as the buck, which the hounds pull to earth, furnisheth no part of their own food, but they are lashed off from the carcass with whips, like those which require punishment for their frowardness, not reward for their services. Yet I speak not this so much in respect of this grant of Woodstock, in regard that, perhaps, their Lordships of the Council, and also the Committeemen of this Parliament, may graciously think they have given me a portion in the matter, in relation that my kinsman Desborough hath an interest allowed him therein; which interest, as he hath well deserved it for his true and faithful service to these unhappy and devoted countries, so it would ill become me to diminish the same to his prejudice, unless it were upon great and public respects. Thus thou seest how it stands with me, my honest friend, and in what mind I stand touching thy master's request to me; which yet I do not say that I can altogether, or unconditionally, grant or refuse, but only tell my simple thoughts with regard thereto. Thou understandest me, I doubt not?"

Now, Roger Wildrake, with all the attention he had been able to pay to the Lord General's speech, had got so much confused among the various clauses of the harangue, that his brain was bewildered, like that of a country clown when he chances to get himself involved among a crowd of carriages, and cannot stir a step to get out of the way of one of them, without being in danger of being ridden over by the others.

The General saw his look of perplexity, and began a new oration, to the same purpose as before;—spoke of his love for his kind friend the Colonel,—his regard for his pious and godly kinsman, Master Desborough,—the great importance of the Palace and Park of Woodstock,—the determination of the Parliament that it should be confiscated, and the produce brought into the coffers of the state,—his own deep veneration for the authority of Parliament, and his no less deep sense of the injustice done to the army,—how it was his wish and will that all matters should be settled in an amicable and friendly manner, without self-seeking, debate, or strife, betwixt those who had been the hands acting, and such as had been the heads governing, in that great national cause,—how he was willing, truly willing, to contribute to this work, by laying down, not his commission only, but his life also, if it were requested of him, or could be granted with safety to the poor soldiers, to whom, silly poor men, he was

bound to be as a father, seeing that they had followed him with the duty and affection of children.

And here he arrived at another dead pause, leaving Wildrake as uncertain as before, whether it was or was not his purpose to grant Colonel Everard the powers he had asked for the protection of Woodstock against the Parliamentary Commissioners. Internally he began to entertain hopes that the justice of Heaven, or the effects of remorse, had confounded the regicide's understanding. But no—he could see nothing but sagacity in that steady stern eye, which, while the tongue poured forth its periphrastic language in such profusion, seemed to watch with severe accuracy the effect which his oratory produced on the listener.

"Egad," thought the cavalier to himself, becoming a little familiar with the situation in which he was placed, and rather impatient of a conversation which led to no visible conclusion or termination, "if Noll were the devil himself, as he is the devil's darling, I will not be thus nose-led by him. I'll e'en brusque it a little, if he goes on at this rate, and try if I can bring him to a more intelligible mode of speaking."

Entertaining this bold purpose, but half afraid to execute it, Wildrake lay by for an opportunity of making the attempt, while Cromwell was apparently unable to express his own meaning. He was already beginning a third panegyric upon Colonel Everard, with sundry varied expressions of his own wish to oblige him, when Wildrake took the opportunity to strike in, on the General's making one of his oratorical pauses.

"So please you," he said, bluntly, "your worship has already spoken on two topics of your discourse, your own worthiness, and that of my master, Colonel Everard. But, to enable me to do mine errand, it would be necessary to bestow a few words on the third head."

"The third!" said Cromwell.

"Ay," said Wildrake, "which in your honour's subdivision of your discourse, touched on my unworthy self. What am I to do—what portion am I to have in this matter?"

Oliver started at once from the tone of voice he had hitherto used, and which somewhat resembled the purring of a domestic cat, into the growl of the tiger when about to spring. "*Thy* portion, jail-bird!" he exclaimed, "the gallows—thou shalt hang as high as Haman, if thou betray counsel!—But," he added, softening his voice, "keep it like a true man, and my favour will be the making of thee. Come hither—thou art bold, I see, though somewhat saucy. Thou hast been a malignant—so writes my worthy friend Colonel Everard; but thou hast now given up that falling cause. I tell thee, friend, not all that the Parliament or the army could do would have pulled down the Stewarts out of their high places, saving that Heaven had a controversy with them. Well, it is a sweet and comely thing to buckle on one's armour in behalf of Heaven's cause; otherwise truly, for mine own part, these men might have remained upon the throne even unto this day. Neither do I blame any for aiding them, until these successive great judgments have overwhelmed them and their house. I am not a bloody man, having in me the feeling of human frailty; but, friend, whosoever putteth his hand to the plough, in the great actings which are now on foot in these nations, had best beware that he do not look back; for, rely upon my simple word, that if you fail me, I will not spare on you one foot's length of the gallows of Haman. Let me therefore know, at a word, if the leaven of thy malignancy is altogether drubbed out of thee?"

"Your honourable lordship," said the cavalier, shrugging up his shoulders, "has done that for most of us, so far as cudgelling to some tune can perform it."

"Sayst thou?" said the General, with a grim smile on his lip, which seemed to intimate that he was not quite inaccessible to flattery; "yea, truly, thou dost not lie in that—we have been an instrument. Neither are we, as I have already hinted, so severely bent *against those who had striven against us as malignants, as others may be.* The parliament-men best know their own interest and their own pleasure; but, to my poor thinking, it is full time to close these jars, and to allow men of all kinds the means of doing service to their country; and we think it will be thy fault if thou art not employed to good purpose for the state and thyself, on condition thou puttest away the old man entirely from thee, and givest thy earnest attention to what I have to tell thee."

"Your lordship need not doubt my attention," said the cavalier.

And the republican General, after another pause, as one who gave his confidence not without hesitation, proceeded to explain his views with a distinctness which he seldom used, yet not without his being a little biassed now and then, by his long habits of circumlocution, which indeed he never laid entirely aside save in the field of battle.

"Thou seest," he said, "my friend, how things stand with me. The Parliament, I care not who knows it, love me not—still less do the Council of State, by whom they manage the executive government of the kingdom. I cannot tell why they nourish suspicion against me, unless it is because I will not deliver this poor innocent army, which has followed me in so many military actions, to be now pulled asunder, broken piecemeal and reduced, so that they who have protected the state at the expense of their blood, will not have, perchance, the means of feeding themselves by their labour; which, methinks, were hard measure, since it is taking from Esau his birthright, even without giving him a poor mess of pottage."

"Esau is likely to help himself, I think," replied Wildrake.

"Truly, thou sayst wisely," replied the General; "it is ill starving an armed man, if there is food to be had for taking—nevertheless, far be it from me to encourage rebellion, or want of due subordination to these our rulers. I would only petition in a due and becoming, a sweet and harmonious manner, that they would listen to our conditions, and consider our necessities. But, sir, looking on me, and estimating me so little as they do, you must think that it would be a provocation in me towards the Council of State, as well as the Parliament, if, simply to gratify your worthy master, I were to act contrary to their purposes, or deny currency to the commission under their authority, which is as yet the highest in the State—and long may it be so for me—to carry on the sequestration which they intend. And would it not also be said, that I was lending myself to the malignant interest, affording this den of the bloodthirsty and lascivious tyrants of yore, to be in this our day a place of refuge to that old and inveterate Amalekite, Sir Henry Lee, to keep possession of the place in which he hath so long glorified himself? Truly it would be a perilous matter."

"Am I then to report," said Wildrake, "an it please you, that you cannot stead Colonel Everard in this matter?"

"Unconditionally, ay—but, taken conditionally, the answer may be otherwise,"—answered Cromwell. "I see thou art not able to fathom my purpose, and therefore I will partly unfold it to thee.—But take notice, that, should thy tongue betray my council, save in so far as carrying it to thy master, by all the blood which has been shed in these wild times, thou shalt die a thousand deaths in one!"

"Do not fear me, sir," said Wildrake, whose natural boldness and carelessness of character was for the present time borne down and quelled, like that of falcons in the presence of the eagle.

"Hear me, then," said Cromwell, "and let no evil lable escape thee. Knowest thou not the young Lee whom they call Albert, a malignant like his father, and one who went up with the young man to that last ruffle which we had with him at Worcester—May we be grateful for the victory!"

"I know there is such a young gentleman as Albert Lee," said Wildrake.

"And knowest thou not—I speak not by way of prying into the good Colonel's secrets, but only as it behoves me to know something of the matter, that I may best judge how I am to serve him—Knowest

thou not that thy master, Markham Everard, is a suitor after the sister of this same malignant, a daughter of the old Keeper, called Sir Henry Lee?"

"All this I have heard," said Wildrake, "nor can I deny that I believe in it."

"Well then, go to.—When the young man Charles Stewart fled from the field of Worcester, and was by sharp chase and pursuit compelled to separate himself from his followers, I know by sure intelligence that this Albert Lee was one of the last who remained with him, if not indeed the very last."

"It was devilish like him," said the cavalier, without sufficiently weighing his expressions, considering in what presence they were to be uttered—"And I'll uphold him with my rapier, to be a true chip of the old block!"

"Ha, swearest thou?" said the General. "Is this thy reformation?"

"I never swear, so please you," replied Wildrake, recollecting himself, "except there is some mention of malignants and cavaliers in my hearing; and then the old habit returns, and I swear like one of Goring's troopers."

"Out upon thee," said the General; "what can it avail thee to practise a profanity so horrible to the ears of others, and which brings no emolument to him who uses it?"

"There are, doubtless, more profitable sins in the world than the barren and unprofitable vice of swearing," was the answer which rose to the lips of the cavalier; but that was exchanged for a profession of regret for having given offence. The truth was, the discourse began to take a turn which rendered it more interesting than ever to Wildrake, who therefore determined not to lose the opportunity for obtaining possession of the secret that seemed to be suspended on Cromwell's lips; and that could only be through means of keeping guard upon his own.

"What sort of a house is Woodstock?" said the General, abruptly.

"An old mansion," said Wildrake, in reply; "and, so far as I could judge by a single night's lodgings, having abundance of backstairs, also subterranean passages, and all the communications under ground, which are common in old raven-nests of the sort."

"And places for concealing priests, unquestionably," said Cromwell. "It is seldom that such ancient houses lack secret stalls wherein to mew up these calves of Bethel."

"Your Honour's Excellency," said Wildrake, "may swear to that."

"I swear not at all," replied the General drily.—'But what think'st thou, good fellow?—I will ask thee a blunt question—Where will those two Worcester fugitives that thou wottest of be more likely to take shelter—and that they must be sheltered somewhere, I well know—than in this same old palace, with all the corners and concealments whereof young Albert hath been acquainted ever since his earliest infancy?"

"Truly," said Wildrake, making an effort to answer the question with seeming indifference, while the possibility of such an event, and its consequences, flashed fearfully upon his mind,—"Truly, I should be of your honour's opinion, but that I think the company, who, by the commission of Parliament, have occupied Woodstock, are likely to fright them thence, as a cat scares doves from a pigeon-house. The neighbourhood, with reverence, of Generals Desborough and Harrison, will suit ill with fugitives from Worcester field."

"I thought as much, and so, indeed, would I have it," answered the General. "Long may it be ere our names shall be aught but a terror to our enemies! But in this matter, if thou art an active plotter for thy master's interest, thou mightst, I should think, work out something favourable to his present object."

"My brain is too poor to reach the depth of your honourable purpose," said Wildrake.

"Listen then, and let it be to profit," answered Cromwell. "Assuredly the conquest at Worcester *was a great and crowning mercy*; yet might we *seem to be but small* in our thankfulness for the *same, did we not do* what in us lies towards the ultimate improvement and final conclusion of the great work which has been thus prosperous in our hands, professing, in pure humility and singleness of heart, that we do not, in any way deserve our instrumentality to be remembered, nay, would rather pray and entreat, that our name and fortunes were forgotten, than that the great work were in itself incomplete. Nevertheless, truly, placed as we now are, it concerns us more nearly than others,—that is, if so poor creatures should at all speak of themselves as concerned, whether more or less, with these changes which have been wrought around, not, I say, by ourselves, or our own power, but by the destiny to which we were called, fulfilling the same with all meekness and humility,—I say it concerns us nearly that all things should be done in conformity with the great work which hath been wrought, and is yet working, in these lands. Such is my plain and simple meaning. Nevertheless, it is much to be desired that this young man, this King of Scots, as he called himself—this Charles Stewart—should not escape forth from the nation, where his arrival has wrought so much disturbance and bloodshed."

"I have no doubt," said the cavalier, looking down, "that your lordship's wisdom hath directed all things as they may best lead towards such a consummation; and I pray your pains may be paid as they deserve."

"I thank thee, friend," said Cromwell, with much humility; "doubtless we shall meet our reward, being in the hands of a good paymaster, who never passeth Saturday night. But understand me, friend—I desire no more than my own share in the good work. I would heartily do what poor kindness I can to your worthy master, and even to you in your degree—for such as I do not converse with ordinary men, that our presence may be forgotten like an every day's occurrence. We speak to men like these for their reward or their punishment; and I trust it will be the former which thou in thine office wilt merit at my hand."

"Your honour," said Wildrake, "speaks like one accustomed to command."

"True; men's minds are linked to those of my degree by fear and reverence," said the General;—"but enough of that, desiring, as I do, no other dependency on my special person than is alike to us all upon that which is above us. But I would desire to cast this golden ball into your master's lap. He hath served against this Charles Stewart and his father. But he is a kinsman near to the old knight, Lee, and stands well affected towards his daughter. *Thou* also wilt keep a watch, my friend—that ruffling look of thine will procure thee the confidence of every malignant, and the prey cannot approach this cover, as though to shelter, like a cony in the rocks, but thou wilt be sensible of his presence."

"I make a shift to comprehend your Excellency," said the cavalier; "and I thank you heartily for the good opinion you have put upon me, and which, I pray I may have some handsome opportunity of deserving, that I may show my gratitude by the event. But still, with reverence, your Excellency's scheme seems unlikely, while Woodstock remains in possession of the sequestrators. Both the old knight and his son, and far more such a fugitive as your honour hinted at, will take special care not to approach it till they are removed."

"It is for that I have been dealing with thee thus long," said the General.—"I told thee that I was something unwilling, upon slight occasion, to dispossess the sequestrators by my own proper warrant, although having, perhaps, sufficient authority in the state both to do so, and to despise the murmurs of those who blame me. In brief, I would be loath to tamper with my privileges, and make experiments between their strength, and the powers of the commission granted by others, without pressing need, or at least great prospect of advantage. So, if thy Colonel will undertake, for his love of the Republic, to find the means of preventing its worst and nearest danger, which must needs occur from the escape of this young man, and will do his endeavour to stay him, in case his flight should lead him to Woodstock,

which I hold very likely, I will give thee an order to these sequestrators, to evacuate the palace instantly; and to the next troop of my regiment, which lies at Oxford, to turn them out by the shoulders, if they make any scruples—Ay, even, for example's sake, if they drag Desborough out foremost, though he be wedded to my sister."

"So please you, sir," said Wildrake, "and with your most powerful warrant, I trust I might expel the commissioners, even without the aid of your most warlike and devout troopers."

"That is what I am least anxious about," replied the General; "I should like to see the best of them sit after I had nodded to them to begone—always excepting the worshipful House, in whose name our commissions run; but who, as some think, will be done with politics ere it be time to renew them. Therefore, what chiefly concerns me to know, is, whether thy master will embrace a traffic which hath such a fair promise of profit with it. I am well convinced that, with a scout like thee, who hast been in the cavalier's quarters, and canst, I should guess, resume thy drinking, ruffianly, health-quaffing manners whenever thou hast a mind, he must discover where this Stewart hath ensconced himself. Either the young Lee will visit the old one in person, or he will write to him, or hold communication with him by letter. At all events, Markham Everard and thou must have an eye in every hair of your head." While he spoke, a flush passed over his brow, he rose from his chair, and paced the apartment in agitation. "Woe to you, if you suffer the young adventurer to escape me!—you had better be in the deepest dungeon in Europe, than breathe the air of England, should you but dream of playing me false. I have spoken freely to thee, fellow—more freely than is my wont—the time required it. But, to share my confidence is like keeping a watch over a powder-magazine, the least and most insignificant spark blows thee to ashes! Tell your master what I have said—but not how I said it—Fie, that I should have been betrayed into this distemperature of passion!—begone, sirrah. Pearson shall bring thee sealed orders—Yet, stay—thou hast something to ask."

"I would know," said Wildrake, to whom the visible anxiety of the General gave some confidence, "what is the figure of this young gallant, in case I should find him?"

"A tall, rawboned, swarthy lad, they say he has shot up into. Here is his picture by a good hand, some time since." He turned round one of the portraits which stood with its face against the wall; but it proved not to be that of Charles the Second, but of his unhappy father.

The first motion of Cromwell indicated a purpose of hastily replacing the picture, and it seemed as if an effort was necessary to repress his disinclination to look upon it. But he did repress it, and, placing the picture against the wall, withdrew slowly and sternly, as if, in defiance of his own feelings, he was determined to gain a place from which to see it to advantage. It was well for Wildrake that his dangerous companion had not turned an eye on him, for *his* blood also kindled when he saw the portrait of his master in the hands of the chief author of his death. Being a fierce and desperate man, he commanded his passion with great difficulty; and if, on its first violence, he had been provided with a suitable weapon, it is possible Cromwell would never have mounted higher in his bold ascent towards supreme power.

But this natural and sudden flash of indignation, which rushed through the veins of an ordinary man like Wildrake, was presently subdued, when confronted with the strong yet stifled emotion displayed by so powerful a character as Cromwell. As the cavalier looked on his dark and bold countenance, agitated by inward and indescribable feelings, he found his own violence of spirit die away and lose itself in fear and wonder. So true it is, that as greater lights swallow up and extinguish the display of those which are less, so men of great, capacious, and overruling minds, bear aside *and subdue*, in their climax *of passion, the more feeble wills* and passions of others; as, when a river joins a brook, the fiercer torrent shoulders aside the smaller stream.

Wildrake stood a silent, inactive, and almost a terrified spectator, while Cromwell, assuming a firm sternness of eye and manner, as one who compels himself to look on what some strong internal feeling renders painful and disgustful to him, proceeded, in brief and interrupted expressions, but yet with a firm voice, to comment on the portrait of the late King. His words seemed less addressed to Wildrake, than to be the spontaneous unburthening of his own bosom, swelling under recollection of the past and anticipation of the future.

"That Flemish painter," he said—"that Antonio Vandyke—what a power he has! Steel may mutilate, warriors may waste and destroy—still the King stands uninjured by time; and our grand-children, while they read his history, may look on his image, and compare the melancholy features with the woful tale.—It was a stern necessity—it was an awful deed! The calm pride of that eye might have ruled worlds of crouching Frenchmen, or supple Italians, or formal Spaniards; but its glances only roused the native courage of the stern Englishman.—Lay not on poor sinful man, whose breath is in his nostrils, the blame that he falls, when Heaven never gave him strength of nerves to stand! The weak rider is thrown by his unruly horse, and trampled to death—the strongest man, the best cavalier, springs to the empty saddle, and uses bit and spur till the fiery steed knows its master. Who blames him, who, mounted aloft, rides triumphantly amongst the people, for having succeeded, where the unskilful and feeble fell and died? Verily he hath his reward: Then, what is that piece of painted canvass to me more than others? No; let him show to others the reproaches of that cold, calm face, that proud yet complaining eye: Those who have acted on higher respects have no cause to start at painted shadows. Not wealth nor power brought me from my obscurity. The oppressed consciences the injured liberties of England, were the banner that I followed."

He raised his voice so high, as if pleading in his own defence before some tribunal, that Pearson, the officer in attendance, looked into the apartment; and observing his master, with his eyes kindling, his arm extended, his foot advanced, and his voice raised, like a general in the act of commanding the advance of his army, he instantly withdrew.

"It was other than selfish regards that drew me forth to action," continued Cromwell, "and I dare the world—ay, living or dead I challenge—to assert that I armed for a private cause, or as a means of enlarging my fortunes. Neither was there a trooper in the regiment who came there with less of personal evil will to yonder unhappy"——

At this moment the door of the apartment opened, and a gentlewoman entered, who, from her resemblance to the General, although her features were soft and feminine, might be immediately recognised as his daughter. She walked up to Cromwell, gently but firmly passed her arm through his, and said to him in a persuasive tone, "Father, this is not well—you have promised me this should not happen."

The General hung down his head, like one who was either ashamed of the passion to which he had given way, or of the influence which was exercised over him. He yielded, however, to the affectionate impulse, and left the apartment, without again turning his head towards the portrait which had so much affected him, or looking towards Wildrake, who remained fixed in astonishment.

CHAPTER IX.

Doctor.—Go to, go to—You have known what you should not.
Macbeth.

WILDRAKE was left in the cabinet, as we have said, astonished and alone. It was often noised about, that Cromwell, the deep and sagacious statesman the calm and intrepid commander, he who had overcome such difficulties, and ascended to such heights, that he seemed already to bestride the land which he

had conquered, had, like many other men of great genius, a constitutional taint of melancholy, which sometimes displayed itself both in words and actions, and had been first observed in that sudden and striking change, when, abandoning entirely the dissolute freaks of his youth, he embraced a very strict course of religious observances, which, upon some occasions, he seemed to consider as bringing him into more near and close contact with the spiritual world. This extraordinary man is said sometimes, during that period of his life, to have given way to spiritual delusions, or, as he himself conceived them, prophetic inspirations of approaching grandeur, and of strange, deep, and mysterious agencies, in which he was in future to be engaged, in the same manner as his younger years had been marked by fits of exuberant and excessive frolic and debaucheries. Something of this kind seemed to explain the ebullition of passion which he had now manifested.

With wonder at what he had witnessed, Wildrake felt some anxiety on his own account. Though not the most reflecting of mortals, he had sense enough to know, that it is dangerous to be a witness of the infirmities of men high in power; and he was left so long by himself, as induced him to entertain some secret doubts, whether the General might not be tempted to take means of confining or removing a witness who had seen him lowered, as it seemed, by the suggestions of his own conscience, beneath that lofty flight, which, in general, he affected to sustain above the rest of the sublunary world.

In this, however, he wronged Cromwell, who was free either from an extreme degree of jealous suspicion, or from any thing which approached towards blood-thirstiness. Pearson appeared, after a lapse of about an hour, and, intimating to Wildrake that he was to follow, conducted him into a distant apartment, in which he found the General seated on a low couch. His daughter was in the apartment, but remained at some distance, apparently busied with some female needle-work, and scarce turned her head as Pearson and Wildrake entered.

At a sign from the Lord General, Wildrake approached him as before. "Comrade," he said, "your old friends the cavaliers look on me as their enemy, and conduct themselves towards me as if they desired to make me such. I profess they are labouring to their own prejudice; for I regard, and have ever regarded them, as honest and honourable fools, who were silly enough to run their necks into nooses, and their heads against stone-walls, that a man called Stewart, and no other, should be king over them. Fools! are there no words made of letters that would sound as well as Charles Stewart, with that magic title beside them? Why, the word King is like a lighted lamp, that throws the same bright gilding upon any combination of the alphabet, and yet you must shed your blood for a name! But thou, for thy part, shalt have no wrong from me. Here is an order, well warranted, to clear the Lodge at Woodstock, and abandon it to thy master's keeping, or those whom he shall appoint. He will have his uncle and pretty cousin with him, doubtless. Fare thee well—think on what I told thee. They say beauty is a loadstone to yonder long lad, thou dost wot of; but I reckon he has other stars at present to direct his course than bright eyes and fair hair. Be it as it may, thou knowest my purpose—peer out, peer out; keep a constant and careful look-out on every ragged patch that wanders by hedge-row or lane—these are days when a beggar's cloak may cover a king's ransom. There are some broad Portugal pieces for thee—something strange to thy pouch, I ween.—Once more, think on what thou hast heard, and," he added, in a lower and more impressive tone of voice, "forget what thou hast seen. My service to thy master;—and, yet once again, *remember*—and *forget*."—Wildrake made his obeisance, and, returning to his inn, left Windsor with all possible speed.

It was afternoon in the same day when the cavalier rejoined his roundhead friend, who was anxiously *expecting him at the inn* in Woodstock appointed for *their rendezvous*.

"*Where hast thou been?*—what hast thou seen?—what strange uncertainty is in thy looks?—and why dost thou not answer me?"

"Because," said Wildrake, laying aside his riding cloak and rapier, "you ask so many questions at once. A man has but one tongue to answer with, and mine is well nigh glued to the roof of my mouth."

"Will drink unloosen it?" said the Colonel; "though I dare say thou hast tried that spell at every alehouse on the road. Call for what thou wouldst have, man, only be quick."

"Colonel Everard," answered Wildrake, "I have not tasted so much as a cup of cold water this day."

"Then thou art out of humour for that reason," said the Colonel; "salve thy sore with brandy, if thou wilt, but leave being so fantastic and unlike to thyself as thou showest in this silent mood."

"Colonel Everard," replied the cavalier, very gravely, "I am an altered man."

"I think thou dost alter," said Everard, "every day in the year, and every hour of the day. Come, good now, tell me, hast thou seen the General, and got his warrant for clearing out the sequestrators from Woodstock?"

"I have seen the devil," said Wildrake, "and have, as thou sayst, got a warrant from him."

"Give it me," said Everard, hastily catching at the packet.

"Forgive me, Mark," said Wildrake; "if thou knewest the purpose with which this deed is granted—if thou knewest—what it is not my purpose to tell thee—what manner of hopes are founded on thy accepting it, I have that opinion of thee, Mark Everard, that thou would'st as soon take a redhot horseshoe from the anvil with thy bare hand, as receive into it this slip of paper."

"Come, come," said Everard, "this comes of some of your exalted ideas of loyalty, which, excellent within certain bounds, drive us mad when encouraged up to some heights. Do not think, since I must needs speak plainly with thee, that I see without sorrow the downfall of our ancient monarchy, and the substitution of another form of government in its stead; but ought my regret for the past to prevent my acquiescing and aiding in such measures as are likely to settle the future? The royal cause is ruined, hadst thou and every cavalier in England sworn the contrary; ruined, not to rise again,—for many a day at least. The Parliament, so often draughted and drained of those who were courageous enough to maintain their own freedom of opinion, is now reduced to a handful of statesmen, who have lost the respect of the people, from the length of time during which they have held the supreme management of affairs. They cannot stand long unless they were to reduce the army; and the army, late servants, are now masters, and will refuse to be reduced. They know their strength, and that they may be an army subsisting on pay and free quarters throughout England as long as they will. I tell thee, Wildrake, unless we look to the only man who can rule and manage them, we may expect military law throughout the land; and I, for mine own part, look for any preservation of our privileges that may be vouchsafed to us, only through the wisdom and forbearance of Cromwell. Now you have my secret. You are aware that I am not doing the best I would, but the best I can. I wish—not so ardently as thou, perhaps—yet I *do* wish that the King could have been restored on good terms of composition, safe for us and for himself. And now, good Wildrake, rebel as thou thinkest me, make me no worse a rebel than an unwilling one. God knows, I never laid aside love and reverence to the King, even in drawing my sword against his ill advisers."

"Ah, plague on you," said Wildrake, "that is the very cant of it—that's what you all say. All of you fought against the King in pure love and loyalty, and not otherwise. However, I see your drift, and I own that I like it better than I expected. The army is your bear now, and old Noll is your bearward; and you are like a country constable, who makes interest with the bearward that he may prevent him from letting bruin loose. Well, there may come a day when the sun will shine on our side of the fence, an

thereon shall you, and all the good fair-weather folks who love the stronger party, come and make common cause with us."

Without much attending to what his friend said, Colonel Everard carefully studied the warrant of Cromwell. "It is bolder and more peremptory than a expected," he said. "The General must feel himself strong, when he opposes his own authority so directly to that of the Council of State and the Parliament."

"You will not hesitate to act upon it?" said Wildrake.

"That I certainly will not," answered Everard; but I must wait till I have the assistance of the Mayor, who, I think, will gladly see these fellows ejected from the Lodge. I must not go altogether upon military authority, if possible." Then, stepping to the door of the apartment, he despatched a servant of the house in quest of the Chief Magistrate, desiring he should be made acquainted that Colonel Everard desired to see him with as little loss of time as possible.

"You are sure he will come, like a dog at a whistle," said Wildrake. "The word captain, or colonel, makes the fat citizen trot in these days, when one sword is worth fifty corporation charters. But there are dragoons yonder, as well as the grim-faced knave whom I frightened the other evening when I showed my face in at the window. Think'st thou the knaves will show no rough play?"

"The General's warrant will weigh more with them than a dozen acts of Parliament," said Everard. —"But it is time thou eatest, if thou hast in truth ridden from Windsor hither without baiting."

"I care not about it," said Wildrake: "I tell thee, your General gave me a breakfast, which, I think, will serve me one while, if I am ever able to digest it. By the mass, it lay so heavy on my conscience, that I carried it to church to see if I could digest it there with my other sins. But not a whit."

"To church!—To the door of the church, thou meanest," said Everard. "I know thy way—thou art ever wont to pull thy hat off reverently at the threshold, but for crossing it, that day seldom comes."

"Well," replied Wildrake, "and if I do pull off my castor and kneel, is it not seemly to show the same respects in a church which we offer in a palace? It is a dainty matter, is it not, to see your Anabaptists, and Brownists, and the rest of you, gather to a sermon with as little ceremony as hogs to a trough? But here comes food, and now for a grace, if I can remember one."

Everard was too much interested about the fate of his uncle and his fair cousin, and the prospect of restoring them to their quiet home, under the protection of that formidable truncheon which was already regarded as the leading-staff of England, to remark, that certainly a great alteration had taken place in the manners and outward behaviour at least of his companion. His demeanour frequently evinced a sort of struggle betwixt old habits of indulgence, and some newly formed resolutions of abstinence; and it was almost ludicrous to see how often the hand of the neophyte directed itself naturally to a large black leathern jack, which contained two double flagons of strong ale, and how often, diverted from its purpose by the better reflections of the reformed toper, it seized, instead, upon a large ewer of salubrious and pure water.

It was not difficult to see that the task of sobriety was not yet become easy, and that, if it had the recommendation of the intellectual portion of the party who had resolved upon it, the outward man yielded a reluctant and restive compliance. But honest Wildrake had been dreadfully frightened at the course proposed to him by Cromwell, and, with a feeling not peculiar to the Catholic religion, had formed a solemn resolution within his own mind, that, if he came off safe and with honour from this dangerous interview, he would show his sense of Heaven's favour, by renouncing some of the sins which most easily beset him, and especially that of intemperance, to which, like many of his wild compeers, he was too much addicted.

This resolution, or vow, was partly prudential as well as religious; for it occurred to him as very possible, that some matters of a difficult and delicate nature might be thrown into his hands at the present emergency, during the conduct of which it would be fitting for him to act by some better oracle than that of the Bottle, celebrated by Rabelais. In full compliance with this prudent determination, he touched neither the ale nor the brandy which were placed before him, and declined peremptorily the sack with which his friend would have garnished the board. Nevertheless, just as the boy removed the trencher and napkins, together with the large black-jack which we have already mentioned, and was one or two steps on his way to the door, the sinewy arm of the cavalier, which seemed to elongate itself on purpose, (as it extended far beyond the folds of the threadbare jacket,) arrested the progress of the retiring Ganymede, and seizing on the black-jack, conveyed it to the lips, which were gently breathing forth the aspiration, "D—n—I mean, Heaven forgive me—we are poor creatures of clay—one modest sip must be permitted to our frailty."

So murmuring, he glued the huge flagon to his lips, and as the head was slowly and gradually inclined backwards in proportion as the right hand elevated the bottom of the pitcher, Everard had great doubts whether the drinker and the cup were likely to part until the whole contents of the latter had been transferred to the person of the former. Roger Wildrake stinted, however, when, by a moderate computation, he had swallowed at one draught about a quart and a half.

He then replaced it on the salver, fetched a long breath to refresh his lungs, bade the boy get him gone with the rest of the liquors, in a tone which inferred some dread of his constancy, and then, turning to his friend Everard, he expatiated in praise of moderation, observing that the mouthful which he had just taken had been of more service to him than if he had remained quaffing healths at table for four hours together.

His friend made no reply, but could not help being privately of opinion that Wildrake's temperance had done as much execution on the tankard in his single draught, as some more moderate topers might have effected if they had sat sipping for an evening. But the subject was changed by the entrance of the landlord, who came to announce to his honour Colonel Everard, that the worshipful Mayor of Woodstock, with the Rev. Master Holdenough, were come to wait upon him.

CHAPTER X.

——Here we have one head
Upon two bodies—your two-headed bullock
Is but an ass to such a prodigy.
These two have but one meaning, thought, and counsel;
And, when the single noddle has spoke out,
The four legs scrape assent to't.—*Old Play.*

In the goodly form of the honest Mayor, there was a bustling mixture of importance and embarrassment like the deportment of a man who was conscious that he had an important part to act, if he could but exactly discover what that part was. But both were mingled with much pleasure at seeing Everard, and he frequently repeated his welcomes and all-hails before he could be brought to attend to what that gentleman said in reply.

'Good, worthy Colonel, you are indeed a desirable sight to Woodstock at all times, being, as I may say, almost our townsman, as you have dwelt so much and so long at the palace. Truly, the matter begins almost to pass my wit, though I have transacted the affairs of this borough for many a long day; and you are come to my assistance like, like"——

"*Tanquam Deus ex machina*, as the Ethnic poet hath it," said Master Holdenough, "although I do not often quote from such books.—Indeed, Master Markham Everard—or worthy Colonel, as I ought rather to say—you are simply the most welcome man who has come to Woodstock since the days of old King Harry."

"I had some business with you, my good friend,

said the Colonel, addressing the Mayor; "I shall be glad if it should so happen at the same time, that I may find occasion to pleasure you or your worthy pastor."

"No question you can do so, good sir," interposed Master Holdenough; "you have the heart, sir, and you have the hand; and we are much in want of good counsel, and that from a man of action. I am aware, worthy Colonel, that you and your worthy father have ever borne yourselves in these turmoils like men of a truly Christian and moderate spirit, striving to pour oil into the wounds of the land, which some would rub with vitriol and pepper; and we know you are faithful children of that church which we have reformed from its papistical and prelatical tenets."

"My good and reverend friend," said Everard, "I respect the piety and learning of many of your teachers; but I am also for liberty of conscience to all men. I neither side with sectaries, nor do I desire to see them the object of suppression by violence."

"Sir, sir," said the Presbyterian, hastily, "all this hath a fair sound; but I would you should think what a fine country and church we are like to have of it, amidst the errors, blasphemies, and schisms, which are daily introduced into the church and kingdom of England, so that worthy Master Edwards, in his Gangrena, declareth, that our native country is about to become the very sink and cess-pool of all schisms, heresies, blasphemies, and confusions, as the army of Hannibal was said to be the refuse of all nations—*Colluvies omnium gentium*.—Believe me, worthy Colonel, that they of the Honourable House view all this over lightly, and with the winking connivance of old Eli. These instructers, the schismatics, shoulder the orthodox ministers out of their pulpits, thrust themselves into families, and break up the peace thereof, stealing away men's hearts from the established faith."

"My good Master Holdenough," replied the Colonel, interrupting the zealous preacher, "there is ground of sorrow for all these unhappy discords; and I hold with you, that the fiery spirits of the present time have raised men's minds at once above sober-minded and sincere religion, and above decorum and common sense. But there is no help save patience. Enthusiasm is a stream that may foam off in its own time, whereas it is sure to bear down every barrier which is directly opposed to it.—But what are these schismatical proceedings to our present purpose?"

"Why, partly this, sir," said Holdenough, "although perhaps you may make less of it than I should have thought before we met.—I was myself—I, Nehemiah Holdenough, [he added consequentially,] was forcibly expelled from my own pulpit, even as a man should have been thrust out of his own house, by an alien, and an intruder, a wolf, who was not at the trouble even to put on sheep's clothing, but came in his native wolfish attire of buff and bandoleer, and held forth in my stead to the people, who are to me as a flock to the awful shepherd. It is too true, sir—Master Mayor saw it, and strove to take such order to prevent it as man might,—though," turning to the Mayor, "I think still you might have striven a little more."

"Good now, good Master Holdenough, do not let us go back on that question," said the Mayor. "Guy of Warwick, or Bevis of Hampton, might do something with this generation; but truly, they are too many and too strong for the Mayor of Woodstock."

"I think Master Mayor speaks very good sense," said the Colonel; "if the Independents are not allowed to preach, I fear me they will not fight;—and then if you were to have another rising of cavaliers?"

"There are worse folks may rise than cavaliers," said Holdenough.

"How, sir?" replied Colonel Everard. "Let me remind you, Master Holdenough, that is no safe language in the present state of the nation."

"I say," said the Presbyterian, "there are worse folk may rise than cavaliers; and I will prove what I say. The devil is worse than the worst cavalier that ever drank a health, or swore an oath—and the devil *has arisen at Woodstock Lodge!*"

"*Ay, truly hath he*," said the Mayor, "bodily and *visibly, in figure and form*—An awful time we live in!"

"Gentlemen, I really know not how I am to understand you," said Everard.

"Why, it was even about the devil we came to speak with you," said the Mayor; "but the worthy minister is always so hot upon the sectaries"——

"Which are the devil's brats, and nearly akin to him," said Master Holdenough. "But true it is, that the growth of these sects has brought up the Evil One even upon the face of the earth, to look after his own interest, where he finds it most thriving."

"Master Holdenough," said the Colonel, "if you speak figuratively, I have already told you that I have neither the means nor the skill sufficient to temper these religious heats. But if you design to say that there has been an actual apparition of the devil, I presume to think that you, with your doctrine and your learning, would be a fitter match for him than a soldier like me."

"True, sir; and I have that confidence in the commission which I hold, that I would take the field against the foul fiend without a moment's delay," said Holdenough; "but the place in which he hath of late appeared, being Woodstock, is filled with those dangerous and impious persons, of whom I have been but now complaining; and though, confident in my own resources, I dare venture in disputation with their Great Master himself, yet without your protection, most worthy Colonel, I see not that I may with prudence trust myself with the tossing and goring ox Desborough, or the bloody and devouring bear Harrison, or the cold and poisonous snake Bletson—all of whom are now at the Lodge, doing license and taking spoil as they think meet; and, as all men say, the devil has come to make a fourth with them."

"In good truth, worthy and noble sir," said the Mayor, "it is even as Master Holdenough says—our privileges are declared void, our cattle seized in the very pastures. They talk of cutting down and disparking the fair Chase, which has been so long the pleasure of so many kings, and making Woodstock of as little note as any paltry village. I assure you we heard of your arrival with joy, and wondered at your keeping yourself so close in your lodgings. We know no one save your father or you, that are like to stand the poor burgesses' friend in this extremity, since almost all the gentry around are malignants, and under sequestration. We trust, therefore, you will make strong intercession in our behalf."

"Certainly, Master Mayor," said the Colonel, who saw himself with pleasure anticipated; "it was my very purpose to have interfered in this matter; and I did but keep myself alone until I should be furnished with some authority from the Lord General."

"Powers from the Lord General!" said the Mayor, thrusting the clergyman with his elbow—"Dost thou hear that?—What cock will fight that cock? We shall carry it now over their necks, and Woodstock shall be brave Woodstock still!"

"Keep thine elbow from my side, friend," said Holdenough, annoyed by the action which the Mayor had suited to his words; "and may the Lord send that Cromwell prove not as sharp to the people of England as thy bones against my person! Yet I approve that we should use his authority to stop the course of these men's proceedings."

"Let us set out, then," said Colonel Everard; "and I trust we shall find the gentlemen reasonable and obedient."

The functionaries, laic and clerical, assented with much joy; and the Colonel required and received Wildrake's assistance in putting on his cloak and rapier, as if he had been the dependent whose part he acted. The cavalier contrived, however, while doing him these menial offices, to give his friend a renewed pinch, in order to maintain the footing of secret equality betwixt them.

The Colonel was saluted, as they passed through the streets, by many of the anxious inhabitants, who seemed to consider his intervention as affording the only chance of saving their fine Park, and the rights of the corporation, as well as of individuals, from ruin and confiscation.

As they entered the Park, the Colonel asked his

ocmpanions, "What is this you say of apparitions being seen amongst them?"

"Why Colonel," said the clergyman, "you know yourself that Woodstock was always haunted?"

"I have lived therein many a day," said the Colonel; "and I know that I never saw the least sign of it, although idle people spoke of the house as they do of all old mansions, and gave the apartments ghosts and spectres to fill up the places of as many of the deceased great, as had ever dwelt there."

"Nay, but, good Colonel," said the clergyman, "I trust you have not reached the prevailing sin of the times, and become indifferent to the testimony in favour of apparitions, which appears so conclusive to all but atheists, and advocates for witches?"

"I would not absolutely disbelieve what is so generally affirmed," said the Colonel; "but my reason leads me to doubt most of the stories which I have heard of this sort, and my own experience never went to confirm any of them."

"Ay, but trust me," said Holdenough, "there was always a demon of one or the other species about this Woodstock. Not a man or woman in the town but has heard stories of apparitions in the forest, or about the old castle. Sometimes it is a pack of hounds, that sweep along, and the whoops and hollows of the huntsmen, and the winding of horns and the galloping of horse, which is heard as if first more distant, and then close around you—and then anon it is a solitary huntsman, who asks if you can tell him which way the stag is gone. He is always dressed in green; but the fashion of his clothes is some five hundred years old. This is what we call Demon Meridianum—the noonday spectre."

"My worthy and reverend sir," said the Colonel, "I have lived at Woodstock many seasons, and have traversed the Chase at all hours. Trust me, what you hear from the villagers, is the growth of their idle folly and superstition."

"Colonel," replied Holdenough, "a negative proves nothing. What signifies, craving your pardon, that you have not seen any thing, be it earthly, or be it of the other world, to detract from the evidence of a score of people who have?—And, besides, there is the Demon Nocturnum—the being that walketh by night—He has been among these Independents and schismatics last night.—Ay, Colonel, you may stare; but it is even so—they may try whether he will mend their gifts, as they profanely call them, of exposition and prayer. No, sir, I trow, to master the foul fiend there goeth some competent knowledge of theology, and an acquaintance of the humane letters, ay, and a regular clerical education, and clerical calling."

"I do not in the least doubt," said the Colonel, "the efficacy of your qualifications to lay the devil; but still I think some odd mistake has occasioned this confusion amongst them, if there has any such in reality existed. Desborough is a blockhead, to be sure; and Harrison is fanatic enough to believe any thing. But there is Bletson, on the other hand, who believes nothing.—What do you know of this matter, good Master Mayor?"

"In sooth, and it was Master Bleston who gave the first alarm," replied the magistrate, "or, at least, the first distinct one. You see, sir, I was in bed with my wife, and no one else; and I was as fast asleep as a man can desire to be at two hours after midnight, when, behold you, they came knocking at my bedroom door, to tell me there was an alarm in Woodstock, and that the bell of the Lodge was ringing at that dead hour of the night, as hard as ever it rung when it called the court to dinner."

"Well, but the cause of this alarm?" said the Colonel.

"You shall hear, worthy Colonel, you shall hear," answered the Mayor, waving his hand with dignity; for he was one of those persons who will not be hurried out of their own pace. "So Mrs. Mayor would have persuaded me, in her love and affection, poor wretch, that to rise at such an hour out of my own warm bed, was like to bring on my old complaint the lumbago, and that I should send the people to Alderman Dutton.—*Alderman Devil, Mrs. Mayor*, said I; *—I beg your reverence's pardon* for using such a phrase—Do you think I am going to lie a-bed when the town is on fire, and the cavaliers up, and the devil to pay?—I beg pardon again, parson.—But here we are before the gate of the Palace; will it not please you to enter?"

"I would first hear the end of your story," said the Colonel; "that is, Master Mayor, if it happens to have an end."

Every thing hath an end," said the Mayor, "and that which we call a pudding hath two.—Your worship will forgive me for being facetious. Where was I?—O, I jumped out of bed, and put on my red plush breeches, with the blue nether stocks, for I always make a point of being dressed suitably to my dignity, night and day, summer or winter, Colonel Everard; and I took the Constable along with me, in case the alarm should be raised by night walkers or thieves, and called up worthy Master Holdenough out of his bed, in case it should turn out to be the devil. And so I thought I was provided for the worst—and so away we came; and, by and by, the soldiers who came to the town with Master Tomkins, who had been called to arms, came marching down to Woodstock as fast as their feet would carry them; so I gave our people the sign to let them pass us, and out march us, as it were, and this for a twofold reason."

"I will be satisfied," interrupted the Colonel, "with one good reason. You desired the red-coats should have the *first* of the fray?"

"True, sir, very true;—and also that they should have the *last* of it, in respect that fighting is their especial business. However, we came on at a slow pace, as men who are determined to do their duty without fear or favour, when suddenly we saw something white haste away up the avenue towards the town, when six of our constables and their assistants fled at once, conceiving it to be an apparition called the White Woman of Woodstock."

"Look you there, Colonel," said Master Holdenough, "I told you there were demons of more kinds than one, which haunt the ancient scenes of royal debauchery and cruelty."

"I hope you stood your own ground, Master Mayor?" said the Colonel.

"I—yes—most assuredly—that is, I did not, strictly speaking, keep my ground; but the town-clerk and I retreated—retreated, Colonel, and without confusion or dishonour, and took post behind worthy Master Holdenough, who, with the spirit of a lion, threw himself in the way of the supposed spectre, and attacked it with such a siserary of Latin, as might have scared the devil himself, and thereby plainly discovered that it was no devil at all, nor white woman, neither woman of any colour, but worshipful Master Bletson, a member of the House of Commons, and one of the commissioners sent hither upon this unhappy sequestration of the Wood, Chase, and Lodge of Woodstock."

"And this was all you saw of the demon?" said the Colonel.

"Truly, yes," answered the Mayor; "and I had no wish to see more. However, we conveyed Master Bletson, as in duty bound, back to the Lodge, and he was ever maundering by the way how that he met a party of scarlet devils incarnate marching down to the Lodge; but, to my poor thinking, it must have been the Independent dragoons who had just passed us."

"And more incarnate devils I would never wish to see," said Wildrake, who could remain silent no longer. His voice, so suddenly heard, showed how much the Mayor's nerves were still alarmed, for he started and jumped aside with an alacrity of which no one would at first sight suppose a man of his portly dignity to have been capable. Everard imposed silence on his intrusive attendant; and, desirous to hear the conclusion of this strange story, requested the Mayor to tell him how the matter ended, and whether they stopped the supposed spectre.

"Truly, worthy sir," said the Mayor, "Master Holdenough was quite venturous upon confronting, as it were, the devil, and compelling him to appear under the real form of Master Joshua Bletson, member of Parliament for the borough of Littlefaith."

"In sooth, Master Mayor," said the divine, "I were strangely ignorant of my own commission and its immunities, if I were to value opposing myself to Satan, or any Independent in his likeness, all of whom, in the name of Him I serve, I do defy, spit at, and trample under my feet; and because Master Mayor is something tedious, I will briefly inform your honour that we saw little of the Enemy that night, save what Master Bletson said in the first feeling of his terrors, and save what we might collect from the disordered appearance of the Honourable Colonel Desborough and Major-General Harrison."

"And what plight were they in, I pray you?" demanded the Colonel.

"Why, worthy sir, every one might see with half an eye that they had been engaged in a fight wherein they had not been honoured with perfect victory; seeing that General Harrison was stalking up and down the parlour, with his drawn sword in his hand, talking to himself, his doublet unbuttoned, his points untrussed, his garters loose, and like to throw him down as he now and then trode on them, and gaping and grinning like a mad player. And yonder sat Desborough with a dry pottle of sack before him, which he had just emptied, and which, though the element in which he trusted, had not restored him sense enough to speak, or courage enough to look over his shoulder. He had a Bible in his hand, forsooth, as if it would of itself make battle against the Evil One; but I peered over his shoulder, and, alas! the good gentleman held the bottom of the page uppermost. It was as if one of your musketeers, noble and valiant sir, were to present the but of his piece at the enemy instead of the muzzle—ha, ha, ha! it was a sight to judge of schismatics by; both in point of head, and in point of heart, in point of skill, and in point of courage.—Oh! Colonel, then was the time to see the true character of an authorized pastor of souls over those unhappy men, who leap into the fold without due and legal authority, and will, forsooth, preach, teach, and exhort, and blaspheme only term the doctrine of the church saltless porridge and dry chips!"

"I have no doubt you were ready to meet the danger, reverend sir: but I would fain know of what nature it was, and from whence it was to be apprehended?"

"Was it for me to make such inquiry?" said the clergyman, triumphantly. "Is it for a brave soldier to number his enemies, or inquire from what quarter they are to come?—No, sir, I was there with match lighted, bullet in my mouth, and my harquebuss shouldered, to encounter as many devils as hell could pour in, were they countless as motes in the sunbeam, and although they came from all points of the compass. The Papists talk of the temptation of St. Anthony—pshaw! let them double all the myriads which the brain of a crazy Dutch painter hath invented, and you will find a poor Presbyterian divine—I will answer for one at least,—who, not in his own strength, but his Master's, will receive the assault in such sort, that far from returning against him as against yonder poor hound, day after day, and night after night, he will at once pack them off as with a vengeance to the uttermost parts of Assyria!"

"Still," said the Colonel, "I pray to know whether you saw any thing upon which to exercise your pious learning?"

"Saw?" answered the divine; "no, truly, I saw nothing, nor did I look for any thing. Thieves will not attack well-armed travellers, nor will devils or evil spirits come against one who bears in his bosom the word of truth, in the very language in which it was first dictated. No, sir, they shun a divine who can understand the holy text, as a crow is said to keep wide of a gun loaded with hailshot."

They had walked a little way back upon their road, to give time for this conversation; and the Colonel, perceiving it was about to lead to no satisfactory explanation of the real cause of alarm on the preceding night, turned round, and observing it was time they should go to the Lodge, began to move in that direction with his three companions.

It had now become dark, and the towers of Woodstock *arose high above the* umbrageous shroud which the forest spread around the ancient and venerable mansion. From one of the highest turrets, which could still be distinguished as it rose against the clear blue sky, there gleamed a light like that of a candle within the building. The Mayor stopt short, and catching fast hold of the divine, and then of Colonel Everard, exclaimed, in a trembling and hasty, but suppressed tone,

"Do you see yonder light?"

"Ay, marry do I," said Colonel Everard; "and what does that matter?—a light in a garret-room of such an old mansion as Woodstock is no subject for wonder, I trow."

"But a light from Rosamond's Tower is surely so?" said the Mayor.

"True," said the Colonel, something surprised, when, after a careful examination, he satisfied himself that the worthy magistrate's conjecture was right. "That is indeed Rosamond's Tower; and as the drawbridge by which it was accessible has been destroyed for centuries, it is hard to say what chance could have lighted a lamp in such an inaccessible place."

"That light burns with no earthly fuel," said the Mayor; "neither from whale nor olive oil, nor beeswax, nor mutton-suet either. I dealt in these commodities, Colonel, before I went into my present line, and I can assure you I could distinguish the sort of light they give, one from another, at a greater distance than yonder turret—Look you, that is no earthly flame.—See you not something blue and reddish upon the edges?—that bodes full well where it comes from.—Colonel, in my opinion we had better go back to sup at the town, and leave the Devil and the redcoats to settle their matters together for to-night; and then when we come back the next morning, we will have a pull with the party that chances to keep a-field."

"You will do as you please, Master Mayor," said Everard, "but my duty requires me that I should see the Commissioners to-night."

"And mine requires me to see the foul Fiend," said Master Holdenough, "if he dare make himself visible to me. I wonder not that, knowing who is approaching, he betakes himself to the very citadel, the inner and the last defences of this ancient and haunted mansion. He is dainty, I warrant you, and must dwell where is a relish of luxury and murder about the walls of his chamber. In yonder turret sinned Rosamond, and in yonder turret she suffered; and there she sits, or, more likely, the Enemy in her shape, as I have heard true men of Woodstock tell.—I wait on you, good Colonel—Master Mayor will do as he pleases. The strong man hath fortified himself in his dwelling-house, but, lo, there cometh another stronger than he."

"For me," said the Mayor, "who am as unlearned as I am unwarlike, I will not engage either with the powers of the Earth, or the Prince of the Powers of the Air, and I would we were again at Woodstock;—and hark ye, good fellow," slapping Wildrake on the shoulder, "I will bestow on thee a shilling wet and a shilling dry if thou wilt go back with me."

"Gadzookers, Master Mayor," said Wildrake, neither flattered by the magistrate's familiarity of address, nor captivated by his munificence—"I wonder who the devil made you and me fellows? and, besides, do you think I would go back to Woodstock with your worshipful cod's-head, when, by good management, I may get a peep of fair Rosamond, and see whether she was that choice and incomparable piece of ware, which the world has been told of by rhymers and ballad-makers?"

"Speak less lightly and wantonly, friend," said the divine; "we are to resist the Devil that he may flee from us, and not to tamper with him, or enter into his counsels, or traffic with the merchandize of his great Vanity Fair."

"Mind what the good man says, Wildrake," said the Colonel; "and take heed another time how thou dost suffer thy wit to outrun discretion."

"I am beholden to the reverend gentleman for his advice," answered Wildrake, upon whose tongue it was difficult to impose any curb whatever, even when

his own safety rendered it most desirable. "But, gadzookers, let him have had what experience he will in fighting with the Devil, he never saw one so so black as I had a tussle with—not a hundred years ago."

"How, friend," said the clergyman, who understood every thing literally when apparitions were mentioned, "have you had so late a visitation of Satan? Believe me, then, that I wonder why thou darest to entertain his name so often and so lightly, as I see thou dost use it in thy ordinary discourse. But when and where didst thou see the Evil One?"

Everard hastily interposed, lest by something yet more strongly alluding to Cromwell, his imprudent squire should in mere wantonness, betray his interview with the General. "The young man raves," he said, "of a dream which he had the other night, when he and I slept together in Victor Lee's chamber, belonging to the ranger's apartments at the Lodge."

"Thanks for help at a pinch, good patron," said Wildrake, whispering into Everard's ear, who in vain endeavoured to shake him off,—"a fib never failed a fanatic."

"You, also, spoke something too lightly of these matters, considering the work which we have in hand, worthy Colonel," said the Presbyterian divine. "Believe me, the young man, thy servant, was more likely to see visions than to dream merely idle dreams in that apartment: for I have always heard, that, next to Rosamond's Tower, in which, as I said, she played the wanton, and was afterwards poisoned by Queen Eleanor, Victor Lee's chamber was the place in the Lodge of Woodstock more peculiarly the haunt of evil spirits,—I pray you, young man, tell me this dream or vision of yours."

"With all my heart, sir," said Wildrake—then addressing his patron, who began to interfere, he said, "Tush, sir, you have had the discourse for an hour, and why should not I hold forth in my turn? By this darkness, if you keep me silent any longer I will turn Independent preacher, and stand up in your despite for the freedom of private judgment.—And so, reverend sir, I was dreaming of a carnal divertisement called a bull-baiting; and methought they were venturing dogs at head, as merrily as e'er I saw them at Tutbury Bull-running; and methought I heard some one say, there was the Devil come to have a sight of the bull-ring. Well, I thought that, gadswoons, I would have a peep at his Infernal Majesty. So I looked, and there was a butcher in greasy woollen, with his steel by his side; but he was none of the Devil. And there was a drunken cavalier, with his mouth full of oaths, and his stomach full of emptiness, and a gold-laced waistcoat in a very dilapidated condition, and a ragged hat, with a piece of a feather in it; and he was none of the Devil neither. And there was a miller, his hands dusty with meal, and every atom of it stolen: and there was a vintner, his green apron stained with wine, and every drop of it sophisticated; but neither was the old gentleman I looked for to be detected among these artisans of iniquity. At length, sir, I saw a grave person with cropped hair, a pair of longish and projecting ears, a band as broad as a slobbering bib under his chin, a brown coat surmounted by a Geneva cloak, and I had old Nicholas at once in his genuine paraphernalia, by——?"

"Shame, shame!" said Colonel Everard. "What! behave thus to an old gentleman and a divine!"—

"Nay, let him proceed," said the minister, with perfect equanimity, "if thy friend, or secretary, is gibing, I must have less patience than becomes my profession, if I could not bear an idle jest, and forgive him who makes it. Or if, on the other hand, the Enemy has really presented himself to the young man in such a guise as he intimates, wherefore should we be surprised that he, who can take upon him the form of an angel of light should be able to assume that of a frail and peccable mortal, whose spiritual calling and profession ought, indeed, to induce him to make his life an example to others, but whose conduct, nevertheless, such is the imperfection of our unassisted nature, *sometimes rather presents us with a warning of what we should shun?*"

"Now, by the mass, honest dominie—I mean reverend sir—I crave you a thousand pardons," said Wildrake, penetrated by the quietness and patience of the presbyter's rebuke. "By St. George, if quiet patience will do it, thou art fit to play a game at foils with the Devil himself, and I would be contented to hold stakes."

As he concluded an apology, which was certainly not uncalled for, and seemed to be received in perfectly good part, they approached so close to the exterior door of the Lodge, that they were challenged with the emphatic *Stand*, by a sentinel who mounted guard there. Colonel Everard replied, *A friend*; and the sentinel repeating his command, "Stand, friend," proceeded to call the corporal of the guard. The corporal came forth, and at the same time turned out his guard. Colonel Everard gave his name and designation, as well as those of his companions, on which the corporal said, "he doubted not there would be orders for his instant admission, but, in the first place, Master Tompkins must be consulted, that he might learn their honours' mind."

"How, sir!" said the Colonel, "do you, knowing who I am, presume to keep me on the outside of your post?"

"Not if your honour pleases to enter," said the corporal, "and undertakes to be my warranty; but such are the orders of my post."

"Nay, then, do your duty," said the Colonel; "but are the cavaliers up, or what is the matter, that you keep so close and strict a watch?"

The fellow gave no distinct answer, but muttered between his mustaches something about the Enemy, and the roaring Lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Presently afterwards Tomkins appeared, followed by two servants, bearing lights in great standing brass candlesticks. They marched before Colonel Everard and his party, keeping as close to each other as two cloves of the same orange, and starting from time to time; and shouldering as they passed through sundry intricate passages, they led up a large and ample wooden staircase, the banisters, rail, and lining of which were executed in black oak, and finally into a long saloon, or parlour, where there was a prodigious fire, and about twelve candles of the largest size distributed in sconces against the wall. There were seated the Commissioners, who now held in their power the ancient mansion and royal domain of Woodstock.

CHAPTER XI.

> The bloody bear, an independent beast,
> Unlick'd to forms, in groans his hate express'd—
> . . . . . .
> Next him the buffoon ape, as atheists use,
> Mimick'd all sects, and had its own to choose.
> *Hind and Panther.*

THE strong light in the parlour which we have described, served to enable Everard easily to recognise his acquaintances, Desborough, Harrison, and Bletson, who had assembled round an oak table of large dimensions placed near the blazing chimney on which were arranged wine, and ale, and materials for smoking, then the general indulgence of the time. There was a species of moveable cupboard set betwixt the table and the door, calculated originally for a display of plate upon grand occasions, but at present only used as a screen; which purpose it served so effectually, that, ere he had coasted around it, Everard heard the following fragment of what Desborough was saying, in his strong coarse voice:—"Sent him to share with us. I'se warrant ye—It was always his Excellency my brother-in law's way if he made a treat for five friends, he would invite more than the table could hold—I have known him ask three men to eat two eggs."

"Hush, hush," said Bletson; and the servants making their appearance from behind the tall cupboard, announced Colonel Everard. It may not be uninteresting to the reader to have a description of the party into which he now entered.

Desborough was a stout, bull-necked man, of middle-size, with heavy vulgar features, grizzled

bushy eyebrows, and wall-eyes. The flourish of his powerful relative's fortunes had burst forth in the finery of his dress, which was much more ornamented than was usual among the roundheads. There was embroidery on his cloak, and lace upon his band; his hat displayed a feather with a golden clasp, and all his habiliments were those of a cavalier, or follower of the court, rather than the plain dress of a parliamentarian officer. But, Heaven knows, there was little of courtlike grace or dignity in the person or demeanour of the individual, who became his fine suit as the hog on the sign-post does his guilded armour. It was not that he was positively deformed, or misshaped, for, taken in detail, the figure was well enough. But his limbs seemed to act upon different and contradictory principles. They were not, as the play says, in a concatenation accordingly;—the right hand moved as if it were upon bad terms with the left, and the legs showed an inclination to foot it in different and opposite directions. In short, to use an extravagant comparison, the members of Colonel Desborough seemed rather to resemble the disputatious representatives of a federative congress, than the well-ordered union of the orders of the state, in a firm and well-compacted monarchy, where each holds his own place, and all obey the dictates of a common head.

General Harrison, the second of the Commissioners, was a tall, thin, middle-aged man, who had risen into his high situation in the army, and his intimacy with Cromwell, by his dauntless courage in the field, and the popularity he had acquired by his exalted enthusiasm amongst the military saints, sectaries, and Independents, who composed the strength of the existing army. Harrison was of mean extraction, and bred up to his father's employment of a butcher. Nevertheless, his appearance, though coarse, was not vulgar, like that of Desborough, who had so much the advantage of him in birth and education. He had a masculine height and strength of figure, was well made, and in his manner announced a rough military character, which might be feared, but could not easily become the object of contempt or ridicule. His aquiline nose and dark black eyes set off to some advantage a countenance otherwise irregular, and the wild enthusiasm that sometimes sparkled in them as he dilated on his opinions to others, and often seemed to slumber under his long dark eyelashes as he mused upon them himself, gave something strikingly wild, and even noble, to his aspect. He was one of the chief leaders of those who were called Fifth Monarchy men, who, going even beyond the general fanaticism of the age, presumptuously interpreted the Book of the Revelations after their own fancies, considered that the second Advent of the Messiah, and the Millennium, or reign of the Saints upon earth, was close at hand, and that they themselves, illuminated, as they believed, with the power of foreseeing these approaching events, were the chosen instruments for the establishment of the New Reign, or Fifth Monarchy, as it was called, and were fated also to win its honours, whether celestial or terrestrial.

When this spirit of enthusiasm, which operated like a partial insanity, was not immediately affecting Harrison's mind, he was a shrewd worldly man, and a good soldier; one who missed no opportunity of mending his fortune, and who, in expecting the exaltation of the Fifth Monarchy, was, in the mean while a ready instrument for the establishment of the word General's supremacy. Whether it was owing to his early occupation, and habits of indifference to pain or bloodshed acquired in the shambles, to natural disposition and want of feeling, or, finally to the awakened character of his enthusiasm, which made him look upon those who opposed him, as opposing the Divine will, and therefore meriting no favour or mercy, is not easy to say; but all agreed, that after a victory, or the successful storm of a town, Harrison was one of the most cruel and pitiless men in Cromwell's army; always urging some misapplied text to *authorize the continued* execution of the fugitives, *and sometimes even* putting to death those who had *surrendered themselves* prisoners. It was said, that at times the recollection of some of those cruelties troubled his conscience, and disturbed the dreams of beatification in which his imagination indulged.

When Everard entered the apartment, this true representative of the fanatical soldiers of the day, who filled those ranks and regiments which Cromwell had politically kept on foot, while he procured the reduction of those in which the Presbyterian interest predominated, was seated a little apart from the others, his legs crossed, and stretched out at length towards the fire, his head resting on his elbow, and turned upwards, as if studying, with the most profound gravity, the half-seen carving of the Gothic roof.

Bletson remains to be mentioned, who, in person and figure, was diametrically different from the other two. There was neither foppery nor slovenliness in his exterior, nor had he any marks of military service or rank about his person. A small walking rapier seemed merely worn as a badge of his rank as a gentleman, without his hand having the least purpose of becoming acquainted with the hilt, or his eye with the blade. His countenance was thin and acute, marked with lines which thought rather than age had traced upon it; and a habitual sneer on his countenance, even when he least wished to express contempt on his features, seemed to assure the individual addressed, that in Bletson he conversed with a person of intellect far superior to his own. This was a triumph of intellect only, however; for on all occasions of difference respecting speculative opinions, and indeed on all controversies whatsoever, Bletson avoided the ultimate *ratio* of blows and knocks.

Yet this peaceful gentleman had found himself obliged to serve personally in the Parliamentary army at the commencement of the Civil War, all happening unluckily to come in contact with the fiery Prince Rupert, his retreat was judged so precipitate, that it required all the shelter his friends could afford, to keep him free of an impeachment or a court-martial. But as Bletson spoke well, and with great effect in the House of Commons, which was his natural sphere, and was on that account high in the estimation of his party, his behaviour at Edgehill was passed over, and he continued to take an active share in all the political events of that bustling period, though he faced not again the actual front of war.

Bletson's theoretical politics had long inclined him to espouse the opinions of Harrington and others, who adopted the visionary idea of establishing a pure democratical republic in so extensive a country as Britain. This was a rash theory, where there is such an infinite difference betwixt ranks, habits, education, and morals—where there is such an immense disproportion betwixt the wealth of individuals—and where a large portion of the inhabitants consists of the inferior classes of the large towns and manufacturing districts—men unfitted to bear that share in the direction of a state, which must be exercised by the members of a republic in the proper sense of the word. Accordingly, as soon as the experiment was made, it became obvious that no such form of government could be adopted with the smallest chance of stability; and the question came only to be, whether the remnant, or, as it was vulgarly called, the Rump of the Long Parliament, now reduced by the seclusion of so many of the members, to a few scores of persons, should continue, in spite of their unpopularity, to rule the affairs of Britain? Whether they should cast all loose by dissolving themselves, and issuing writs to convoke a new Parliament, the composition of which no one could answer for, any more than for the measures they might take when assembled? Or, lastly, Whether Cromwell, as actually happened, was not to throw the sword into the balance, and boldly possess himself of that power which the remnant of the Parliament were unable to hold, and yet afraid to resign?

Such being the state of parties, the Council of State in distributing the good things in their gift, endeavoured to soothe and gratify the army, as a beggar flings crusts to a growling mastiff. In this view Desborough had been created a Commissioner in the Woodstock matter to gratify Cromwell, Harrison to soothe

the fierce Fifth-monarchy men, and Bletson as a sincere republican, and one of their own leaven.

But if they supposed Bletson had the least intention of becoming a martyr to his republicanism, or submitting to any serious loss on account of it, they much mistook the man. He entertained their principles sincerely, and not the less that they were found impracticable; for the miscarriage of his experiment no more converts the political speculator, than the explosion of a retort undeceives an alchymist. But Bletson was quite prepared to submit to Cromwell, or any one else who might be possessed of the actual authority. He was a ready subject in practice to the powers existing, and made little difference betwixt various kinds of government, holding in theory all to be nearly equal in imperfection, so soon as they diverged from the model of Harrington's Oceana. Cromwell had already been tampering with him, like wax between his finger and thumb, and which he was ready shortly to seal with, smiling at the same time to himself when he beheld the Council of State giving rewards to Bletson as their faithful adherent, while he himself was secure of his allegiance, how soon soever the expected change of government should take place.

But Bletson was still more attached to his metaphysical than his political creed, and carried his doctrines of the perfectibility of mankind as far as he did those respecting the conceivable perfection of a model of government; and as in the one case he declared against all power which did not emanate from the people themselves, so, in his moral speculations, he was unwilling to refer any of the phenomena of nature to a final cause. When pushed, indeed, very hard, Bletson was compelled to mutter some inarticulate and unintelligible doctrines concerning an *Animus Mundi*, or Creative Power in the works of Nature, by which she originally called into existence, and still continues to preserve, her works. To this power, he said some of the purest metaphysicians rendered a certain degree of homage; nor was he himself inclined absolutely to censure those, who, by the institution of holidays, choral dances, songs, and harmless feasts and libations might be disposed to celebrate the great goddess Nature; at least dancing, singing, feasting, and sporting, being comfortable things to both young and old, they might as well sport, dance, and feast, in honour of such appointed holidays, as under any other pretext. But then this moderate show of religion was to be practised under such exceptions as are admitted by the Highgate oath; and no one was to be compelled to dance, drink, sing, or feast, whose taste did not happen to incline them to such divertisement; nor was any one to be obliged to worship the creative power, whether under the name of the *Animus Mundi*, or any other whatsoever. The interference of the Deity in the affairs of mankind he entirely disowned, having proved to his own satisfaction that the idea originated entirely in priestcraft. In short, with the shadowy metaphysical exception aforesaid Mr. Joshua Bletson of Darlington, member for Littlecreed, came as near the predicament of an atheist, as it is perhaps possible for a man to do. But we say this with the necessary salvo; for we have known many like Bletson, whose curtains have been shrewdly shaken by superstition, though their fears were unsanctioned by any religious faith. The devils, we are assured, believe and tremble; but on earth there are many, who, in worse plight than even the natural children of perdition, tremble without believing, and fear even while they blaspheme.

It follows, of course, that nothing could be treated with more scorn by Mr. Bletson, than the debates about Prelacy and Presbytery, about Presbytery and Independency, about Quakers and Anabaptists, Muggletonians and Brownists, and all the various sects with which the Civil War had commenced, and by which its dissensions were still continued. "It was," he said, "as it beasts of burden should quarrel amongst themselves about the fashion of their halters and packsaddles, instead of embracing a favourable opportunity of throwing them aside." Other witty and pithy *remarks he used to make when* time and place suited; for instance, at the club called the Rota, frequented by St. John, and established by Harrington, for the free discussion of political and religious subjects.

But when Bletson was out of this academy, or stronghold of philosophy, he was very cautious how he carried his contempt of the general prejudice in favour of religion and Christianity further than an implied objection or a sneer. If he had an opportunity of talking in private with an ingenuous and intelligent youth, he sometimes attempted to make a proselyte, and showed much address in bribing the vanity of inexperience, by suggesting that a mind like his ought to spurn the prejudices impressed upon it in childhood; and when assuming the *latus clavus* of reason, assuring him that such as he, laying aside the *bulla* of juvenile incapacity, as Bletson called it, should proceed to examine and decide for himself. It frequently happened, that the youth was induced to adopt the doctrines in whole, or in part, of the sage who had seen his natural genius, and who had urged him to exert it in examining, detecting, and declaring for himself; and thus flattery gave proselytes to infidelity, which could not have been gained by all the powerful eloquence, or artful sophistry, of the infidel.

These attempts to extend the influence of what was called free-thinking and philosophy, were carried on, as we have hinted, with a caution dictated by the timidity of the philosopher's disposition. He was conscious his doctrines were suspected, and his proceedings watched, by the two principal sects of Prelatists and Presbyterians, who, however inimical to each other, were still more hostile to one who was an opponent, not only to a church establishment of any kind, but to every denomination of Christianity. He found it more easy to shroud himself among the Independents, whose demands were for a general liberty of conscience, or an unlimited toleration, and whose faith, differing in all respects and particulars, was by some pushed into such wild errors, as to get totally beyond the bounds of every species of Christianity, and approach very nearly to infidelity itself, as extremes of each kind are said to approach each other. Bletson mixed a good deal among those sectaries; and such was his confidence in his own logic and address, that he is supposed to have entertained hopes of bringing to his opinions in time the enthusiastic Vane, as well as the no less enthusiastic Harrison, provided he could but get them to resign their visions of a Fifth Monarchy, and induce them to be contented with a reign of Philosophers in England for the natural period of their lives, instead of the reign of the Saints during the Millennium.

Such was the singular group into which Everard was now introduced; showing, in their various opinions, upon how many devious coasts human nature may make shipwreck, when she has once let go her hold on the anchor which religion has given her to lean upon; the acute self-conceit and worldly learning of Bletson—the rash and ignorant conclusions of the fierce and under-bred Harrison, leading them into the opposite extremes of enthusiasm and infidelity, while Desborough, constitutionally stupid, thought nothing about religion at all; and while the others were active in making sail on different but equally erroneous courses, he might be said to perish like a vessel, which springs a leak and founders in the roadstead. It was wonderful to behold what a strange variety of mistakes and errors, on the part of the King and his Ministers, on the part of the Parliament and their leaders, on the part of the allied kingdoms of Scotland and England towards each other, had combined to rear up men of such dangerous opinions and interested characters among the arbiters of the destiny of Britain.

Those who argue for party's sake, will see all the faults on the one side, without deigning to look at those on the other; those who study history for instruction, will perceive that nothing but the want of concession on either side, and the deadly height to which the animosity of the King's and Parliament's parties had arisen, could have so totally overthrown the well-poised balance of the English constitution.

But we hasten to quit political reflections, the rather that ours, we believe, will please neither Whig nor Tory.

CHAPTER XII.

Three from a College—an you give us four,
Let him bring his share with him.
BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

MR. BLETSON arose and paid his respects to Colonel Everard, with the ease and courtesy of a gentleman of the time; though on every account grieved at his intrusion, as a religious man who held his free-thinking principles in detestation, and would effectually prevent his conversion of Harrison, and even of Desborough, if any thing could be moulded out of such a clod, to the worship of the *Animus Mundi*. Moreover, Bletson knew Everard to be a man of steady probity, and by no means disposed to close with a scheme on which he had successfully sounded the other two, and which was calculated to assure the Commissioners of some little private indemnification for the trouble they were to give themselves in the public business. The philosopher was yet less pleased, when he saw the magistrate and the pastor who had met him in his flight of the preceding evening, when he had been seen, *parma non bene relicta*, with cloak and doublet left behind him.

The presence of Colonel Everard was as unpleasing to Desborough as to Bletson; but the former having no philosophy in him, nor an idea that it was possible for any man to resist helping himself out of untold money, was chiefly embarrassed by the thought, that the plunder which they might be able to achieve out of their trust, might, by this unwelcome addition to their number, be divided into four parts instead of three; and this reflection added to the natural awkwardness with which he grumbled forth a sort of welcome, addressed to Everard.

As for Harrison, he remained like one on higher thoughts intent; his posture unmoved, his eyes fixed on the ceiling as before, and in no way indicating the least consciousness that the company had been more than doubled around him.

Mean time Everard took his place at the table, as a man who assumed his own right, and pointed to his companions to sit down nearer the foot of the board. Wildrake so far misunderstood his signals, as to sit down above the Mayor; but rallying his recollection at a look from his patron, he rose and took his place lower whistling, however, as he went, a sound at which the company stared, as at a freedom highly unbecoming. To complete his indecorum, he seized upon a pipe, and filling it from a large tobacco-box, was soon immersed in a cloud of his own raising, from which a hand shortly after emerged, seized on the black-jack of ale, withdrew it within the vapoury sanctuary and, after a potential draught, replaced it upon the table, its owner beginning to renew the cloud which his intermitted exercise of the tube had almost allowed to subside.

Nobody made any observation on his conduct, out of respect, probably, to Colonel Everard, who bit his lip, but continued silent; aware that censure might extract some escapade more unequivocally characteristic of a cavalier, from his refractory companion. As silence seemed awkward, and the others made no advances to break it, beyond the ordinary salutation, Colonel Everard at length said, "I presume, gentlemen, that you are somewhat surprised at my arrival here, and thus intruding myself into your meeting?"

"Why the dickens should we be surprised, Colonel?" said Desborough; "we know his Excellency, my brother-in-law Noll's—I mean my Lord Cromwell's way, of over-quartering his men in the towns he marches through. Thou hast obtained a share in our commission?"

"And in that," said Bletson, smiling and bowing, "the Lord-General has given us the most acceptable *colleague that could* have been added to our number. *No doubt your authority* for joining with us must be *under warrant of the* Council of State?"

"*Of that, gentlemen*," said the Colonel, "I will presently advise you."—He took out his warrant accordingly, and was about to communicate the contents: but observing that there were three or four half-empty flasks upon the table, that Desborough looked more stupid than usual, and that the philosopher's eyes were reeling in his head, notwithstanding the temperance of Bletson's usual habits, he concluded that they had been fortifying themselves against the horrors of the haunted mansion, by laying in a store of what is called Dutch courage, and therefore prudently resolved to postpone his more important business with them till the cooler hour of morning.—He, therefore, instead of presenting the General's warrant superseding their commission, contented himself with replying,—"My business has, of course, some reference to your proceedings here. But here is—excuse my curiosity—a reverend gentleman," pointing to Holdenough, "who has told me that you are so strangely embarrassed here, as to require both the civil and spiritual authority to enable you to keep possession of Woodstock."

"Before we go into that matter," said Bletson blushing up to the eyes at the recollection of his own fears, so manifestly displayed, yet so inconsistent with his principles, "I should like to know who this other stranger is, who is come with the worthy magistrate, and the no less worthy Presbyterian?"

"Meaning me?" said Wildrake, laying his pipe aside; "Gadzooks, the time hath been that I could have answered the question with a better title; but at present I am only his honour's poor clerk, or secretary, whichever is the current phrase."

"Fore George, my lively blade, thou art a frank fellow of thy tattle," said Desborough. "There is my secretary Tomkins, whom men sillily enough call Fibbet, and the honourable Lieutenant-General Harrison's secretary, Bibbet, who are now at supper below stairs, that durst not for their ears speak a phrase above their breath in the presence of their betters, unless to answer a question."

"Yes, Colonel Everard," said the philosopher, with his quiet smile, glad, apparently, to divert the conversation from the topic of last night's alarm, and recollections which humbled his self-love and self-satisfaction,—"yes; and when Master Fibbet and Master Bibbet *do* speak, their affirmations are as much in a common mould of mutual attestation, as their names would accord in the verses of a poet. If Master Fibbet happens to tell a fiction, Master Bibbet swears it as truth. If Master Bibbet chances to have gotten drunk in the fear of the Lord, Master Fibbet swears he is sober. I have called my own secretary Gibbet, though his name chances to be only Gibeon, a worthy Israelite at your service, but as pure a youth as ever picked a lamb-bone at Paschal. But I call him Gibbet, merely to make up the holy trefoil with another rhyme. This squire of thine, Colonel Everard, looks as if he might be worthy to be coupled with the rest of the fraternity."

"Not I, truly," said the cavalier; "I'll be coupled with no Jew that was ever whelped, and no Jewess neither."

"Scorn not for that, young man," said the philosopher; "the Jews are, in point of religion, the elder brethren, you know."

"The Jews older than the Christians?" said Desborough; "'fore George, they will have thee before the General Assembly, Bletson, if thou venturest to say so."

Wildrake laughed without ceremony at the gross ignorance of Desborough, and was joined by a smuggling response from behind the cupboard, which, when inquired into, proved to be produced by the serving-men. These worthies, timorous as their betters, when they were supposed to have left the room, had only withdrawn to their present place of concealment.

"How now, ye rognes," said Bletson, angrily; "do you not know your duty better?"

"We beg your worthy honour's pardon," said one of the men, "but we dared not go down stairs without a light."

"A light, ye cowardly poltrons?" said the philosopher; "what—to show which of you looks palest when a rat squeaks?—but take a candlestick, and

egone, you cowardly villains! the devils you are so nuch afraid of must be but paltry kites, if they hawk it such bats as you are."

The servants, without replying, took up one of the candlesticks, and prepared to retreat, Trusty Tomkins at the head of the troop, when suddenly, as they arrived at the door of the parlour, which had been left half open, it was shut violently. The three terrified domestics tumbled back into the middle of the room, as if a shot had been discharged in their face, and all who were at the table started to their feet.

Colonel Everard was incapable of a moment's fear, even if any thing frightful had been seen; but he remained stationary, to see what his companions would do, and to get at the bottom, if possible, of the cause of their alarm upon an occasion so trifling. The philosopher seemed to think that *he* was the person chiefly concerned to show manhood on the occasion.

He walked to the door accordingly, murmuring at the cowardice of the servants; but at such a snail's pace, that it seemed he would most willingly have been anticipated by any one whom his reproaches had roused to exertion. "Cowardly blockheads!" he said at last, seizing hold of the handle of the door, but without turning it effectually round—"dare you not open a door?"—(still fumbling with the lock)—"dare you not go down a staircase without a light? Here, bring me the candle, you cowardly villains!—By Heaven, something sighs on the outside!"

As he spoke, he let go the handle of the parlour door, and stepped back a pace or two into the apartment, with cheeks as pale as the band he wore.

"*Deus adjutor meus!*" said the Presbyterian clergyman, rising from his seat. "Give place, sir," addressing Bletson; "it would seem I know more of this matter than thou, and I bless Heaven I am armed for the conflict."

Bold as a grenadier about to mount a breach, yet with the same belief in the existence of a great danger to be encountered, as well as the same reliance in the goodness of his cause, the worthy man stepped before the philosophical Bletson, and taking a light from the sconce in one hand, quietly opened the door with the other, and standing in the threshold, said, "Here is nothing!"

"And who expected to see any thing," said Bletson, excepting those terrified oafs, who take fright at every puff of wind that whistles through the passages of this old dungeon?"

"Mark you, Master Tomkins," said one of the waiting-men in a whisper to the steward,—"See how boldly the minister pressed forward before all of them! Ah! Master Tomkins, our parson is the real commissioned officer of the church—your lay-preachers are no better than a parcel of club-men and volunteers."

"Follow me those who list," said Master Holdenough, "or go before me those who choose, I will walk through the habitable places of this house before I leave it, and satisfy myself whether Satan hath really mingled himself among these dreary dens of ancient wickedness, or whether, like the wicked of whom holy David speaketh, we are afraid, and flee when no one pursueth."

Harrison, who had heard these words, sprung from his seat, and drawing his sword, exclaimed, "Were there as many fiends in the house, as there are hairs on my head, upon this cause I will charge them up to their very trenches!"

So saying, he brandished his weapon, and pressed to the head of the column, where he moved side by side with the minister. The Mayor of Woodstock next joined the body, thinking himself safer perhaps in the company of his pastor; and the whole train moved forward in close order, accompanied by the servants bearing lights, to search the Lodge for some cause of that panic with which they seemed to be suddenly seized.

"Nay, take me with you, my friends," said Colonel Everard, who had looked on in surprise, and was now about to follow the party, when Bletson laid hold on his cloak, and begged him to remain.

"You see, my good Colonel," he said, affecting a courage which his shaking voice belied, "here are only you and I, and honest Desborough, left behind in garrison, while all the others are absent on a sally. We must not hazard the whole troops on one sortie—that were unmilitary—Ha, ha, ha!"

"In the name of Heaven, what means all this?" said Everard. "I heard a foolish tale about apparitions as I came this way, and now I find you all half mad with fear, and cannot get a word of sense among so many of you. Fie, Colonel Desborough—fie, Master Bletson—try to compose yourselves, and let me know, in Heaven's name, the cause of all this disturbance. One would be apt to think your brains were turned."

"And so mine well may," said Desborough "ay, and overturned too, since my bed last night was turned upside down, and I was placed for ten minutes heels uppermost, and head downmost, like a bullock going to be shot."

"What means this nonsense, Master Bletson?—Desborough must have had the nightmare."

"No, faith, Colonel, the goblins, or whatever else they were, had been favourable to honest Desborough, for they reposed the whole of his person on that part of his body which—Hark, did you not hear something?—is the central point of gravity, namely his head?"

"Did you see any thing to alarm you?" said the Colonel.

"Nothing," said Bletson; "but we heard hellish noises, as all our people did; and I, believing little of ghosts and apparitions, concluded the cavaliers were taking us at advantage; so, remembering Rainsborough's fate, I e'en jumped the window, and ran to Woodstock, to call the soldiers to the rescue of Harrison and Desborough."

"And did you not first go to see what the danger was?"

"Ah, my good friend, you forgot that I laid down my commission at the time of the self-denying ordinance. It would have been quite inconsistent with my duty as a Parliament-man, to be brawling amidst a set of ruffians, without any military authority. No—when the Parliament commanded me to sheathe my sword, Colonel, I have too much veneration for their authority, to be found again with it drawn in my hand."

"But the Parliament," said Desborough, hastily, 'did not command you to use your heels when your hands could have saved a man from choking. Odsdickens! you might have stopped when you saw my bed canted heels uppermost, and me half stifled in the bedclothes—you might, I say, have stopped and lent a hand to put it to rights, instead of jumping out of the window, like a new-shorn sheep, so soon as you had run across my room."

"Nay, worshipful Master Desborough," said Bletson, winking on Everard, to show that he was playing on his thickskulled colleague, "how could I tell your particular mode of reposing?—there are many tastes—I have known men who slept by choice on a slope or angle of forty-five."

"Yes, but did ever a man sleep standing on his head, except by miracle?" said Desborough.

"Now, as to miracles"—said the philosopher, confident in the presence of Everard, besides that an opportunity of scoffing at religion really in some degree diverted his fear—"I leave these out of the question, seeing that the evidence on such subjects seems as little qualified to carry conviction, as a horsehair to land a leviathan."

A loud clap of thunder, or a noise as formidable, rang through the Lodge as the scoffer had ended, which struck him pale and motionless, and made Desborough throw himself on his knees, and repeat exclamations and prayers in much admired confusion.

"There must be contrivance here," exclaimed Everard; and snatching one of the candles from a sconce, he rushed out of the apartment, little heeding the entreaties of the philosopher, who, in the extremity of his distress, conjured him by the *Animus Mundi* to remain to the assistance of a distressed philosopher endangered by witches, and a Parliament-man assaulted by ruffians. As for Desborough, he only gaped like a clown in a pantomime; and, doubtful whether

to follow or stop, his natural indolence prevailed, and he sat still.

When on the landing-place of the stairs, Everard paused a moment to consider which was the best course to take. He heard the voices of men talking fast and loud, like people who wish to drown their fears, in the lower story; and aware that nothing could be discovered by those whose inquiries were conducted in a manner so noisy, he resolved to proceed in a different direction, and examine the second floor, which he had now gained.

He had known every corner, both of the inhabited and uninhabited part of the mansion, and availed himself of the candle to traverse two or three intricate passages, which he was afraid he might not remember with sufficient accuracy. This movement conveyed him to a sort of *œil-de-bœuf*, an octagon vestibule, or small hall, from which various rooms opened. Amongst these doors, Everard selected that which led to a very long, narrow, and dilapidated gallery, built in the time of Henry VIII., and which, running along the whole south-west side of the building, communicated at different points with the rest of the mansion. This he thought was likely to be the post occupied by those who proposed to act the sprites upon the occasion; especially as its length and shape gave him some idea that it was a spot where the bold thunder might in many ways be imitated.

Determined to ascertain the truth if possible, he placed his light on a table in the vestibule, and applied himself to open the door into the gallery. At this point he found himself strongly opposed, either by a bolt drawn, or, as he rather conceived, by somebody from within resisting his attempt. He was induced to believe the latter, because the resistance slackened and was renewed, like that of human strength, instead of presenting the permanent opposition of an inanimate obstacle. Though Everard was a strong and active young man, he exhausted his strength in the vain attempt to open the door; and having paused to take breath, was about to renew his efforts with foot and shoulder, and to call at the same time for assistance, when to his surprise, on again attempting the door more gently, in order to ascertain if possible where the strength of the opposing obstacle was situated, he found it give way to a very slight impulse, some impediment fell broken to the ground, and the door flew wide open. The gust of wind, occasioned by the sudden opening of the door, blew out the candle, and Everard was left in darkness, save where the moonshine, which the long siderow of latticed windows dimmed, could imperfectly force its way into the gallery, which lay in ghostly length before him.

The melancholy and doubtful twilight was increased by a quantity of creeping plants on the outside, which, since all had been neglected in these ancient halls, now completely overgrown, had in some instances greatly diminished, and in others almost quite choked up, the space of the lattices, extending between the heavy stone shaft-work which divided the windows, both lengthways and across. On the other side there were no windows at all, and the gallery had been once hung round with paintings, chiefly portraits, by which that side of the apartment had been adorned. Most of the pictures had been removed, yet the empty frames of some, and the tattered remnants of others, were still visible along the extent of the waste gallery; the look of which was so desolate, and it appeared so well adapted for mischief, supposing there were enemies near him, that Everard could not help pausing at the entrance, and recommending himself to God, ere, drawing his sword, he advanced into the apartment, treading as lightly as possible, and keeping in the shadow as much as he could.

Markham Everard was by no means superstitious, but he had the usual credulity of the times; and though he did not yield easily to tales of supernatural visitations, yet he could not help thinking he was in the very situation, where, if such things were ever *permitted, they might* be expected to take place, *while his own stealthy* and ill-assured pace, his *drawn weapon and* extended arms, being the very attitude and action of doubt and suspicion, tended to increase in his mind the gloomy feelings of which they are the usual indications, and with which they are constantly associated. Under such unpleasant impressions, and conscious of the neighbourhood of something unfriendly, Colonel Everard had already advanced about half along the gallery, when he heard some one sigh very near him, and a low soft voice pronounce his name.

"Here I am," he replied, while his heart beat thick and short. "Who calls on Markham Everard?"

Another sigh was the only answer.

"Speak," said the Colonel, "whoever or whatsoever you are, and tell with what intent and purpose you are lurking in these apartments?"

"With a better intent than yours," returned the soft voice.

"Than mine!" answered Everard in great surprise. "Who are you that dare judge of my intents?"

"What, or who are you, Markham Everard, who wander by moonlight through these deserted halls of royalty, where none should be but those who mourn their downfall, or are sworn to avenge it?"

"It is—and yet it cannot be," said Everard; "yet it is, and must be.—Alice Lee, the devil or you speaks. Answer me. I conjure you! speak openly—on what dangerous scheme are you engaged? where is your father? why are you here?—wherefore do you run so deadly a venture?—Speak, I conjure you, Alice Lee!"

"She whom you call on is at the distance of miles from this spot. What if her Genius speaks when she is absent?—what if the soul of an ancestress of hers and yours were now addressing you?—what if"——

"Nay," answered Everard, "but what if the dearest of human beings has caught a touch of her father's enthusiasm?—what if she is exposing her person to danger, her reputation to scandal, by traversing in disguise and darkness a house filled with armed men? Speak to me, my fair cousin, in your own person. I am furnished with powers to protect my uncle, Sir Henry—to protect you too, dearest Alice, even against the consequences of this visionary and wild attempt. Speak—I see where you are, and, with all my respect, I cannot submit to be thus practised upon. Trust me—trust your cousin Markham with your hand, and believe that he will die or place you in honourable safety."

As he spoke, he exercised his eyes as keenly as possible to detect where the speaker stood; and it seemed to him, that about three yards from him there was a shadowy form, of which he could not discern even the outline, placed as it was within the deep and prolonged shadow thrown by a space of wall intervening betwixt two windows, upon that side of the room from which the light was admitted. He endeavoured to calculate, as well as he could, the distance betwixt himself and the object which he watched, under the impression, that if, by even using a slight degree of compulsion, he could detach his beloved Alice from the confederacy into which he supposed her father's zeal for the cause of royalty had engaged her, he would be rendering them both the most essential favour. He could not indeed but conclude, that however successfully the plot which he conceived to be in agitation had proceeded against the timid Bletson, the stupid Desborough, and the crazy Harrison, there was little doubt that at length their artifice must necessarily bring shame and danger on those engaged in it.

It must also be remembered, that Everard's affection to his cousin, although of the most respectful and devoted character, partook less of the distant veneration which a lover of those days entertained for the lady whom he worshipped with humble diffidence, than of the fond and familiar feelings which a brother entertains towards a younger sister, whom he thinks himself entitled to guide, advise, and even in some degree to control. So kindly and intimate had been their intercourse, that he had little more hesitation in endeavouring to arrest her progress in the dangerous course in which she seemed to be engaged, even at the risk of giving her momentary offence,

m he would have had in snatching her from a tor-
it or conflagration, at the chance of hurting her by
violence of his grasp. All this passed through
mind in the course of a single minute; and he
olved at all events to detain her on the spot, and
mpel, if possible, an explanation from her.
With this purpose, Everard again conjured his
usin, in the name of Heaven, to give up this idle
d dangerous mummery; and lending an accurate
to her answer, endeavoured from the sound to
.culate as nearly as possible the distance between
em.
'I am not she for whom you take me," said the
ice; "and dearer regards than aught connected
th her life or death, bid me warn you to keep aloof,
d leave this place."
'Not till I have convinced you of your childish
ly," said the Colonel, springing forward, and en-
ouring to catch hold of her who spoke to him.
t no female form was within his grasp. On the
ntrary, he was met by a shock which could come
m no woman's arm, and which was rude enough
stretch him on his back on the floor. At the same
ne he felt the point of a sword at his throat, and his
nds so completely mastered, that not the slightest
'ence remained to him.
'A cry for assistance," said a voice near him, but
t that which he had hitherto heard, "will be stifled
your blood!—No harm is meant you—be wise, and
silent."
The fear of death, which Everard had often braved
the field of battle, became more intense as he felt
nself in the hands of unknown assassins, and to-
ly devoid of all means of defence. The sharp point
the sword pricked his bare throat, and the foot of
n who held it was upon his breast. He felt as if a
gle thrust would put an end to life, and all the
erish joys and sorrows which agitate us so strange-
and from which we are yet so reluctant to part.
rge drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead
is heart throbbed, as if it would burst from its
nfinement in the bosom—he experienced the agony
ich fear imposes on the brave man, acute in pro-
rtion to that which pain inflicts when it subdues the
ost and healthy.
'Cousin Alice,"—he attempted to speak, and the
ord's point pressed his throat yet more closely,
'Cousin, let me not be murdered in a manner so
rful!"
'I tell you," replied the voice, "that you speak to
e who is not here; but your life is not aimed at,
ovided you swear on your faith as a Christian, and
ur honour as a gentleman, that you will conceal
at has happened, whether from the people below,
from any other person. On this condition you may
e; and if you seek her, you will find Alice Lee at
celino's cottage in the forest."
'Since I may not help myself otherwise," said
erard, "I swear, as I have a sense of religion and
nour, I will say nothing of this violence, nor make
y search after those who are concerned in it."
'For that we care nothing," said the voice. "Thou
st an example how well thou mayst catch mischief
thy own part; but we are in case to defy thee. Rise
d begone!"
The foot, the sword's-point, were withdrawn, and
erard was about to start up hastily, when the
ice, in the same softness of tone which distin-
shed it at first, said, "No haste—cold and bare
el is yet around thee. Now—now—now—[the
rds dying away as at a distance]—thou art free.
secret and be safe."
Markham Everard arose, and, in rising, embar-
ssed his feet with his own sword, which he had
pped when springing forward, as he supposed, to
hold of his fair cousin. He snatched it up in
ste, and as his hand clasped the hilt, his courage,
ich had given way under the apprehension of in-
nt death, began to return; he considered, with
ost his usual composure, what was to be done
ct. Deeply affronted at the disgrace which he had
tained, he questioned for an instant whether he
ght to keep his *extorted promise*, or should not
ser summon assistance, and make haste to disco-
ver and seize those who had been recently engaged
in such violence on his person. But these persons,
be they who they would, had had his life in their
power—he had pledged his word in ransom of it—and
what was more, he could not divest himself of the
idea that his beloved Alice was a confidant, at least,
if not an actor, in the confederacy which had thus
baffled him. This prepossession determined his con-
duct; for, though angry at supposing she must have
been accessory to his personal ill-treatment, he could
not in any event think of an instant search through
the mansion, which might have compromised her
safety, or that of his uncle. "But I will to the hut,"
he said—"I will instantly to the hut, ascertain her
share in this wild and dangerous confederacy, and
snatch her from ruin, if it be possible."
As, under the influence of the resolution which he
had formed, Everard groped his way through the gal-
lery, and regained the vestibule, he heard his name
called by the well-known voice of Wildrake. "What
—ho!—holla!—Colonel Everard—Mark Everard—it
is dark as the devil's mouth—speak—where are you?
—The witches are keeping their hellish sabbath here,
as I think.—Where are you?"
"Here, here!" answered Everard. "Cease your
bawling. Turn to the left, and you will meet me."
Guided by his voice, Wildrake soon appeared, with
a light in one hand, and his drawn sword in the
other. "Where have you been?" he said—"what has
detained you?—Here are Bletson and the brute Dos-
borough terrified out of their lives, and Harrison rav-
ing mad, because the devil will not be civil enough to
rise to fight him in single *duello*."
"Saw or heard you nothing as you came along?"
said Everard.
"Nothing," said his friend, "excepting that when
I first entered this cursed ruinous labyrinth, the light
was struck out of my hand, as if by a switch, which
obliged me to return for another."
"I must come by a horse instantly, Wildrake, and
another for thyself, if it be possible."
"We can take two of those belonging to the troop-
ers," answered Wildrake. "But for what purpose
should we run away, like rats, at this time in the eve-
ning?—Is the house falling?"
"I cannot answer you," said the Colonel, pushing
forward into a room where there were some remains
of furniture.
Here the cavalier took a more strict view of his per-
son, and exclaimed in wonder, "What the devil have
you been fighting with, Markham, that has bedizened
you after this sorry fashion?"
"Fighting!" exclaimed Everard.
"Yes," replied his trusty attendant, "I say fight-
ing. Look at yourself in the mirror."
He did, and saw he was covered with dust and
blood. The latter proceeded from a scratch which he
had received in the throat, as he struggled to extricate
himself. With unaffected alarm, Wildrake undid his
friend's collar, and with eager haste proceeded to exa-
mine the wound, his hands trembling, and his eyes
glistening with apprehension for his benefactor's life.
When, in spite of Everard's opposition, he had exa-
mined the hurt, and found it trifling, he resumed the
natural wildness of his character, perhaps the more
readily that he had felt shame in departing from it,
into one which expressed more of feeling than he
would be thought to possess.
"If that be the devil's work, Mark," said he, "the
foul fiend's claws are not nigh so formidable as they
are represented; but no one shall say that your blood
has been shed unrevenged, while Roger Wildrake was
by your side. Where left you this same imp? I will
back to the field of fight, confront him with my ra-
pier, and were his nails ten-penny nails, and his teeth
as long as those of a harrow, he shall render me rea-
son for the injury he has done you."
"Madness—madness!" exclaimed Everard; "I had
this trifling hurt by a fall—a basin and towel will
wipe it away. Mean while, if you will ever do me
kindness, get the troop-horses—command them for
the service of the public, in the name of his Excel-
lency the General. I will but wash, and join you in
an instant before the gate."

"Well, I will serve you, Everard, as a mute serves the Grand Signior, without knowing why or wherefore. But will you go without seeing these people below?"

"Without seeing any one," said Everard; "lose no time, for God's sake."

He found out the non-commissioned officer, and demanded the horses in a tone of authority, to which the corporal yielded undisputed obedience, as one well aware of Colonel Everard's military rank and consequence. So all was in a minute or two ready for the expedition.

CHAPTER XIII.

——She kneel'd, and saintlike
Cast her eyes to heaven, and pray'd devoutly.
King Henry VIII.

Colonel Everard's departure at the late hour, for so it was then thought, of seven in the evening, excited much speculation. There was a gathering of menials and dependants in the outer chamber, or hall, for no one doubted that his sudden departure was owing to his having, as they expressed it, "seen something," and all desired to know how a man of such acknowledged courage as Everard, looked under the awe of a recent apparition. But he gave them no time to make comments; for, striding through the hall wrapt in his riding suit, he threw himself on horseback, and rode furiously through the Chase, towards the hut of the keeper Joliffe.

It was the disposition of Markham Everard to be hot, keen, earnest, impatient, and decisive to a degree of precipitation. The acquired habits which education had taught, and which the strong moral and religious discipline of his sect had greatly strengthened, were such as to enable him to conceal, as well as to check, this constitutional violence, and to place him upon his guard against indulging it. But when in the high tide of violent excitation, the natural impetuosity of the young soldier's temper was sometimes apt to overcome these artificial obstacles, and then, like a torrent foaming over a wear, it became more furious, as if in revenge for the constrained calm which it had been for some time obliged to assume. In these instances he was accustomed to see only that point to which his thoughts were bent, and to move straight towards it, whether a moral object, or the storming of a breach, without either calculating, or even appearing to see, the difficulties which were before him.

At present, his ruling and impelling motive was to detach his beloved cousin, if possible, from the dangerous and discreditable machinations in which he suspected her to have engaged, or, on the other hand, to discover that she really had no concern with these stratagems. He should know how to judge of that in some measure, he thought, by finding her present or absent at the hut, towards which he was now galloping. He had read, indeed, in some ballad or minstrel's tale, of a singular deception practised on a jealous old man, by means of a subterranean communication between his house and that of a neighbour, which the lady in question made use of to present herself in the two places alternately, with such speed, and so much address, that, after repeated experiments, the dotard was deceived into the opinion, that his wife, and the lady who was so very like her, and to whom his neighbour paid so much attention, were two different persons. But in the present case there was no room for such a deception; the distance was too great, and as he took by much the nearest way from the castle, and rode full speed, it would be impossible, he knew, for his cousin, who was a timorous horsewoman even by daylight, to have got home before him.

Her father might indeed be displeased at his interference; but what title had he to be so?—Was not Alice Lee the near relation of his blood, the dearest object of his heart, and would he now abstain from an effort to save her from the consequences of a silly and wild conspiracy, because the old knight's spleen might *be awakened by Everard's* making his appearance at *their present dwelling* contrary to his commands? *No He would endure the* old man's harsh language, as he endured the blast of the autumn wind, which was howling around him, and swinging the crashing branches of the trees under which he passed, but could not oppose, or even retard, his journey.

If he found not Alice, as he had reason to believe she would be absent, to Sir Henry Lee himself he would explain what he had witnessed. However she might have become accessory to the juggling tricks performed at Woodstock, he could not but think it was without her father's knowledge, so severe a judge was the old knight of female propriety, and so strict an assertor of female decorum. He would take the same opportunity, he thought, of stating to him the well-grounded hopes he entertained, that his dwelling at the Lodge might be prolonged, and the sequestrators removed from the royal mansion and domains, by other means than those of the absurd species of intimidation which seemed to be resorted to to scare them from thence.

All this seemed to be so much within the line of his duty as a relative, that it was not until he halted at the door of the ranger's hut, and threw his bridle into Wildrake's hand, that Everard recollected the fiery, high, and unbending character of Sir Henry Lee, and felt, even when his fingers were on the latch, a reluctance to intrude himself upon the presence of the irritable old knight.

But there was no time for hesitation. Bevis, who had already bayed more than once from within the Lodge, was growing impatient, and Everard had but just time to bid Wildrake hold the horses until he should send Joceline to his assistance, when old Joan unpinned the door, to demand who was without at that time of the night. To have attempted any thing like an explanation with poor dame Joan, would have been quite hopeless; the Colonel, therefore, put her gently aside, and shaking himself loose from the hold she had laid on his cloak, entered the kitchen of Joceline's dwelling. Bevis, who had advanced to support Joan in her opposition, humbled his lion-port, with that wonderful instinct which makes his race remember so long those with whom they have been familiar, and acknowledged his master's relative, by doing homage in his fashion, with his head and tail.

Colonel Everard, more uncertain in his purpose every moment as the necessity of its execution drew near, stole over the floor like one who treads in a sick chamber, and opening the door of the interior apartment with a slow and trembling hand, as he would have withdrawn the curtains of a dying friend, he saw, within, the scene which we are about to describe.

Sir Henry Lee sat in a wicker arm-chair by the fire. He was wrapped in a cloak, and his limbs extended on a stool, as if he were suffering from gout or indisposition. His long white beard flowing over the dark-coloured garment, gave him more the appearance of a hermit than of an aged soldier or man of quality; and that character was increased by the deep and devout attention with which he listened to a respectable old man, whose dilapidated dress showed still something of the clerical habit, and who, with a low, but full and deep voice, was reading the Evening Service according to the Church of England. Alice Lee kneeled at the feet of her father, and made the responses with a voice that might have suited the choir of angels, and a modest and serious devotion, which suited the melody of her tone. The face of the officiating clergyman would have been good-looking, had it not been disfigured with a black patch which covered the left eye and a part of his face, and had not the features which were visible been marked with the traces of care and suffering.

When Colonel Everard entered, the clergyman raised his finger, as cautioning him to forbear disturbing the divine service of the evening, and pointed to a seat; to which, struck deeply with the scene he had witnessed, the intruder stole with as light a step as possible, and knelt devoutly down as one of the little congregation.

Everard had been bred by his father what was called a Puritan; a member of a sect who, in the primitive sense of the word, were persons that did not except against the doctrines of the Church of

England, or even in all respects against its hierarchy, but chiefly dissented from it on the subject of certain ceremonies, habits, and forms of ritual, which were insisted upon by the celebrated and unfortunate Laud, with ill-timed tenacity. But even if, from the habits of his father's house, Everard's opinions had been diametrically opposed to the doctrines of the English Church, he must have been reconciled to them by the regularity with which the service was performed in his uncle's family at Woodstock, who, during the blossom of his fortunes, generally had a chaplain residing in the Lodge for that special purpose.

Yet deep as was the habitual veneration with which he heard the impressive service of the Church, Everard's eyes could not help straying towards Alice, and his thoughts wandering to the purpose of his presence there. She seemed to have recognised him at once, for there was a deeper glow than usual upon her cheek, her fingers trembled as they turned the leaves of her prayerbook, and her voice, lately as firm as it was melodious, faltered when she repeated the responses. It appeared to Everard, as far as he could collect by the stolen glances which he directed towards her, that the character of her beauty, as well as of her outward appearance, had changed with her fortunes.

The beautiful and high-born young lady had now approached as nearly as possible to the brown stuff dress of an ordinary village maiden; but what she had lost in gayety of appearance, she had gained as it seemed in dignity. Her beautiful light-brown tresses, now folded around her head, and only curled where nature had so arranged them, gave her an air of simplicity, which did not exist when her headdress showed the skill of a curious tire-woman. A light joyous air, with something of a humorous expression, which seemed to be looking for amusement, had vanished before the touch of affliction, and a calm melancholy supplied its place, which seemed on the watch to administer comfort to others. Perhaps the former arch, though innocent expression of countenance, was uppermost in her lover's recollection, when he concluded that Alice had acted a part in the disturbances which had taken place at the Lodge. It is certain, that when he now looked upon her, it was with shame for having nourished such a suspicion, and the resolution to believe rather that the devil had imitated her voice, than that a creature, who seemed so much above the feelings of this world, and so nearly allied to the purity of the next, should have had the indelicacy to mingle in such manœuvres as he himself and others had been subjected to.

These thoughts shot through his mind, in spite of the impropriety of indulging them at such a moment. The service now approached the close; and a good deal to Colonel Everard's surprise as well as confusion, the officiating priest, in firm and audible tone, and with every attribute of dignity, prayed to the Almighty to bless and preserve "Our Sovereign Lord, King Charles, the lawful and undoubted King of these realms." The petition (in those days most dangerous) was pronounced with a full, raised, and distinct articulation, as if the priest challenged all who heard him to dissent if they dared. If the republican officer did not assent to the petition, he thought at least it was no time to protest against it.

The service was concluded in the usual manner, and the little congregation arose. It now included Wildrake, who had entered during the latter prayer, and was the first of the party to speak, running up to the priest, and shaking him by the hand most heartily, swearing at the same time, that he truly rejoiced to see him. The good clergyman returned the pressure with a smile, observing he should have believed his asseveration without an oath. In the mean while, Colonel Everard, approaching his uncle's seat, made a deep inclination of respect, first to Sir Henry Lee, and then to Alice, whose colour now spread from her cheek to her brow and bosom.

"I have to crave your excuse," said the Colonel with hesitation, "for having chosen for my visit, which I dare not hope would be very agreeable at any time, a season most peculiarly unsuitable."

"So far from it, nephew," answered Sir Henry, with much more mildness of manner than Everard had dared to expect, "that your visits at other times would be much more welcome, had we the fortune to see you often at our hours of worship."

"I hope the time will soon come, sir, when Englishmen of all sects and denominations," replied Everard, "will be free in conscience to worship in common the great Father, whom they all after their manner call by that affectionate name."

"I hope so too, nephew," said the old man in the same unaltered tone; "and we will not at present dispute, whether you would have the Church of England coalesce with the Conventicle, or the Conventicle conform to the Church. It was, I ween, not to settle jarring creeds, that you have honoured our poor dwelling, where, to say the truth, we dared scarce have expected to see you again, so coarse was our last welcome."

"I should be happy to believe," said Colonel Everard, hesitating, "that—that—in short my presence was not now so unwelcome here as on that occasion."

"Nephew," said Sir Henry, "I will be frank with you. When you were last here, I thought you had stolen from me a precious pearl, which at one time it would have been my pride and happiness to have bestowed on you; but which, being such as you have been of late, I would bury in the depths of the earth rather than give to your keeping. This somewhat chafed, as honest Will says, 'the rash humour which my mother gave me.' I thought I was robbed, and I thought I saw the robber before me. I am mistaken—I am not robbed; and the attempt without the deed I can pardon."

"I would not willingly seek offence in your words, sir," said Colonel Everard, "when their general purport sounds kind; but I can protest before Heaven, that my views and wishes towards you and your family are as void of selfish hopes and selfish ends, as they are fraught with love to you and to yours."

"Let us hear them, man; we are not much accustomed to good wishes now-a-days and their very rarity will make them welcome."

"I would willingly, Sir Henry, since you might not choose me to give you a more affectionate name, convert those wishes into something effectual for your comfort. Your fate, as the world now stands, is bad, and, I fear, like to be worse."

"Worse than I expect it cannot be. Nephew, I do not shrink before my changes of fortune. I shall wear coarser clothes,—I shall feed on more ordinary food,—men will not doff their cap to me as they were wont, when I was the great and the wealthy. What of that? Old Harry Lee loved his honour better than his title, his faith better than his land and lordship. Have I not seen the 30th of January? I am neither philomath nor astrologer; but old Will teaches me that when green leaves fall winter is at hand, and that darkness will come when the sun sets."

"Bethink you, sir," said Colonel Everard, "if without any submission asked, any oath taken, any engagement imposed, express or tacit, excepting that you are not to excite disturbances in the public peace you can be restored to your residence in the Lodge, and your usual fortunes and perquisites there—I have great reason to hope this may be permitted, if not expressly, at least on sufferance."

"Yes, I understand you. I am to be treated like the royal coin, marked with the cognisance of the Rump to make it pass current, although I am too old to have the royal insignia grinded off from me. Kinsman, I will have none of this. I have lived at the lodge too long; and let me tell you, I had left it in scorn long since, but for the orders of one whom I may yet live to do service to. I will take nothing from the usurpers, be their name Rump or Cromwell—be they one devil or legion—I will not take from them an old cap to cover my gray hairs—a coat cloak to protect my frail limbs from the cold. They shall not say they have, by their unwilling bounty, made Abraham rich—I will live, as I will die, the Loyal Lee."

"May I hope you will think of it, sir; and that you will, perhaps, considering what slight submission is asked, give me a better answer?"

"Sir, if I retract my opinion, which is not my wont, you shall hear of it.—And now, cousin, have you more to say? We keep that worthy clergyman in the outer room."

"Something I had to say—something touching my cousin Alice," said Everard, with embarrassment; "but I fear that the prejudices of both are so strong against me"——

"Sir, I dare turn my daughter loose to you—I will go join the good doctor in dame Joan's apartment. I am not unwilling that you should know that the girl hath, in all reasonable sort, the exercise of her free will."

He withdrew and left the cousins together.

Colonel Everard advanced to Alice, and was about to take her hand. She drew back, took the seat which her father had occupied, and pointed out to him one at some distance.

"Are we then so much estranged, my dearest Alice?" he said.

"We will speak of that presently," she replied. "In the first place, let me ask the cause of your visit here at so late an hour."

"You heard," said Everard, "what I stated to your father?"

"I did; but that seems to have been only part of your errand—something there seemed to be which applied particularly to me."

"It was a fancy—a strange mistake," answered Everard. "May I ask if you have been abroad this evening?"

"Certainly not," she replied. "I have small temptation to wander from my present home, poor as it is; and whilst here, I have important duties to discharge. But why does Colonel Everard ask so strange a question?"

"Tell me in turn, why your cousin Markham has lost the name of friendship and kindred, and even of some nearer feeling, and then I will answer you, Alice."

"It is soon answered," she said. "When you drew your sword against my father's cause—almost against his person—I studied, more than I should have done, to find excuse for you. I knew, that is, I thought I knew, your high feelings of public duty—I knew the opinions in which you had been bred up; and I said, I will not even for this, cast him off—he opposes his King because he is loyal to his country. You endeavoured to avert the great and concluding tragedy of the 30th of January; and it confirmed me in my opinion, that Markham Everard might be misled, but could not be base or selfish."

"And what has changed your opinion, Alice? or who dare," said Everard, reddening, "attach such epithets to the name of Markham Everard?"

"I am no subject," she said, "for exercising your valour Colonel Everard, nor do I mean to offend. But you will find enough of others who will avow, that Colonel Everard is truckling to the usurper Cromwell, and that all his fair pretexts of forwarding his country's liberties, are but a screen for driving a bargain with the successful encroacher, and obtaining the best terms he can for himself and his family."

"For myself—Never!"

"But for your family you have—Yes, I am well assured that you have pointed out to the military tyrant, the way in which he and his satraps may master the government. Do you think my father or I would accept an asylum purchased at the price of England's liberty, and your honour?"

"Gracious Heaven, Alice, what is this? You accuse me of pursuing the very course which so lately had your approbation!"

"When you spoke with authority of your father, and recommended our submission to the existing government, such as it was, I own I thought—that my father's gray head might, without dishonour, have remained under the roof where it had so long been sheltered. But did your father sanction your becoming the adviser of yonder ambitious soldier *to a new course of innovation*, and his abettor in *the establishment of a new species of tyranny?—It is one thing to submit to oppression, another to* be the agent of tyrants—And O, Markham—their bloodhound!"

"How! bloodhound?—what mean you?—I own it is true I could see with content the wounds of this bleeding country stanched, even at the expense of beholding Cromwell, after his matchless rise, take a yet further step to power—but to be his bloodhound! What is your meaning?"

"It is false, then?—Ah, I thought I could swear it had been false!"

"What, in the name of God, is it you ask?"

"It is false that you are engaged to betray the young King of Scotland?"

"Betray him! *I* betray him, or any fugitive? Never! I would he were well out of England—I would lend him my aid to escape, were he in the house at this instant; and think in acting so I did his enemies good service, by preventing their soiling themselves with his blood—but betray him, never!"

"I knew it—I was sure it was impossible. Oh, be yet more honest; disengage yourself from yonder gloomy and ambitious soldier! Shun him and his schemes, which are formed in injustice, and can only be realized in yet more blood!"

"Believe me," replied Everard, "that I choose the line of policy best befitting the times."

"Choose that," she said, "which best befits duty, Markham—which best befits truth and honour. Do your duty, and let Providence decide the rest.—Farewell! we tempt my father's patience too far—you know his temper—farewell, Markham."

She extended her hand, which he pressed to his lips, and left the apartment. A silent bow to his uncle, and a sign to Wildrake, whom he found in the kitchen of the cabin, were the only tokens of recognition exhibited, and leaving the hut, he was soon mounted, and, with his companion, advanced on his return to the Lodge.

CHAPTER XIV.

Deeds are done on earth,
Which have their punishment ere the earth closes
Upon the perpetrators. Be it the working
Of the remorse-stirr'd fancy, or the vision,
Distinct and real, of unearthly being,
All ages witness, that beside the couch
Of the fell homicide oft stalks the ghost
Of him he slew, and shows the shadowy wound.
Old Play.

EVERARD had come to Joceline's hut as fast as horse could bear him, and with the same impetuosity of purpose as of speed. He saw no choice in the course to be pursued, and felt in his own imagination the strongest right to direct, and even reprove, his cousin, beloved as she was, on account of the dangerous machinations with which she appeared to have connected herself. He returned slowly, and in a very different mood.

Not only had Alice, prudent as beautiful, appeared completely free from the weakness of conduct which seemed to give him some authority over her, but her views of policy, if less practicable, were so much more direct and noble than his own, as led him to question whether he had not compromised himself too rashly with Cromwell, even although the state of the country was so greatly divided and torn by faction, that the promotion of the General to the possession of the executive government seemed the only chance of escaping a renewal of the Civil War. The more exalted and purer sentiments of Alice lowered him in his own eyes; and though unshaken in his opinion, that it were better the vessel should be steered by a pilot having no good title to the office, than that she should run upon the breakers, he felt that he was not espousing the most direct, manly, and disinterested side of the question.

As he rode on, immersed in these unpleasant contemplations, and considerably lessened in his own esteem by what had happened, Wildrake, who rode by his side, and was no friend to long silence, began to enter into conversation. "I have been thinking, Mark," said he, "that if you and I had been called to the bar—as, by the by, has been in danger of happening to me in more senses than one—I say,

had we become barristers, I would have had the better oiled tongue of the two—the fairer art of persuasion."

"Perhaps so," replied Everard, "though I never heard thee use any, save to induce a usurer to lend thee money, or a taverner to abate a reckoning."

"And yet this day, or rather night, I could have, as I think, made a conquest which baffled you."

"Indeed?" said the Colonel, becoming attentive.

"Why, look you," said Wildrake, "it was a main object with you to induce Mistress Alice Lee—by Heaven, she is an exquisite creature—I approve of your taste, Mark—I say you desire to persuade her, and the stout old Trojan her father, to consent to return to the Lodge, and live there quietly, and under connivance, like gentlefolk, instead of lodging in a hut hardly fit to harbour a Tom of Bedlam."

"Thou art right; such, indeed, was a great part of my object in this visit," answered Everard.

"But, perhaps, you also expected to visit there yourself, and so keep watch over pretty Mistress Lee—eh?"

"I never entertained so selfish a thought," said Everard; "and if this nocturnal disturbance at the mansion were explained and ended, I would instantly take my departure."

"Your friend Noll would expect something more from you," said Wildrake—"he would expect, in case the knight's reputation for loyalty should draw any of our poor exiles and wanderers about the Lodge, that you should be on the watch, and ready to snap them. In a word—as far as I can understand his long-winded speeches—he would have Woodstock a trap, your uncle and his pretty daughter the bait of toasted cheese—craving your Chloe's pardon for the comparison—you the spring-fall which should bar their escape—his Lordship himself being the great grimalkin to whom they are to be given over to be devoured."

"Dared Cromwell mention this to thee in express terms?" said Everard, pulling up his horse, and stopping in the midst of the road.

"Nay, not in express terms, which I do not believe he ever used in his life—you might as well expect a drunken man to go straight forward; but he insinuated as much to me, and indicated that you might deserve well of him—Gadzo—the damnable proposal sticks in my throat—by betraying our noble and rightful King, [here he pulled off his hat,] whom God grant in health and wealth long to reign, as the worthy clergyman says, though I fear just now his Majesty is both sick and sorry, and never a penny in his pouch to boot."

"This tallies with what Alice hinted," said Everard; "but how could she know it? didst thou give her any hint of such a thing?"

"I?" replied the cavalier, "I, who never saw Mistress Alice in my life till to-night, and then only for an instant—zooks, man, how is that possible?"

"True," replied Everard, and seemed lost in thought. At length he spoke—"I should call Cromwell to account for his bad opinion of me; for, even though not seriously expressed, but, as I am convinced it was, with the sole view of proving you, and perhaps myself, it was, nevertheless, a misconstruction to be resented."

"I'll carry a cartel for you, with all my heart and soul," said Wildrake; "and turn out with his godliness's second, with as good will as I ever drank a glass of sack."

"Pshaw," replied Everard, "those in his high place fight no single combats.—But tell me, Roger Wildrake, didst thou thyself think me capable of the falsehood and treachery implied in such a message?"

"I!" exclaimed Wildrake.—"Markham Everard, you have been my early friend, my constant benefactor. When Colchester was reduced, you saved me from the gallows, and since that thou hast twenty times saved me from starving. But, by Heaven, if I thought you capable of such villany as your General recommended,—by yonder blue sky, and all the works of creation which it bends over, I would stab you with my own hand!"

"Death," replied Everard, "I should indeed deserve, *but not from you, perhaps;—but fortunately*, I cannot, if I would, be guilty of the treachery you would punish. Know that I had this day secret notice, and from Cromwell himself, that the young man has escaped by sea from Bristol."

"Now, God Almighty be blessed, who protected him through so many dangers!" exclaimed Wildrake.—"Huzza!—Up hearts, cavaliers!—Hey for cavaliers!—God bless King Charles!—Moon and stars, catch my hat!"—and he threw it up as high as he could into the air. The celestial bodies which he invoked did not receive the present despatched to them; but, as in the case of Sir Henry Lee's scabbard, an old gnarled oak became a second time the receptacle of a waif and stray of loyal enthusiasm. Wildrake looked rather foolish at the circumstance, and his friend took the opportunity of admonishing him.

"Art thou not ashamed to bear thee so like a schoolboy?"

"Why," said Wildrake, "I have but sent a Puritan's hat upon a loyal errand. I laugh to think how many of the schoolboys thou talk'st of will be cheated into climbing the pollard next year, expecting to find the nest of some unknown bird in yonder unmeasured margin of felt."

"Hush now, for God's sake, and let us speak calmly," said Everard. "Charles has escaped, and I am glad of it. I would willingly have seen him on his father's throne by composition, but not by the force of the Scottish army, and the incensed and vengeful royalists"——

"Master Markham Everard," began the cavalier, interrupting him——

"Nay, hush, dear Wildrake," said Everard; "let us not dispute a point on which we cannot agree; and give me leave to go on.—I say, since the young man has escaped, Cromwell's offensive and injurious stipulation falls to the ground; and I see not why my uncle and his family should not again enter their own house, under the same terms of connivance as many other royalists. What may be incumbent on me is different, nor can I determine my course until I have an interview with the General, which, as I think, will end in his confessing that he threw in this offensive proposal to sound us both. It is much in his manner; for he is blunt, and never sees or feels the punctilious honour which the gallants of the day stretch to such delicacy."

"I'll acquit him of having any punctilio about him," said Wildrake, "either touching honour or honesty.—Now, to come back to where we started.—Supposing you were not to reside in person at the Lodge, and to forbear even visiting there, unless on invitation, when such a thing can be brought about, I tell you frankly, I think your uncle and his daughter might be induced to come back to the Lodge, and reside there as usual. At least the clergyman, that worthy old cock, gave me to hope as much."

"He had been hasty in bestowing his confidence," said Everard.

"True," replied Wildrake; "he confided in me at once; for he instantly saw my regard for the church. I thank Heaven I never passed a clergyman in his canonicals without pulling my hat off—(and thou knowest, the most desperate duel I ever fought was with young Grayless of the Inner Temple, for taking the wall of the Reverend Dr. Bunce)—Ah, I can gain a chaplain's ear instantly. Gadzooks, they know whom they have to trust to in such a one as I."

"Dost thou think, then," said Colonel Everard, "or rather does this clergyman think, that if they were secure of intrusion from me, the family would return to the Lodge, supposing the intruding commissioners gone, and this nocturnal disturbance explained and ended?"

"The old Knight," answered Wildrake, "may be wrought upon by the Doctor to return, if he is secure against intrusion. As for disturbances, the stout old boy, so far as I can learn in two minutes' conversation, laughs at all this turmoil as the work of mere imagination, the consequence of the remorse of their own evil consciences; and says that goblin or devil was never heard of at Woodstock, until it became the residence of such men as they, who have now usurped the possession."

"There is more than imagination in it," said Everard. "I have personal reason to know there is some conspiracy carrying on, to render the house untenable by the Commissioners. I acquit my uncle of accession to such a silly trick; but I must see it ended ere I can agree to his and my cousin's residing where such a confederacy exists; for they are likely to be considered as the contrivers of such pranks, be the actual agent who he may."

"With reverence to your better acquaintance with the gentleman, Everard, I should rather suspect the old father of Puritans (I beg your pardon again) has something to do with the business; and if so, Lucifer will never look near the true old Knight's beard, nor abide a glance of yonder maiden's innocent blue eyes. I will uphold them as safe as pure gold in a miser's chest."

"Sawest thou aught thyself, which makes thee think thus?"

"Not a quill of the devil's pinion saw I," replied Wildrake. "He supposes himself too secure of an old cavalier, who must steal, hang, or drown, in the long run, so he gives himself no trouble to look after the assured booty. But I heard the serving-fellows prate of what they had seen and heard; and though their tales were confused enough, yet if there was any truth among them at all, I should say the devil must have been in the dance.—But, halloo! here comes some one upon us.—Stand, friend—who art thou?"

"A poor daylabourer in the great work of England—Joseph Tomkins by name—Secretary to a godly and well-endowed leader in this poor Christian army of England, called General Harrison."

"What news, Master Tomkins?" said Everard; "and why are you on the road at this late hour?"

"I speak to the worthy Colonel Everard, as I judge?" said Tomkins; "and truly I am glad of meeting your honour. Heaven knows, I need such assistance as yours.—Oh, worthy Master Everard!—Here has been a sounding of trumpets, and a breaking of vials, and a pouring forth, and"——

"Prithee, tell me, in brief, what is the matter—where is thy master—and, in a word, what has happened?"

"My master is close by, parading it in the little meadow, beside the hugeous oak, which is called by the name of the late Man; ride but two steps forward, and you may see him walking swiftly to and fro, advancing all the while the naked weapon."

Upon proceeding as directed, but with as little noise as possible, they descried a man, whom of course they concluded must be Harrison, walking to and fro beneath the King's oak, as a sentinel under arms, but with more wildness of demeanour. The tramp of the horses did not escape his ear; and they heard him call out, as if at the head of the brigade—"Lower pikes against cavalry!—Here comes Prince Rupert—Stand fast, and you shall turn them aside, as a bull would toss a cur-dog.—Lower your pikes still, my hearts, the end secured against your foot—down on your right knee, front rank—spare not for the spoiling of your blue aprons.—Ha—Zerobabel—ay, that is the word!"

"In the name of Heaven, about whom or what is he talking?" said Everard; "wherefore does he go about with his weapon drawn?"

"Truly, sir, when aught disturbs my master General Harrison, he is something rapt in the spirit, and conceives that he is commanding a reserve of pikes at the great battle of Armageddon—and for his weapon, alack, worthy sir, wherefore should he keep Sheffield steel in calves' leather, when there are fiends to be combated—incarnate fiends on earth, and raging infernal fiends under the earth?"

"This is intolerable," said Everard. "Listen to me, Tomkins. Thou art not now in the pulpit, and I desire none of thy preaching language. I know thou canst speak intelligibly when thou art so minded. Remember, I may serve or harm thee; and as you hope or fear any thing on my part, answer straightforward.—What has happened to drive out thy master to the wild wood at this time of night?"

"Forsooth, worthy and honoured sir, I will speak with the precision I may. True it is, and of verity, that the breath of man, which is in his nostrils, goeth forth and returneth"——

"Hark you, sir," said Colonel Everard, "take care where you ramble in your correspondence with me. You have heard how at the great battle of Dunbar in Scotland, the General himself held a pistol to the head of Lieutenant Hewereed, threatening to shoot him through the brain if he did not give up holding forth, and put his squadron in line to the front. Take care, sir."

"Verily, the lieutenant then charged with an even and unbroken order," said Tomkins, "and bore a thousand plaids and bonnets over the beach before him into the sea. Neither shall I pretermit or postpone your honour's commands, but speedily obey them, and that without delay."

"Go to, fellow; thou knowest what I would have," said Everard; "speak at once—I know thou canst if thou wilt. Trusty Tomkins is better known than he thinks for."

"Worthy sir," said Tomkins, in a much less periphrastic style, "I will obey your worship as far as the spirit will permit. Truly it was not an hour since, when my worshipful master being at table with Master Bibbet and myself, not to mention the worshipful Master Bletson and Colonel Desborough, and behold there was a violent knocking at the gate, as of one in haste. Now, of a certainty, so much had our household been harassed with witches and spirits, and other objects of sound and sight, that the sentinels could not be brought to abide upon their posts without doors, and it was only by provision of beef and strong liquors that we were able to maintain a guard of three men in the hall, who nevertheless ventured not to open the door, lest they should be surprised with some of the goblins wherewith their imaginations were overwhelmed. And they heard the knocking, which increased until it seemed that the door was well nigh about to be beaten down. Worthy Master Bibbet was a little overcome with liquor, (as is his fashion, good man, about this time of the evening,) not that he is in the least given to ebriety, but simply, that since the Scottish campaign he hath had a perpetual ague, which obliges him so to nourish his frame against the damps of the night; wherefore, as it is well known to your honour that I discharge the office of a faithful servant, as well to Major-General Harrison, and the other commissioners, as to my just and lawful master, Colonel Desborough"——

"I know all that.—And now that thou art trusted by both, I pray to heaven thou mayst merit the trust," said Colonel Everard.

"And devoutly do I pray," said Tomkins, "that your worshipful prayers may be answered with favour; for certainly to be, and to be called and entitled, Honest Joe, and trusty Tomkins, is to me more than ever would be an Earl's title, were such things to be granted anew in this regenerated government."

"Well, go on—go on—or if thou dalliest much longer, I will make bold to dispute the article of your honesty. I like short tales, sir, and doubt what is told with a long unnecessary train of words."

"Well, good sir, be not hasty. As I said before, the doors rattled till you would have thought the knocking was reiterated in every room of the Palace. The bell rung out for company, though we could not find that any one tolled the clapper, and the guards let off their firelocks, merely because they knew not what better to do. So, Master Bibbet being as I said, unsusceptible of his duty, I went down with my poor rapier to the door, and demanded who was there; and I was answered in a voice which, I must say, was much like another voice, that it was one wanting Major-General Harrison. So, as it was then late, I answered mildly, that General Harrison was betaking himself to his rest, and that any who wished to speak to him must return on the morrow morning, for that after nightfall the door of the Palace, being in the room of a garrison, would be opened to no one. So the voice replied, and bid me open directly, without which he would blow the folding leaves of the door into the middle of the hall. And therewithal

e recommenced, that we thought the house
ave fallen; and I was in some measure con-
to open the door, even like a besieged garri-
ch can hold out no longer."
ny honour, and it was stoutly done of you, I
y," said Wildrake, who had been listening
ich interest. "I am a bold dare-devil enough,
n I had two inches of oak plank between the
end and me, hang him that would demolish
ier between us say I—I would as soon, when
bore a hole in the ship, and let in the waves;
now we always compare the devil to the deep

ace, peace, Wildrake," said Everard, "and
go on with his history.—Well, and what
hou when the door was opened?—the great
ith his horns and claws thou wilt say, no

ir, I will say nothing but what is true. When
the door, one man stood there, and he, to
, a man of no extraordinary appearance. He
pped in a taffeta cloak, of a scarlet colour,
a red lining. He seemed as if he might
en in his time a very handsome man, but
s something of paleness and sorrow in his
ong love-lock and long hair he wore, even
abomination of the cavaliers, and the un-
s, as learned Master Prynne well termed it,
ocks—a jewel in his ear—a blue scarf over
lder, like a military commander for the King,
t with a white plume, bearing a peculiar hat-

e unhappy officer of cavaliers, of whom so
e in hiding, and seeking shelter through the
' briefly replied Everard.
, worthy sir—right as a judicious exposition.
was something about this man (if he was a
om I, for one, could not look upon without
g; nor the musketeers who were in the hall,
betraying much alarm, and swallowing, as
nselves will aver, the very bullets which they
eir mouths for loading their carabines and
Nay, the wolf and deer-dogs, that are the
f their kind, fled from this visiter, and crept
s and corners, moaning and wailing in a
broken tone. He came into the middle of
and still he seemed no more than an ordi-
, only somewhat fantastically dressed, in a
f black velvet pinked upon scarlet satin under
, a jewel in his ear, with large roses in his
d a kerchief in his hand, which he some-
ssed against his left side."
ous Heaven!" said Wildrake, coming close
rard, and whispering in his ear, with accents
rror rendered tremulous, (a mood of mind
ual to the daring man, who seemed now
by it)—"it must have been poor Dick Robi-
layer, in the very dress in which I have seen
Philaster—ay, and drunk a jolly bottle with
it at the Mermaid! I remember how many
e had together, and all his little fantastic
He served for his old master, Charles, in
troop, and was murdered by this butcher's-
have heard, after surrender, at the battle of
ield."
! I have heard of the deed," said Everard;
's sake hear the man to an end.—Did this
eak to thee, my friend?"
ir, in a pleasing tone of voice, but some-
ciful in the articulation, and like one who
ng to an audience as from a bar or a pulpit,
n in the voice of ordinary men on ordi-
tters. He desired to see Major-General
"
d!—and you," said Everard, infected by the
he time, which, as is well known, leaned to
upon all matters of supernatural agency,—
d you do?"
t up to the parlour, and related that such a
quired for him. He started when I told him,
ly desired to know the man's dress; but no
d I mention his dress, and the jewel in his
he said, '*Begone! tell him I will not admit
eech of me. Say that I defy him*, and will
make my defiance good at the great battle in the valley of Armageddon, when the voice of the angel shall call all fowls which fly under the face of heaven to feed on the flesh of the captain and the soldier, the war-horse and his rider. Say to the Evil One, I have power to appeal our conflict even till that day, and that in the front of that fearful day he will again meet with Harrison.' I went back with this answer to the stranger, and his face was writhed into such a deadly frown as a mere human brow hath seldom worn. 'Return to him,' he said, 'and say it is MY HOUR; and that if he come not instantly down to speak with me, I will mount the stairs to him. Say that I COMMAND him to descend, by the token, that, on the field of Naseby, *he did not the work negligently*.'"

"I have heard," whispered Wildrake,—who felt more and more strongly the contagion of superstition, "that these words were blasphemously used by Harrison when he shot my poor friend Dick."

"What happened next?" said Everard. "See that thou speakest the truth!"

"As gospel unexpounded by a steeple-man," said the independent; "yet truly it is but little I have to say. I saw my master come down, with a blank, yet resolved air; and when he entered the hall and saw the stranger, he made a pause. The other waved on him as if to follow, and walked out at the portal. My worthy patron seemed as if he were about to follow, yet again paused, when this visitant, be he man or fiend, re-entered, and said, 'Obey thy doom.

> By pathless march, by greenwood tree,
> It is thy weird to follow me—
> To follow me through the ghastly moonlight—
> To follow me through the shadows of night—
> To follow me, comrade, still art thou bound:
> I conjure thee by the unstanched wound—
> I conjure thee by the last words I spoke,
> When the body slept and the spirit awoke,
> In the very last pangs of the deadly stroke!'

So saying, he stalked out, and my master followed him into the wood.—I followed also at a distance. But when I came up, my master was alone, and bearing himself as you now behold him."

"Thou hast had a wonderful memory, friend," said the Colonel, coldly, "to remember these rhymes in a single recitation—there seems something of practice in all this."

"A single recitation, my honoured sir?" exclaimed the Independent,—"alack, the rhyme is seldom out of my poor master's mouth, when, as sometimes haps, he is less triumphant in his wrestles with Satan. But it was the first time I ever heard it uttered by another; and, to say truth, he ever seems to repeat it unwillingly, as a child after his pedagogue, and as it was not indited by his own head, as the psalmist saith."

"It is singular," said Everard;—"I have heard and read that the spirits of the slaughtered have strange power over the slayer; but I am astonished to have it insisted upon that there may be truth in such tales.—Roger Wildrake—what art thou afraid of, man?—why dost thou shift thy place thus?"

"Fear? it is not fear—it is hate, deadly hate.—I see the murderer of poor Dick before me, and—see, he throws himself into a posture of fence—Sa—sa—say'st thou, brood of a butcher's mastiff? thou shalt not want an antagonist."

Ere any one could stop him, Wildrake threw aside his cloak, drew his sword, and almost with a single bound cleared the distance betwixt him and Harrison, and crossed swords with the latter, as he stood brandishing his weapon, as if in immediate expectation of an assailant. Accordingly, the Republican General was not for an instant taken at unawares, but the moment the swords clashed, he shouted, "Ha! I feel thee now, thou hast come in body at last.—Welcome!—welcome!—the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

"Part them, part them," cried Everard, as he and Tomkins, at first astonished at the suddenness of the affray, hastened to interfere. Everard, seizing on the cavalier, drew him forcibly backwards, and Tomkins contrived, with risk and difficulty, to sep-

ter Harrison's sword, while the General exclaimed, "Ha! two to one—two to one!—thus fight demons." Wildrake, on his side, swore a dreadful oath, and added, "Markham, you have cancelled every ob'igation I owed you—they are all out of sight—gone, d—n me!"

"You have indeed acquitted these obligations rarely," said Everard. "Who knows how this affair shall be explained and answered?"

"I will answer it with my life," said Wildrake.

"Good now, be silent," said Tompkins, "and let me manage. It shall be so ordered that the good General shall never know that he hath encountered with a mortal man; only let that man of Moab put his sword into the scabbard's rest, and be still."

"Wildrake, let me entreat thee to sheath thy sword," said Everard, "else, on my life, thou must turn it against me."

"No, 'fore George, not so mad as that neither, but I'll have another day with him."

"Thou, another day!" exclaimed Harrison, whose eye had still remained fixed on the spot where he found such palpable resistance. "Yes, I know thee well; day by day, week by week, thou makest the same idle request, for thou knowest that my heart quivers at thy voice.—But my hand trembles not when opposed to thine—the spirit is willing to the combat, if the flesh be weak when opposed to that which is not of the flesh."

"Now, peace all, for Heaven's sake,"—said the steward Tomkins; then added, addressing his master, "there is no one here, if it please your Excellence, but Tomkins and the worthy Colonel Everard."

General Harrison, as sometimes happens in cases of partial insanity, (that is, supposing his to have been a case of mental delusion,) though firmly and entirely persuaded of the truth of his own visions, yet was not willing to speak on the subject to those who, he knew, would regard them as imaginary. Upon this occasion, he assumed the appearance of perfect ease and composure, after the violent agitation he had just manifested, in a manner which showed how anxious he was to disguise his real feelings from Everard, whom he considered as unlikely to participate them.

He saluted the Colonel with profound ceremony, and talked of the fineness of the evening, which had summoned him forth of the Lodge, to take a turn in the Park, and enjoy the favourable weather. He then took Everard by the arm, and walked back with him towards the Lodge, Wildrake and Tomkins following close behind and leading the horses. Everard, desirous to gain some light on these mysterious incidents, endeavoured to come on the subject more than once, by a mode of interrogation, which Harrison (for madmen are very often unwilling to enter on the subject of their mental delusion) parried with some skill, or addressed himself for aid to his steward Tomkins, who was in the habit of being voucher for his master upon all occasions, which led to Desborough's ingenious nickname of Fibbet.

"And wherefore had you your sword drawn, my worthy General," said Everard, "when you were only on an evening walk of pleasure?"

"Truly, excellent Colonel, these are times when men must watch with their loins girded, and their lights burning, and their weapons drawn. The day draweth nigh, believe me or not as you will, that men must watch lest they be found naked and unarmed, when the seven trumpets shall sound, Boot and saddle; and the pipes of Jezer shall strike up, Horse and away."

"True, good General; but methought I saw you making passes even now as if you were fighting?" said Everard.

"I am of a strange fantasy, friend Everard," answered Harrison; and when I walk alone, and happen as but now, to have my weapon drawn, I sometimes, for exercise' sake, will practise a thrust against *such a tree* as that. It is a silly pride men have in *the use of weapons. I* have been accounted a master *of fence, and have fought prizes* when I was unregenerated, and before I was called to do my part in the great work, entering as a trooper into our victorious General's first regiment of horse."

"But methought," said Everard, "I heard a weapon clash with yours?"

"How? a weapon clash with my sword?—How could that be, Tompkins?"

"Truly, sir," said Tomkins, "it must have been a bough of the tree; they have them of all kinds here, and your honour may have pushed against one of them, which the Brazilians call iron-wood, a block of which, being struck with a hammer, saith Purchas in his Pilgrimage, ringeth like an anvil."

"Truly, it may be so," said Harrison; "for those rulers who are gone, assembled in this their abode of pleasure many strange trees and plants, though they gathered not of the fruit of that tree which beareth twelve manner of fruits, or of those leaves which are for the healing of the nations."

Everard pursued his investigation; for he was struck with the manner in which Harrison evaded his questions, and the dexterity with which he threw his transcendental and fanatical notions, like a sort of veil, over the darker visions excited by remorse and conscious guilt.

"But," said he, "if I may trust my eyes and ears, I cannot but still think that you had a real antagonist—Nay, I am sure I saw a fellow, in a dark-coloured jerkin, retreat through the wood."

"Did you?" said Harrison, with a tone of surprise, while his voice faltered in spite of him—"Who could he be?—Tomkins, did you see the fellow Colonel Everard talks of with the napkin in his hand—the bloody napkin which he always pressed to his side?"

This last expression, in which Harrison gave a mark different from that which Everard had assigned, but corresponding to Tomkins's original description of the supposed spectre, had more effect on Everard in confirming the steward's story, than any thing he had witnessed or heard. The voucher answered the draft upon him as promptly as usual, that he had seen such a fellow glide past them into the thicket—that he dared to say he was some deer-stealer, for he had heard they were become very audacious.

"Look ye there now, Master Everard," said Harrison, hurrying from the subject—"Is it not time now that we should lay aside our controversies, and join hand in hand to repairing the breaches of our Zion? Happy and contented were I, my excellent friend, to be a treader of mortar, or a bearer of a hod, upon this occasion, under our great leader, with whom Providence has gone forth in this great national controversy; and truly, so devoutly do I hold by our excellent and victorious General Oliver, whom Heaven long preserve—that were he to command me, I should not scruple to pluck forth of his high place the man whom they call Speaker, even as I lent a poor hand to pluck down the man whom they called King.—Wherefore, as I know your judgment holdeth with mine on this matter, let me urge unto you lovingly, that we may act as brethren, and build up the breaches, and re-establish the bulwarks of our English Zion, whereby we shall be doubtless chosen as pillars and buttresses, under our excellent Lord General, for supporting and sustaining the same, and endowed with proper revenues and incomes, both spiritual and temporal, to serve as a pedestal, on which we may stand, seeing that otherwise our foundation will be on the loose sand.—Nevertheless," continued he, his mind again diverging from his views of temporal ambition into his visions of the Fifth Monarchy, "these things are but vanity in respect of the opening of the book which is sealed; for all things approach speedily towards lightning and thundering, and unloosing of the great dragon from the bottomless pit, wherein he is chained."

With this mingled strain of earthly politics, and fanatical prediction, Harrison so overpowered Colonel Everard, as to leave him no time to urge him farther on the particular circumstances of his nocturnal skirmish, concerning which it is plain he had no desire to be interrogated. They now reached the Lodge of Woodstock.

CHAPTER XV.

Now the wasted brands do glow,
While the screech-owl, sounding loue,
Puts the wretch that lies in wo,
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets out its sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

BEFORE the gate of the palace the guards were now doubled. Everard demanded the reason of this from the corporal, whom he found in the hall with his soldiers, sitting or sleeping around a great fire, maintained at the expense of the carved chairs and benches, with fragments of which it was furnished.

"Why, verily," answered the man, "the *corps-de garde*, as your worship says, will be harassed to pieces by such duty; nevertheless, fear hath gone abroad among us, and no man will mount guard alone. We have drawn in, however, one or two of our outposts from Banbury and elsewhere, and we are to have a relief from Oxford to-morrow."

Everard continued minute inquiries concerning the sentinels that were posted within as well as without the Lodge; and found that, as they had been stationed under the eye of Harrison himself, the rules of prudent discipline had been exactly observed in the distribution of the posts. There remained nothing therefore for Colonel Everard to do, but, remembering his own adventure of the evening, to recommend that an additional sentinel should be placed, with a companion, if judged indispensable, in that vestibule, or anteroom, from which the long gallery where he had met with the rencontre, and other suites of apartments, diverged. The corporal respectfully promised all obedience to his orders. The serving-men being called, appeared also in double force. Everard demanded to know whether the commissioners had gone to bed, or whether he could get speech with them?

"They are in their bedroom, forsooth," replied one of the fellows; "but I think they be not yet undressed."

"What!" said Everard, "are Colonel Desborough and Master Bletson both in the same sleeping apartment?"

"Their honours have so chosen it," said the man; "and their honours' secretaries remain upon guard all night."

"It is the fashion to double guards all over the house," said Wildrake. "Had I a glimpse of a tolerably good-looking housemaid now, I should know how to fall into the fashion."

"Peace, fool!" said Everard—"and where are the Mayor and Master Holdenough?"

"The Mayor is returned to the borough on horseback, behind the trooper who goes to Oxford for the reinforcement; and the man of the steeple-house hath quartered himself in the chamber which Colonel Desborough had last night, being that in which he is most likely to meet the —— your honour understands. The Lord pity us, we are a harassed family!"

"And where be General Harrison's knaves," said Tompkins, "that they do not marshal him to his apartment?"

"Here—here—here, Master Tompkins," said three fellows, pressing forward, with the same consternation on their faces which seemed to pervade the whole inhabitants of Woodstock.

"Away with you, then," said Tompkins;—"speak not to his worship—you see he is not in the humour."

"Indeed," observed Colonel Everard, "he looks singularly wan—his features seem writhen as by a palsy stroke; and though he was talking so fast while we came along, he hath not opened his mouth since we came to the light."

"It is his manner after such visitations," said Tomkins.—"Give his honour your arms, Zedekiah and Jonathan, to lead him off—I will follow instantly.—You, Nicodemus, tarry to wait upon me—it is not well walking alone in this mansion."

"Master Tomkins," said Everard, "I have heard of you often as a sharp, intelligent man—tell me fairly, are you *in earnest afraid of any thing* supernatural *haunting this house?*"

"I would be loath to run the chance, sir," said Tomkins very gravely; "by looking on my worshipful master, you may form a guess how the living look after they have spoken with the dead. He bowed low, and took his leave. Everard proceeded to the chamber which the two remaining Commissioners had, for comfort's sake, chosen to inhabit in company. They were preparing for bed as he went into their apartment. Both started as the door opened, both rejoiced when they saw it was only Everard who entered.

"Hark ye hither," said Bletson, pulling him aside, "sawest thou ever ass equal to Desborough?—the fellow is as big as an ox, and as timorous as a sheep. He has insisted on my sleeping here, to protect him. Shall we have a merry night on't, ha? We will, if thou wilt take the third bed, which was prepared for Harrison; but he is gone out, like a mooncalf, to look for the valley of Armageddon in the Park of Woodstock."

"General Harrison has returned with me but now," said Everard.

"Nay but, as I shall live, he comes not into our apartment," said Desborough, overhearing his answer. "No man that has been supping, for aught I know, with the Devil, has a right to sleep among Christian folk."

"He does not propose so," said Everard; "he sleeps, as I understand, apart—and alone."

"Not quite alone, I dare say," said Desborough: "for Harrison hath a sort of attraction for goblins—they fly round him like moths about a candle: But, I prithee, good Everard, do thou stay with us. I know not how it is, but although thou hast not thy religion always in thy mouth, nor speakest many hard words about it, like Harrison—nor makest long preachments, like a certain most honourable relation of mine who shall be nameless, yet somehow I feel myself safer in thy company than with any of them. As for this Bletson, he is such a mere blasphemer, that I fear the Devil will carry him away ere morning."

"Did you ever hear such a paltry coward?" said Bletson, apart to Everard. "Do tarry, however, mine honoured Colonel—I know your zeal to assist the distressed, and you see Desborough is in that predicament, that he will require near him more than one good example to prevent him thinking of ghosts and fiends."

"I am sorry I cannot oblige you, gentlemen," said Everard; "but I have settled my mind to sleep in Victor Lee's apartment, so I wish you good-night; and, if you would repose without disturbance, I would advise that you commend yourselves, during the watches of the night, to Him unto whom night is even as mid-day. I had intended to have spoke with you this evening on the subject of my being here; but I will defer the conference till to-morrow, when, I think, I will be able to show you excellent reasons for leaving Woodstock."

"We have seen plenty such already," said Desborough; "for one, I came here to serve the estate, with some moderate advantage doubtless to myself for my trouble; but if I am set upon my head again to-night, as I was the night before. I would not stay longer to gain a king's crown; for I am sure my neck would be unfitted to bear the weight of it."

"Good-night," exclaimed Everard; and was about to go, when Bletson again pressed close, and whispered to him, "Hark thee, Colonel—you know my friendship for thee—I do implore thee to leave the door of thy apartment open, that if thou meetest with any disturbance, I may hear thee call, and be with thee upon the very instant. Do this, dear Everard, my fears for thee will keep me awake else; for I know that, notwithstanding your excellent sense, you entertain some of those superstitious ideas which we suck in with our mother's milk, and which constitute the ground of our fears in situations like the present; therefore leave thy door open, if you love me, that you may have ready assistance from me in case of need."

"My master," said Wildrake, "trusts, first, in his Bible, sir, and then in his good sword. He has

idea that the Devil can be baffled by the charm of two men lying in one room, still less that the foul fiend can be argued out of existence by the Nullifidians of the Rota."

Everard seized his imprudent friend by the collar, and dragged him off as he was speaking, keeping fast hold of him till they were both in the chamber of Victor Lee, where they had slept on a former occasion. Even then he continued to hold Wildrake, until the servant had arranged the lights, and was dismissed from the room; then letting him go, addressed him with the upbraiding question, "Art thou not a prudent and sagacious person, who in times like these seek'st every opportunity to argue yourself into a broil, or embroil yourself in an argument? Out on you!"

"Ay, out on me, indeed," said the cavalier; "out on me for a poor tame-spirited creature, that submits to be bandied about in this manner, by a man who is neither better born nor better bred than myself. I tell thee, Mark, you make an unfair use of your advantages over me. Why will you not let me go from you, and live and die after my own fashion?"

"Because, before we had been a week separate, I should hear of your dying after a fashion of a dog. Come, my good friend, what madness was it in thee to fall foul on Harrison, and then to enter into useless argument with Bletson?"

"Why, we are in the Devil's house, I think, and I would willingly give the landlord his due wherever I travel. To have sent him Harrison, or Bletson now, just as a lunch to stop his appetite, till Crom"——

"Hush! stone walls have ears," said Everard, looking around him. "Here stands thy night drink. Look to thy arms, for we must be careful as if the Avenger of Blood were behind us. Yonder is thy bed—and I, as thou seest, have one prepared in the parlour. The door only divides us."

"Which I will leave open, in case thou shouldst holla for assistance, as yonder Nullifidian hath it.—But how hast thou got all this so well put in order, good patron?"

"I gave the steward Tomkins notice of my purpose to sleep here."

"A strange fellow that," said Wildrake, "and, as I judge, has taken measure of every one's foot—all seems to pass through his hands."

"He is, I have understood," replied Everard, "one of the men formed by the times—has a ready gift of preaching and expounding, which keeps him in high terms with the Independents; and recommends himself to the more moderate people by his intelligence and activity."

"Has his sincerity ever been doubted?" said Wildrake.

"Never, that I heard of," said the Colonel; "on the contrary, he has been familiarly called Honest Joe, and Trusty Tompkins. For my part, I believe his sincerity has always kept pace with his interest.—But come, finish thy cup, and to bed.—What, all emptied at one draught?"

"Adzookers, yea—my vow forbids me to make two on't; but, never fear—the nightcap will only warm my brain, not clog it. So, man or devil, give me notice if you are disturbed, and rely on me in a twinkling." So saying, the cavalier retreated into his separate apartment, and Colonel Everard, taking off the most cumbrous part of his dress, lay down in his hose and doublet, and composed himself to rest.

He was awakened from sleep by a slow and solemn strain of music, which died away as at a distance. He started up, and felt for his arms, which he found close beside him. His temporary bed being without curtains, he could look around him without difficulty; but as there remained in the chimney only a few red embers of the fire, which he had arranged before he went to sleep, it was impossible he could discern any thing. He felt, therefore, in spite of his natural courage, that undefined and thrilling species of tremor which attends a sense that danger is near, and an uncertainty concerning its cause and character. *Reluctant as he was to yield belief to supernatural occurrences, we have already said he was not absolutely incredulous; as, perhaps, even in this more sceptical age, there are many fewer complete and absolute infidels on this particular than give themselves out for such.* Uncertain whether he had not dreamed of these sounds which seemed yet in his ears, he was unwilling to risk the raillery of his friend by summoning him to his assistance. He sat up, therefore, in his bed, not without experiencing that nervous agitation to which brave men as well as cowards are subject; with this difference, that the one sinks under it, like the vine under the hail-storm, and the other collects his energies to shake it off, as the cedar of Lebanon is said to elevate its boughs to disperse the snow which accumulates upon them.

The story of Harrison, in his own absolute despite, and notwithstanding a secret suspicion which he had of trick or connivance, returned on his mind at this dead and solitary hour. Harrison, he remembered, had described the vision by a circumstance of its appearance different from that which his own remark had been calculated to suggest to the mind of the visionary;—that bloody napkin, always pressed to the side, was then a circumstance present either to his bodily eye, or to that of his agitated imagination. Did, then, the murdered revisit the living haunts of those who had forced them from the stage with all their sins unaccounted for? And if they did, might not the same permission authorize other visitations of a similar nature, to warn—to instruct—to punish? Rash are they, was his conclusion, and credulous, who receive as truth every tale of the kind; but no less rash may it be, to limit the power of the Creator over the works which he has made, and to suppose that, by the permission of the Author of Nature, the laws of Nature may not, in peculiar cases, and for high purposes, be temporarily suspended.

While these thoughts passed through Everard's mind, feelings unknown to him, even when he stood first on the rough and perilous edge of battle, gained ground upon him. He feared as he knew not what; and where an open and discernible peril would have drawn out his courage, the absolute uncertainty of his situation increased his sense of the danger. He felt an almost irresistible desire to spring from his bed and heap fuel on the dying embers, expecting by the blaze to see some strange sight in his chamber. He was also strongly tempted to awaken Wildrake; but shame, stronger than fear itself, checked these impulses. What! should it be thought that Markham Everard, held one of the best soldiers who had drawn a sword in this sad war—Markham Everard, who had obtained such distinguished rank in the army of the Parliament, though so young in years, was afraid of remaining by himself in a twilight-room at midnight?—It never should be said.

This was, however, no charm for his unpleasant current of thought. There rushed on his mind the various traditions of Victor Lee's chamber, which, though he had often despised them as vague, unauthenticated, and inconsistent rumours, engendered by ancient superstition, and transmitted from generation to generation by loquacious credulity, had yet something in them, which did not tend to allay the present unpleasant state of his nerves. Then, when he recollected the events of that very afternoon, the weapon pressed against his throat, and the strong arm which threw him backward on the floor—if the remembrance served to contradict the idea of flitting phantoms, and unreal daggers, it certainly induced him to believe, that there was in some part of this extensive mansion a party of cavaliers, or malignants, harboured, who might arise in the night, overpower the guards, and execute upon them all, but on Harrison in particular, as one of the regicide judges, that vengeance, which was so eagerly thirsted for by the attached followers of the slaughtered monarch.

He endeavoured to console himself on this subject, by the number and position of the guards, yet still was dissatisfied with himself for not having taken yet more exact precautions, and for keeping an extorted promise of silence, which might consign so many of his party to the danger of assassination. These thoughts, connected with his military duties, awakened another train of reflections. He bethought himself, that all he could now do, was to visit the sentries, and ascertain that they were awake, alert,

on the watch, and so situated, that in time of need they might be ready to support each other.—"This better befits me," he thought, "than to be here like a child, frightening myself with the old woman's legend, which I have laughed at when a boy. What although old Victor Lee was a sacrilegious man, as common report goes, and brewed ale in the font which he brought from the ancient palace of Holyrood, while church and building were in flames? And what although his eldest son was when a child scalded to death in the same vessel? How many churches have been demolished since his time? How many fonts desecrated? So many indeed, that were the vengeance of Heaven to visit such aggressions in a supernatural manner, no corner in England, no, not the most petty parish church, but would have its apparition.—Tush, these are idle fancies, unworthy, especially, to be entertained by those educated to believe that sanctity resides in the intention and the act, not in the buildings or fonts, or the form of worship."

As thus he called together the articles of his Calvinistic creed, the bell of the great clock (a token seldom silent in such narratives) tolled three, and was immediately followed by the hoarse call of the sentinels through vault and gallery, up stairs and beneath, challenging and answering each other with the usual watchword, All's well. Their voices mingled with the deep boom of the bell, yet ceased before that was silent, and when they had died away, the tingling echo of the prolonged knell was scarcely audible. Ere yet that last distant tingling had finally subsided into silence, it seemed as if it again was awakened; and Everard could hardly judge at first whether a new echo had taken up the falling cadence, or whether some other and separate sound was disturbing anew the silence to which the deep knell had, as its voice ceased, consigned the ancient mansion and the woods around it.

But the doubt was soon cleared up. The musical tones, which had mingled with the dying echoes of the knell, seemed at first to prolong, and afterwards to survive them. A wild strain of melody, beginning at a distance, and growing louder as it advanced, seemed to pass from room to room, from cabinet to gallery, from hall to bower, through the deserted and dishonoured ruins of the ancient residence of so many sovereigns; and, as it approached, no soldier gave alarm, nor did any of the numerous guests of various degrees, who spent an unpleasant and terrified night in that ancient mansion, seem to dare to announce to each other the inexplicable cause of apprehension.

Everard's excited state of mind did not permit him to be so passive. The sounds approached so nigh, that it seemed they were performing, in the very next apartment, a solemn service for the dead, when he gave the alarm, by calling loudly to his trusty attendant and friend Wildrake, who slumbered in the next chamber with only a door betwixt them, and even that ajar.

"Wildrake—Wildrake!—Up—up! Dost thou not hear the alarm?"

There was no answer from Wildrake, though the musical sounds, which now rung through the apartment, as if the performers had actually been within its precincts would have been sufficient to awaken a sleeping person, even without the shout of his comrade and patron.

"Alarm!—Roger Wildrake—alarm!" again called Everard, getting out of bed and grasping his weapons —"Get a light, and cry alarm!"

There was no answer. His voice died away as the sound of the music seemed also to die; and the same soft sweet voice, which still to his thinking resembled that of Alice Lee, was heard in his apartment, and, as he thought, at no distance from him.

"Your comrade will not answer," said the low soft voice. "Those only hear the alarm whose consciences feel the call."

"Again this mummery!" said Everard. "I am better armed than I was of late; and but for the sound of that voice, the speaker had bought his trifling dear."

It was singular, we may observe in passing, that *the instant the distinct sounds of the* human voice were heard by Everard, all idea of supernatural interference was at an end, and the charm by which he had been formerly fettered appeared to be broken; so much is the influence of imaginary or superstitious terror dependent (so far as it respects strong judgments at least) upon what is vague or ambiguous and so readily do distinct tones, and express ideas, bring such judgments back to the current of ordinary life. The voice returned answer, as addressing his thoughts as well as his words.

"We laugh at the weapons thou thinkest should terrify us. Over the guardians of Woodstock they have no power. Fire, if thou wilt, and try the effect of thy weapons. But know, it is not our purpose to harm thee—thou art of a falcon breed, and noble in thy disposition, though, unreclaimed and ill nurtured, thou hauntest with kites and carrion crows. Wing thy flight from hence on the morrow, for if thou tarriest with the bats, owls, vultures, and ravens, which have thought to nestle here, thou wilt inevitably share their fate. Away then, that these halls may be swept and garnished for the reception of those who have a better right to inhabit them."

Everard answered in a raised voice.—"Once more I warn you, think not to defy me in vain. I am no child to be frightened by goblin's tales; and no coward, armed as I am, to be alarmed at the threats of banditti. If I give you a moment's indulgence, it is for the sake of dear and misguided friends, who may be concerned with this dangerous gambol. Know, I can bring a troop of soldiers round the castle, who will search its most inward recesses for the author of this audacious frolic; and if that search should fail, it will cost but a few barrels of gunpowder to make the mansion a heap of ruins, and bury under them the authors of such an ill-judged pastime."

"You speak proudly, Sir Colonel," said another voice, similar to that harsher and stronger tone by which he had been addressed in the gallery; "try your courage in this direction."

"You should not dare me twice," said Colonel Everard, "had I a glimpse of light to take aim by."

As he spoke, a sudden gleam of light was thrown with a brilliancy which almost dazzled the speaker, showing distinctly a form somewhat resembling that of Victor Lee, as represented in his picture, holding in one hand a lady completely veiled, and in the other his leading-staff, or truncheon. Both figures were animated, and, as it appeared, standing within six feet of him.

"Were it not for the woman," said Everard, "I would not be thus mortally dared."

"Spare not for the female form, but do your worst," replied the same voice. "I defy you."

"Repeat your defiance when I have counted thrice," said Everard, "and take the punishment of your insolence. Once—I have cocked my pistol—Twice—I never missed my aim—By all that is sacred, I fire if you do not withdraw. When I pronounce the next number, I will shoot you dead where you stand. I am yet unwilling to shed blood—I give you another chance of flight—once—twice—THRICE!"

Everard aimed at the bosom, and discharged his pistol. The figure waved its arm in an attitude of scorn; and a loud laugh arose, during which the light, as gradually growing weaker, danced and glimmered upon the apparition of the aged knight, and then disappeared. Everard's life-blood ran cold to his heart—"Had he been of human mould," he thought, "the bullet must have pierced him—but I have neither will nor power to fight with supernatural beings."

The feeling of oppression was now so strong as to be actually sickening. He groped his way, however to the fireside, and flung on the embers which were yet gleaming, a handful of dry fuel. It presently blazed, and afforded him light to see the room in every direction. He looked cautiously, almost timidly, around, and half expected some horrible phantom to become visible. But he saw nothing save the old furniture, the reading-desk, and other articles, which had been left in the same state as when Sir Henry Lee departed. He felt an uncontrollable desire, mingled with much repugnance, to look at the portrait of

the ancient knight, which the form he had seen so strongly resembled. He hesitated betwixt the opposing feelings, but at length snatched, with desperate resolution, the taper which he had extinguished, and relighted it, ere the blaze of the fuel had again died away. He held it up to the ancient portrait of Victor Lee, and gazed on it with eager curiosity, not unmingled with fear. Almost the childish terrors of his earlier days returned, and he thought the severe pale eye of the ancient warrior followed his, and menaced him with its displeasure. And although he quickly argued himself out of such an absurd belief, yet the mixed feelings of his mind were expressed in words that seemed half addressed to the ancient portrait.

"Soul of my mother's ancestor," he said, "be it for weal or for wo, by designing men, or by supernatural beings, that these ancient halls are disturbed, I am resolved to leave them on the morrow."

"I rejoice to hear it, with all my soul," said a voice behind him.

He turned, saw a tall figure in white, with a sort of turban upon its head, and dropping the candle in the exertion, instantly grappled with it.

"*Thou* at least art palpable," he said.

"Palpable?" answered he whom he grasped so strongly—"'Sdeath, methinks you might know that without the risk of choking me; and if you loose me not, I'll show you that two can play at the game of wrestling."

"Roger Wildrake!" said Everard, letting the cavalier loose, and stepping back.

"Roger Wildrake? ay, truly. Did you take me for Roger Bacon, come to help you to raise the devil?—for the place smells of sulphur consumedly."

"It is the pistol I fired—Did you not hear it?"

"Why, yes, it was the first thing waked me—for that nightcap which I pulled on, made me sleep like a dormouse—Pshaw, I feel my brains giddy with it yet."

"And wherefore came you not on the instant?—I never needed help more."

"I came as fast as I could," answered Wildrake; "but it was some time ere I got my senses collected, for I was dreaming of that cursed field at Naseby—and then the door of my room was shut, and hard to open, till I played the locksmith with my foot."

"How! it was open when I went to bed," said Everard.

"It was locked when I came out of bed, though," said Wildrake, "and I marvel you heard me not when I forced it open."

"My mind was occupied otherwise," said Everard.

"Well," said Wildrake, "but what has happened?—Here am I bolt upright, and ready to fight, if this yawning fit will give me leave—Mother Redcap's mightiest is weaker than I drank last night, by a bushel to a barleycorn—I have quaffed the very elixir of malt—Ha—yaw."

"And some opiate besides, I should think," said Everard.

"Very like—very like—less than the pistol-shot would not waken me; even me, who with but an ordinary grace-cup sleep as lightly as a maiden on the first of May, when she watches for the earliest beam to go to gather dew. But what are you about to do next?"

"Nothing," answered Everard.

"Nothing?" said Wildrake, in surprise.

"I speak it," said Colonel Everard, "less for your information, than for that of others who may hear me, that I will leave the Lodge this morning, and, if it is possible, remove the Commissioners."

"Hark," said Wildrake, "do you not hear some noise, like the distant sound of the applause of a theatre? The goblins of the place rejoice in your departure.

"I shall leave Woodstock," said Everard, "to the occupation of my uncle Sir Henry Lee, and his family, if they choose to resume it; not that I am frightened into this as a concession to the series of artifices which have been played off on this occasion, *but solely because* such was my intention from the *beginning*. *But let me warn*," (he added, raising his voice,)—"*let me warn* the parties concerned in this combination, that though it may pass off successfully on a fool like Desborough, a visionary like Harrison, a coward like Bletson"——

Here a voice distinctly spoke, as standing near them—"Or a wise, moderate, and resolute person, like Colonel Everard."

"By Heaven, the voice came from the picture," said Wildrake, drawing his sword; "I will pink his plated amour for him."

"Offer no violence," said Everard, startled at the interruption, but resuming with firmness what he was saying,—"Let those engaged be aware, that however this string of artifices may be immediately successful, it must, when closely looked into, be attended with the punishment of all concerned—the total demolition of Woodstock, and the irremediable downfall of the family of Lee. Let all concerned think of this, and desist in time."

He paused, and almost expected a reply, but none such came.

"It is a very odd thing," said Wildrake; "but—yaw-ha—my brain cannot compass it just now; it whirls round like a toast in a bowl of muscadine; I must sit down—ha-yaw—and discuss it at leisure—Gramercy, good elbowchair."

So saying, he threw himself, or rather sank gradually down, on a large easy-chair, which had been often pressed by the weight of stout Sir Henry Lee, and in an instant was sound asleep. Everard was far from feeling the same inclination for slumber, yet his mind was relieved of the apprehension of any farther visitation that night; for he considered his treaty to evacuate Woodstock, as made known to, and accepted in all probability by, those whom the intrusion of the Commissioners had induced to take such singular measures for expelling them. His opinion, which had for a time bent towards a belief in something supernatural in the disturbances, had now returned to the more rational mode of accounting for them, by dexterous combination, for which such a mansion as Woodstock afforded so many facilities.

He heaped the hearth with fuel, lighted the candle, and, examining poor Wildrake's situation, adjusted him as easily in the chair as he could, the cavalier stirring his limbs no more than an infant. His situation went far, in his patron's opinion, to infer trick and confederacy, for ghosts have no occasion to drug men's posset. He threw himself on the bed, and while he thought these strange circumstances over, a sweet and low strain of music stole through the chamber, the words "Good-night—good-night—good-night," thrice repeated, each time in a softer and more distant tone, seeming to assure him that the goblins and he were at truce, if not at peace, and that he had no more disturbance to expect that night. He had scarcely the courage to call out a "good-night;" for, after all his conviction of the existence of a trick, it was so well performed as to bring with it a feeling of fear, just like what an audience experience during the performance of a tragic scene, which they know to be unreal, and which yet affects their passions by its near approach to nature. Sleep overtook him at last, and left him not till broad daylight on the ensuing morning.

CHAPTER XVI.

And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to church-yard——
Midsummer Night's Dream.

WITH the fresh air, and the rising of morning, every feeling of the preceding night had passed away from Colonel Everard's mind, excepting wonder how the effects which he had witnessed could be produced. He examined the whole room, sounding bolt, floor, and wainscot, with his knuckles and cane, but was unable to discern any secret passages; while the door, secured by a strong cross bolt, and the lock besides, remained as firm as when he had fastened it on the preceding evening. The apparition resembling Victor Lee next called his attention. Ridiculous stories had been often circulated, of this figure

ictly resembling it, having been met with by
ng the waste apartments and corridors of
ace, and Markham Everard had often heard
s childhood. He was angry to recollect his
ency of courage, and the thrill which he felt
ceding night, when, by confederacy doubtless,
ject was placed before his eyes.

" he said, "this fit of childish folly could not
miss my aim—more likely that the bullet had
rawn clandestinely from my pistol."

lined that which was undischarged—he found
in it. He investigated the apartment oppo-
point at which he had fired, and, at five feet
oor, in a direct line between the bedside and
where the appearances had been seen, a pis-
l recently buried itself in the wainscot. He
loubt, therefore, that he had fired in a just
and, indeed, to have arrived at the place
as lodged, the bullet must have passed through
ance at which he aimed, and proceeded, point
ugh the wall beyond. This was mysterious.
d him to doubt whether the art of witchcraft
tion had not been called in to assist the ma-
of those daring conspirators, who, being
mortal, might, nevertheless, according to the
reed of the times, have invoked and obtained
from the inhabitants of another world.

. investigation respected the picture of Vic-
self. He examined it minutely, as he stood
r before it, and compared its pale, shadowy,
ed outlines, its faded colours, the stern re-
e eye, and death-like palidness of the coun-
rith its different aspect on the preceding
n illuminated by the artificial light which fell
it, while it left every other part of the room
ative darkness. The features seemed then
a unnatural glow, while the rising and falling
ie in the chimney, gave the head and limbs
which resembled the appearance of actual
ow, seen by day, it was a mere picture of
ind ancient school of Holbein; last night, it
r the moment, something more. Determined
the bottom of this contrivance, if possible,
y the assistance of a table and a chair, exa-
portrait still more closely, and endeavoured
in the existence of any private spring, by
might be slipped aside.—a contrivance not
in ancient buildings, which usually abounded
is of access and escape, communicated to
ie lords of the castle, or their immediate con-
at the panel on which Victor Lee was painted
r fixed in the wainscoting of the apartment,
it made a part, and the colonel satisfied him-
t could not have been used for the purpose
ad suspected.

aroused his faithful squire Wildrake, who,
nding his deep share of the "blessedness of
I scarce even yet got rid of the effects of the
of the preceding evening. "It was the re-
ording to his own view of the matter. "of his
e; one single draught having made him sleep
and more sound than a matter of half-a-dozen,
ence to a dozen pulls, would have done, when
ilty of the enormity of rere-suppers,* and of
eep after them."

our temperate draught," said Everard, "been
ight more strongly seasoned, Wildrake, thou
so sound that the last trump only could have
e."

hen," answered Wildrake, "I should have
th a headache. Mark; for I see my modest
it exempted me from that epilogue.—But let
th, and see how the night, which we have
strangely, has been spent by the rest of them.
they are all right willing to evacuate Wood-

uppers (*quasi arriere*) belonged to a species
introduced in the jolly days of King James's
nce, and continued through the subsequent
e supper took place at an early hour, six or
ock at latest—the rere-supper was a postli-
nquet, a *hors d'œuvre*, which made its appear-
n or eleven, and served as an apology for pro-
e entertainment till midnight.

stock, unless they have either rested better than we, or at least have been more lucky in lodgings."

"In that case, I will despatch thee down to Joceline's hut, to negotiate the re-entrance of Sir Henry Lee and his family into their old apartments, where my interest with the general being joined with the indifferent repute of the place itself, I think they have little chance of being disturbed either by the present or by any new commissioners."

"But how are they to defend themselves against the fiends, my gallant colonel?" said Wildrake. "Methinks, had I an interest in yonder pretty girl, such as thou dost boast, I should be loath to expose her to the terrors of a residence at Woodstock, where these devils—I beg their pardon, for I suppose they hear every word we say—these merry goblins—make such gay work from twilight till morning."

"My dear Wildrake," said the colonel, "I, as well as you, believe it possible that our speech may be overheard: but I care not, and will speak my mind plainly. I trust Sir Henry and Alice are not engaged in this silly plot: I cannot reconcile it with the pride of the one, the modesty of the other, or the good sense of both, that any motive could engage them in so strange a conjunction. But the fiends are all of your own political persuasion, Wildrake, all true-blue cavaliers; and I am convinced, that Sir Henry and Alice Lee, though they be unconnected with them, have not the slightest cause to be apprehensive of their goblin machinations. Besides, Sir Henry and Joceline must know every corner about the place: it will be far more difficult to play off any ghostly machinery upon them than upon strangers. But let us to our toilet, and when water and brush have done their work, we will inquire what is next to be done."

"Nay, that wretched puritan's garb of mine is hardly worth brushing," said Wildrake; "and but for this hundred-weight of rusty iron, with which thou hast bedizened me, I look more like a bankrupt Quaker than any thing else. But I'll make you as spruce as ever was a canting rogue of your party."

So saying, and humming, at the same time, the cavalier tune,—

"'Though for a time we see Whitehall
With cobwebs hung around the wall,
Yet Heaven shall make amends for all,
When the king shall enjoy his own again.'"—

"Thou forgettest who are without," said Colonel Everard.

"No—I remember who are within," replied his friend. "I only sing to my merry goblins, who will like me all the better for it. Tush, man, the devils are my *bonos socios*, and when I see them I will warrant they prove such roaring boys as I knew when I served under Lumford and Goring, fellows with long nails that nothing escaped, bottomless stomachs that nothing filled,—mad for pillage, ranting, drinking, and fighting,—sleeping rough on the trenches, and dying stubbornly in their boots. Ah! those merry days are gone! Well, it is the fashion to make a grave face on't among cavaliers, and especially the parsons that have lost their tithe-pigs; but I was fitted for the element of the time, and never did or can desire merrier days than I had during that same barbarous, bloody, and unnatural rebellion."

"Thou wert ever a wild sea-bird, Roger, even according to your name; liking the gale better than the calm, the boisterous ocean better than the smooth lake, and your rough, wild struggle against the wind than daily food, ease, and quiet."

"Pshaw! a fig for your smooth lake, and your old woman to feed me with brewer's grains, and the poor drake obliged to come swimtering whenever she whistles! Everard, I like to feel the wind rustle against my pinions,—now diving, now on the crest of the wave, now in ocean, now in sky—that is the wild-drake's joy, my grave one! And in the Civil War, so it went with us—down in one country, up in another, beaten to-day, victorious to-morrow—now starving in some barren leaguer—now revelling in a Presbyterian's pantry—his cellars, his plate chest, his old judicial thumb-ring, his pretty serving-wench, all at command!"

"Hush, friend," said Everard; "remember I hold that persuasion."

"More the pity, Mark, more the pity," said Wildrake; "but, as you say, it is needless talking of it. Let us e'en go and see how your Presbyterian pastor, Mr. Holdenough, has fared, and whether he has proved more able to foil the foul Fiend than have you his disciple and auditor."

They left the apartment accordingly, and were overwhelmed with the various incoherent accounts of sentinels and others, all of whom had seen or heard something extraordinary in the course of the night. It is needless to describe particularly the various rumours which each contributed to the common stock, with the greater alacrity that in such cases there seems always to be a sort of disgrace in not having seen or suffered as much as others.

The most moderate of the narrators only talked of sounds like the mewing of a cat, or the growling of a dog, especially the squeaking of a pig. They heard also as if it had been nails driven and saws used, and the clashing of fetters, and the rustling of silk gowns, and the notes of music, and in short all sorts of sounds which have nothing to do with each other. Others swore they had smelt savours of various kinds, chiefly bituminous, indicating a Satanic derivation; others did not indeed swear, but protested, to visions of men in armour, horses without heads, asses with horns, and cows with six legs, not to mention black figures, whose cloven hoofs gave plain information what realm they belonged to.

But these strongly attested cases of nocturnal disturbances among the sentinels had been so general, as to prevent alarm and succour on any particular point, so that those who were on duty called in vain on the *corps-de-garde*, who were trembling on their own post: and an alert enemy might have done complete execution on the whole garrison. But amid this general *alerte*, no violence appeared to be meant, and annoyance, not injury, seemed to have been the goblin's object, excepting in the case of one poor fellow, a trooper, who had followed Harrison in half his battles, and now was sentinel in that very vestibule upon which Everard had recommended them to mount a guard. He had presented his carabine at something which came suddenly upon him, when it was wrested out of his hands, and he himself knocked down with the but-end of it. His broken head, and the drenched bedding of Desborough, upon whom a tub of ditch water had been emptied during his sleep, were the only pieces of real evidence to attest the disturbances of the night.

The reports from Harrison's apartment were, as delivered by the grave Master Tomkins, that truly the General had passed the night undisturbed, though there was still upon him a deep sleep, and a folding of the hands to slumber; from which Everard argued that the machinators had esteemed Harrison's part of the reckoning sufficiently paid off on the preceding evening.

He then proceeded to the apartment doubly garrisoned by the worshipful Desborough, and the philosophical Bletson. They were both up and dressing themselves, the former open-mouthed in his feeling of fear and suffering. Indeed, no sooner had Everard entered, than the ducked and dismayed Colonel made a dismal complaint of the way he had spent the night, and murmured not a little against his worshipful kinsman, for imposing a task upon him which inferred so much annoyance.

"Could not his Excellency, my kinsman Noll," he said, "have given his poor relative and brother-in-law a sop somewhere else, than out of this Woodstock, which seems to be the devil's own porridge-pot? I cannot sup broth with the devil; I have no long spoon —not I. Could he not have quartered me in some quiet corner, and given this haunted place to some of his preachers and prayers, who know the Bible as well as the muster-roll? whereas I know the four hoofs of a clean-going nag, or the points of a team of oxen, better than all the books of Moses. But I will give it *over, at once and for ever*; hopes of earthly gain shall *never make me run the* risk of being carried away *bodily by the devil, besides* being set upon my head one whole night, and soused with ditch water the next —No, no—I am too wise for that."

Master Bletson had a different part to act. He complained of no personal annoyances; on the contrary, he declared he should have slept as well as ever he did in his life, but for the abominable disturbances around him, of men calling to arms every half hour, when so much as a cat trotted by one of their posts—He would rather, he said, "have slept among a whole sabaoth of witches, if such creatures could be found."

"Then you think there are no such things as apparitions, Master Bletson?" said Everard. "I used to be sceptical on the subject; but, on my life, to-night has been a strange one."

"Dreams, dreams, dreams, my simple Colonel," said Bletson, though his pale face, and shaking limbs, belied the assumed courage with which he spoke. "Old Chaucer, sir, hath told us the real moral on't—He was an old frequenter of the forest of Woodstock here"——

"Chaser?" said Desborough; "some huntsman belike, by his name—Does he walk, like Hearne at Windsor?"

"Chaucer," said Bletson, "my dear Desborough, is one of those wonderful fellows, as Colonel Everard knows, who live many a hundred years after they are buried, and whose words haunt our ears after their bones are long mouldered in the dust."

"Ay, ay! well," answered Desborough, to whom this description of the old poet was unintelligible—"I for one desire his room rather than his company—one of your conjurers, I warrant him. But what says he to the matter?"

"Only a slight spell, which I will take the freedom to repeat to Colonel Everard," said Bletson; "but which would be as bad as Greek to thee, Desborough. —Old Geoffrey lays the whole blame of our nocturnal disturbance on superfluity of humours,

> 'Which causes folke to dred in their dreams
> Of arrowes, and of fire with red gleams,
> Right as the humour of Melancholy
> Causeth many a man in sleep to cry
> For fear of great bulls and bears black,
> And others that black devils will them take.'"

While he was thus declaiming, Everard observed a book sticking out from beneath the pillow of the bed lately occupied by the honourable member.

"Is that Chaucer?" he said, making to the volume. —"I would like to look at the passage"——

"Chaucer?"—said Bletson, hastening to interfere; "no—that is Lucretius, my darling Lucretius. I cannot let you see it—I have some private marks."

But by this time Everard had the book in his hand. "Lucretius?" he said; "no, Master Bletson—this is not Lucretius, but a fitter comforter in dread or in danger—Why should you be ashamed of it?—Only, Bletson, instead of resting your head, if you can but anchor your heart upon this volume, it may serve you in better stead than Lucretius or Chaucer either."

"Why, what book is it?" said Bletson, his pale cheek colouring with the shame of detection.—"Oh, the Bible?" throwing it down contemptuously—"some book of my fellow Gibeon's—these Jews have been always superstitious—ever since Juvenal's time, thou knowest—

> 'Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt.'

He left me the old book for a spell, I warrant you, for 'tis a well-meaning fool."

"He would scarce have left the New Testament, as well as the Old," said Everard. "Come, my dear Bletson, do not be ashamed of the wisest thing you ever did in your life, supposing you took your Bible in an hour of apprehension, with a view to profit by the contents."

Bletson's vanity was so much galled, that it overcame his constitutional cowardice. His little thin fingers quivered for eagerness, his neck and cheeks were as red as scarlet, and his articulation was as thick and vehement as—in short, as if he had been no philosopher.

"Master Everard," he said, "you are a man of the sword, sir,—and, sir, you seem to suppose yourself entitled to say whatever comes into your mind with

respect to civilians, sir—But I would have you remember, sir, that there are bounds beyond which human patience may be urged, sir,—and jests which no man of honour will endure, sir,—and therefore I expect an apology for your present language, Colonel Everard, and this unmannerly jesting, sir,—or you may chance to hear from me in a way that will not please you."

Everard could not help smiling at this explosion of valour, engendered by irritated self-love.

"Look you Master Bletson," he said, "I have been a soldier, that is true, but I was never a bloody-minded one; and as a Christian, I am unwilling to enlarge the kingdom of darkness by sending a new vassal thither before his time. If Heaven gives you time to repent, I see no reason why my hand should deprive you of it, which, were we to have a rencontre, would be your fate in the thrust of a sword, or the pulling of a trigger—I therefore prefer to apologize; and I call Desborough, if he has recovered his wits, to bear evidence that I *do* apologize for having suspected you, who are completely the slave of your own vanity, of any tendency, however slight, towards grace or good sense. And I farther apologize for the time that I have wasted in endeavouring to wash an Ethiopian white, or in recommending rational inquiry to a self-willed theist."

Bletson, overjoyed at the turn the matter had taken—for the defiance was scarce out of his mouth ere he began to tremble for the consequences—answered with great eagerness and servility of manner,—"Nay, dearest Colonel, say no more of it—an apology is all that is necessary among men of honour—it neither leaves dishonour with him who asks it, nor infers degradation on him who makes it."

"Not such an apology as I have made, I trust," said the Colonel.

"No, no—not in the least," answered Bletson,—"one apology serves me just as well as another, and Desborough will bear witness you have made one, and that is all there can be said on the subject."

"Master Desborough and you," rejoined the Colonel, "will take care how the matter is reported, I dare say, and I only recommend it to both, that, if mentioned at all, it may be told correctly."

"Nay, nay, we will not mention it all," said Bletson, "we will forget it from this moment. Only, never suppose me capable of superstitious weakness. Had I been afraid of apparent and real danger—why such fear is natural to man—and I will not deny that the mood of mind may have happened to me as well as to others. But to be thought capable of resorting to spells, and sleeping with books under my pillow to secure myself against ghosts,—on my word, it was enough to provoke one to quarrel, for the moment, with his very best friend.—And now, Colonel, what is to be done, and how is our duty to be executed at this accursed place? If I should get such a wetting as Desborough's, why I should die of catarrh, though you see it hurts him no more than a bucket of water thrown over a posthorse. You are, I presume, a brother in our commission; how are you of opinion we should proceed?"

"Why, in good time here comes Harrison," said Everard, "and I will lay my commission from the Lord General before you all; which, as you see, Colonel Desborough, commands you to desist from acting on your present authority, and intimates his pleasure accordingly, that you withdraw from this place."

Desborough took the paper and examined the signature.—"It is Noll's signature sure enough," said he, dropping his under jaw; "only, every time of late he has made the *Oliver* as large as a giant, while the *Cromwell* creeps after like a dwarf, as if the surname were like to disappear one of these days altogether. But is his Excellency, our kinsman, Noll Cromwell, (since he has the surname yet,) so unreasonable as to think his relations and friends are to be set upon their heads till they have the crick in their neck—drenched as if they had been plunged in a horsepond—frightened, day and night, by all sort of devils, witches, and fairies, and get not a penny of smart-money? Adzooks, (forgive me for swearing,) *if that's* the case, I *had better home to my farm, and* mind team and herd, than dangle after such a thankless person, though I *have* wived his sister. She was poor enough when I took her, for as high as Noll holds his head now."

"It is not my purpose," said Bletson, "to stir debate in this honourable meeting; and no one will doubt the veneration and attachment which I bear to our noble General, whom the current of events, and his own matchless qualities of courage and constancy, have raised so high in these deplorable days.—If I were to term him a direct and immediate emanation of the *Animus Mundi* itself—something which Nature had produced in her proudest hour, while exerting herself, as is her law, for the preservation of the creatures to whom she has given existence—I should scarce exhaust the ideas which I entertain of him. Always protesting, that I am by no means to be held as admitting, but merely as granting for the sake of argument, the possible existence of that species of emanation, or exhalation, from the *Animus Mundi*, of which I have made mention. I appeal to you, Colonel Desborough, who are his Excellency's relation—to you, Colonel Everard, who hold the dearer title of his friend, whether I have overrated my zeal in his behalf?"

Everard bowed at this pause, but Desborough gave a more complete authentication. "Nay, I can bear witness to that! I have seen when you were willing to tie his points or brush his cloak, or the like—and to be treated thus ungratefully—and gudgeoned of the opportunities which had been given you"——

"It is not for that," said Bletson, waving his hand gracefully. "You do me wrong, Master Desborough—you do indeed, kind sir—although I know you meant it not—No, sir—no partial consideration of private interest prevailed on me to undertake this charge. It was conferred on me by the Parliament of England, in whose name this war commenced, and by the Council of State, who are the conservators of England's liberty. And the chance and serene hope of serving the country, the confidence that I—and you, Master Desborough—and you, worthy General Harrison—superior, as I am, to all selfish considerations—to which I am sure you also, good Colonel Everard, would be superior, had you been named in this commission, as I would to Heaven you had—I say, the hope of serving the country, with the aid of such respectable associates, one and all of them—as well as you, Colonel Everard, supposing you to have been of the number, induced me to accept of this opportunity, whereby I might, gratuitously, with your assistance, render so much advantage to our dear mother the Commonwealth of England.—Such was my hope—my trust—my confidence. And now comes my Lord General's warrant to dissolve the authority by which we are entitled to act. Gentlemen, I ask this honourable meeting, (with all respect to his excellency,) whether his commission be paramount to that from which he himself directly holds *his* commission? No one will say so. I ask whether he has climbed into the seat from which the late Man descended, or hath a great seal, or means to proceed by prerogative in such a case? I cannot see reason to believe it, and therefore I must resist such doctrine. I am in your judgment, my brave and honourable colleagues; but touching my own poor opinion, I feel myself under the unhappy necessity of proceeding in our commission, as if the interruption had not taken place; with this addition, that the Board of Sequestrators should sit, by day, at this same Lodge of Woodstock, but that, to reconcile the minds of weak brethren, who may be afflicted by superstitious rumours, as well as to avoid any practice on our persons by the malignants, who, I am convinced, are busy in this neighbourhood, we should remove our sittings after sunset to the George Inn, in the neighbouring borough."

"Good Master Bletson," replied Colonel Everard. "it is not for me to reply to you; but you may know in what characters this army of England and their General write their authority. I fear me the annotation on this precept of the General, will be expressed by the march of a troop of horse from Oxford to see it executed. I believe there are orders out for that ef-

fect; and you know by late experience, that the soldier will obey his General equally against King and Parliament."

"That obedience is conditional," said Harrison, starting fiercely up. "Know'st thou not, Markham Everard, that I have followed the man Cromwell as close as the bull-dog follows his master?—and so I will yet;—but I am no spaniel, either to be beaten, or to have the food I have earned snatched from me, as if I were a vile cur, whose wages are a whipping, and free leave to wear my own skin. I looked, amongst the three of us, that we might honestly and piously, and with advantage to the Commonwealth, have gained out of this commission three, or it may be five thousand pounds. And does Cromwell imagine I will part with it for a rough word? No man goeth a warfare on his own charges. He that serves the altar must live by the altar—and the saints must have means to provide them with good harness and fresh horses against the unsealing and the pouring forth. Does Cromwell think I am so much of a tame tiger as to permit him to rend from me at pleasure the miserable dole he hath thrown me? Of a surety I will resist; and the men who are here, being chiefly of my own regiment—men who wait, and who expect, with lamps burning and loins girded, and each one his weapon bound upon his thigh, will aid me to make this house good against every assault—ay, even against Cromwell himself, until the latter coming—Selah! Selah!"——

"And I," said Desborough, "will levy troops and protect your out-quarters, not choosing at present to close myself up in garrison"——

"And I," said Bletson, "will do my part, and hie me to town and lay the matter before Parliament, arising in my place for that effect."

Everard was little moved by all these threats. The only formidable one, indeed, was that of Harrison, whose enthusiasm, joined with his courage, and obstinacy, and character among the fanatics of his own principles, made him a dangerous enemy. Before trying any arguments with the refractory Major-General, Everard endeavoured to moderate his feelings, and threw something in about the late disturbances.

"Talk not to me of supernatural disturbances, young man—talk not to me of enemies in the body or out of the body. Am I not the champion chosen and commissioned to encounter and to conquer the great Dragon, and the Beast which cometh out of the sea? Am I not to command the left wing and two regiments of the centre, when the Saints shall encounter with the countless legions of Gog and Magog? I tell thee that my name is written on the sea of glass mingled with fire, and that I will keep this place of Woodstock against all mortal men, and against all devils, whether in field or chamber, in the forest or in the meadow, even till the Saints reign in the fullness of their glory!"

Everard saw it was then time to produce two or three lines under Cromwell's hand, which he had received from the General, subsequently to the communination through Wildrake. The information they contained was calculated to allay the disappointment of the commissioners. This document assigned as the reason of superseding the Woodstock Commission, that he should probably propose to the Parliament to require the assistance of General Harrison, Colonel Desborough, and Master Bletson, the honourable member for Littlefaith, in a much greater matter, namely, the disposing of the royal property, and disparking of the King's forest at Windsor. So soon as this idea was started, all parties pricked up their ears; and their drooping, and gloomy and vindictive looks began to give place to courteous smiles, and to a cheerfulness, which laughed in their eyes, and turned their mustaches upwards.

Colonel Desborough acquitted his right honourable and excellent cousin and kinsman of all species of unkindness; Master Bletson discovered, that the interest of the state was trebly concerned in the good *administration of Windsor* more than in that of *Woodstock*. *As for Harrison*, he exclaimed, without *disguise or hesitation*, that the gleaning of the grapes of Windsor was better than the vintage of Woodstock. Thus speaking, the glance of his dark eye expressed as much triumph in the proposed earthly advantage, as if it had not been, according to his vain persuasion, to be shortly exchanged for his share in the general reign of the Millennium. His delight, in short, resembled the joy of an eagle, who preys upon a lamb in the evening with not the less relish, because she descries in the distant landscape a hundred thousand men about to join battle with daybreak, and to give her an endless feast on the hearts and lifeblood of the valiant.

Yet though all agreed that they would be obedient to the General's pleasure in this matter, Bletson proposed, as a precautionary measure, in which all agreed, that they should take up their abode for some time in the town of Woodstock, to wait for their new commissions respecting Windsor; and this upon the prudential consideration, that it was best not to slip one knot until another was first tied.

Each commissioner, therefore, wrote to Oliver individually, stating, in his own way, the depth and height, length and breadth, of his attachment to him. Each expressed himself resolved to obey the General's injunctions to the uttermost; but with the same scrupulous devotion to the Parliament, each found himself at a loss how to lay down the commission intrusted to them by that body, and therefore felt bound in conscience to take up his residence at the borough of Woodstock, that he might not seem to abandon the charge committed to them, until they should be called to administrate the weightier matter of Windsor, to which they expressed their willingness instantly to devote themselves, according to his Excellency's pleasure.

This was the general style of their letters, varied by the characteristic flourishes of the writers. Desborough, for example, said something about the religious duty of providing for one's own household, only he blundered the text. Bletson wrote long and big words about the political obligation incumbent on every member of the community, on every person, to sacrifice his time and talents to the service of his country; while Harrison talked of the littleness of present affairs, in comparison of the approaching tremendous change of all things beneath the sun. But although the garnishing of the various epistles was different, the result came to the same, that they were determined at least to keep sight of Woodstock, until they were well assured of some better and more profitable commission.

Everard also wrote a letter in the most grateful terms to Cromwell, which would probably have been less warm had he known more distinctly than his follower chose to tell him, the expectation under which the wily General had granted his request. He acquainted his Excellency with his purpose of continuing at Woodstock, partly to assure himself of the motions of the three Commissioners, and to watch whether they did not again enter upon the execution of the trust, which they had for the present renounced—and partly to see that some extraordinary circumstances, which had taken place in the Lodge, and which would doubtless transpire, were not followed by any explosion to the disturbance of the public peace. He knew (as he expressed himself) that his Excellency was so much the friend of order, that he would rather disturbances or insurrections were prevented than punished; and he conjured the General to repose confidence in his exertions for the public service by every mode within his power; not aware, it will be observed, in what peculiar sense his general pledge might be interpreted.

These letters being made up into a packet, were forwarded to Windsor by a trooper, detached on that errand.

CHAPTER XVII.

We do that in our zeal,
Our calmer moments are afraid to answer.
Anonymous

WHILE the Commissioners were preparing to remove themselves from the Lodge to the inn at the

borough of Woodstock, with all that state and bustle which attend the movements of great persons, and especially of such to whom greatness is not entirely familiar, Everard held some colloquy with the Presbyterian clergyman, Master Holdenough, who had issued from the apartment which he had occupied, as it were in defiance of the spirits by whom the mansion was supposed to be disturbed, and whose pale cheek and pensive brow gave token that he had not passed the night more comfortably than the other inmates of the Lodge of Woodstock. Colonel Everard having offered to procure the reverend gentleman some refreshment, received this reply:—"This day shall I not taste food, saving that which we are assured of as sufficient for our sustenance, where it is promised that our bread shall be given us, and our water shall be sure. Not that I fast, in the papistical opinion that it adds to those merits, which are but an accumulation of filthy rags; but because I hold it needful that no grosser sustenance should this day cloud my understanding, or render less pure and vivid the thanks I owe to Heaven for a most wonderful preservation."

"Master Holdenough," said Everard, "you are, I know, both a good man and a bold one, and I saw you last night courageously go upon your sacred duty, when soldiers, and tried ones, seemed considerably alarmed."

"Too courageous—too venturous," was Master Holdenough's reply, the boldness of whose aspect seemed completely to have died away. "We are frail creatures, Master Everard, and frailest when we think ourselves strongest. Oh, Colonel Everard," he added, after a pause, and as if the confidence was partly involuntary, "I have seen that which I shall never survive!"

"You surprise me, reverend sir," said Everard;—'may I request you will speak more plainly? I have heard some stories of this wild night, nay, have witnessed strange things myself; but, methinks, I would be much interested in knowing the nature of your disturbance."

"Sir," said the clergyman, "you are a discreet gentleman; and though I would not willingly that these heretics, schismatics, Brownists, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, and so forth, had such an opportunity of triumph, as my defeat in this matter would have afforded them, yet with you, who have been ever a faithful follower of our church, and are pledged to the good cause by the great National League and Covenant, surely I would be more open. Sit we down, therefore, and let me call for a glass of pure water, for as yet I feel some bodily faltering; though, I thank Heaven, I am in mind resolute and composed as a merely mortal man may after such a vision.—They say, worthy Colonel, that looking on such things foretells, or causes speedy death—I know not if it be true; but if so, I only depart like the tried sentinel when his officer releases him from his post; and glad shall I be to close these wearied eyes against the sight, and shut these harassed ears against the croaking, as of frogs, of Antinomians, and Pelagians, and Socinians, and Arminians, and Arians, and Nullifidians, which have come up into our England, like those filthy reptiles into the house of Pharaoh."

Here one of the servants who had been summoned, entered with a cup of water, gazing at the same time in the face of the clergyman, as if his stupid gray eyes were endeavouring to read what tragic tale was written on his brow; and shaking his empty scull as he left the room, with the air of one who was proud of having discovered that all was not exactly right, though he could not so well guess what was wrong.

Colonel Everard invited the good man to take some refreshment more genial than the pure element, but he declined: "I am in some sort a champion," he said; "and though I have been foiled in the late controversy with the Enemy, still I have my trumpet to give the alarm, and my sharp sword to smite withal; therefore, like the Nazarites of old, I will eat nothing that cometh of the vine, neither drink wine nor strong drink, until these my days of combat shall have passed away."

Kindly and respectfully the Colonel anew pressed Master Holdenough to communicate the events that had befallen him on the preceding night; and the good clergyman proceeded as follows, with that little characteristical touch of vanity in his narrative, which naturally arose out of the part he had played in the world, and the influence which he had exercised over the minds of others. "I was a young man at the University of Cambridge," he said, "when I was particularly bound in friendship to a fellow-student, perhaps because we were esteemed (though it is vain to mention it) the most hopeful scholars at our college; and so equally advanced, that it was difficult, perhaps, to say which was the greater proficient in his studies. Only our tutor, Master Purefoy, used to say, that if my comrade had the advantage of me in gifts, I had the better of him in grace; for he was attached to the profane learning of the classics, always unprofitable, often impious and impure; and I had light enough to turn my studies into the sacred tongues. Also we differed in our opinions touching the Church of England, for he held Arminian opinions, with Laud, and those who would connect our ecclesiastical establishment with the civil, and make the Church dependent on the breath of an earthly man. In fine, he favoured Prelacy both in essentials and ceremonial; and although we parted with tears and embraces, it was to follow very different courses. He obtained a living, and became a great controversial writer in behalf of the Bishops and of the Court. I also, as is well known to you, to the best of my poor abilities, sharpened my pen in the cause of the poor oppressed people, whose tender consciences rejected the rites and ceremonies more befitting a papistical than a reformed Church, and which, according to the blinded policy of the Court, were enforced by pains and penalties. Then came the Civil War, and I—called thereunto by my conscience, and nothing fearing or suspecting what miserable consequences have chanced, through the rise of these Independents—consented to lend my countenance and labour to the great work, by becoming chaplain to Colonel Harrison's regiment. Not that I mingled with carnal weapons in the field—which Heaven forbid that a minister of the altar should—but I preached, exhorted, and, in time of need, was a surgeon, as well to the wounds of the body as of the soul. Now, it fell, towards the end of the war, that a party of malignants had seized on a strong house in the shire of Shrewsbury, situated on a small island, advanced into a lake, and accessible only by a small and narrow causeway. From thence they made excursions, and vexed the country; and high time it was to suppress them, so that a part of our regiment went to reduce them; and I was requested to go, for they were few in number to take in so strong a place, and the Colonel judged that my exhortations would make them do valiantly. And so, contrary to my wont, I went forth with them, even to the field, where there was valiant fighting on both sides. Nevertheless, the malignants shooting their wall-pieces at us, had so much the advantage, that after bursting their gates with a salvo of our cannon, Colonel Harrison ordered his men to advance on the causeway, and try to carry the place by storm. Nathless, although our men did valiantly, advancing in good order, yet being galled on every side by the fire, they at length fell into disorder, and were retreating with much loss, Harrison himself valiantly bringing up the rear, and defending them as he could against the enemy, who sallied forth in pursuit of them, to smite them hip and thigh. Now, Colonel Everard, I am a man of quick and vehement temper by nature, though better teaching than the old law hath made me mild and patient as you now see me. I could not bear to see our Israelites flying before the Philistines, so I rushed upon the causeway, with the Bible in one hand, and a halberd, which I had caught up, in the other, and turned back the foremost fugitives, by threatening to strike them down, pointing out to them at the same time a priest in his cassock, as they call it, who was among the malignants, and asking them whether they would not do as much for a true servant of Heaven, as the uncircumcised would for a priest of Baal. My words and strokes prevailed, they turned at once, and shouting out, Down with

Baal and his worshippers! they charged the malignants so unexpectedly home, that they not only drove them back into their house of garrison, but entered it with them, as the phrase is, pellmell. I also was there, partly hurried on by the crowd, partly to prevail on our enraged soldiers to give quarter; for it grieved my heart to see Christians and Englishmen hashed down with swords and gunstocks, like curs in the street when there is an alarm of mad dogs. In this way, the soldiers fighting and slaughtering, and I calling to them to stay their hand, we gained the very roof of the building, which was in part leaded, and to which, as a last tower of refuge, those of the cavaliers, who yet escaped, had retired. I was myself, I may say, forced up the narrow winding staircase by our soldiers, who rushed on like dogs of chase upon their prey; and when extricated from the passage, I found myself in the midst of a horrid scene. The scattered defenders were, some resisting with the fury of despair; some on their knees, imploring for compassion in words and tones to break a man's heart when he thinks on them; some were calling on God for mercy; and it was time, for man had none. They were stricken down, thrust through, flung from the battlements into the lake; and the wild cries of the victors, mingled with the groans, shrieks, and clamours, of the vanquished, made a sound so horrible, that only death can erase it from my memory. And the men who butchered their fellow-creatures thus, were neither Pagans from distant savage lands, nor ruffians, the refuse and offscourings of our own people. They were in calm blood reasonable, nay, religious men, maintaining a fair repute both heavenward and earthward. Oh, Master Everard, your trade of war should be feared and avoided, since it converts such men into wolves towards their fellow-creatures!"

"It is a stern necessity," said Everard, looking down, "and as such alone is justifiable—But proceed, reverend sir; I see not how this storm, an incident but e'en too frequent on both sides during the late war, connects with the affair of last night."

"You shall hear anon," said Mr Holdenough; then paused as one who makes an effort to compose himself before continuing a relation, the tenor of which agitated him with much violence.—"In this infernal tumult," he resumed—"for surely nothing on earth could so much resemble hell, as when men go thus loose in mortal malice on their fellow-creatures,—I saw the same priest whom I had distinguished on the causeway, with one or two other malignants, pressed into a corner by the assailants, and defending themselves to the last, as those who had no hope.—I saw him—I knew him—Oh, Colonel Everard!"

He grasped Everard's hand with his own left hand, and pressed the palm of his right to his face and forehead, sobbing aloud.

"It was your college companion?" said Everard, anticipating the catastrophe.

"Mine ancient—mine only friend—with whom I had spent the happy days of youth!—I rushed forward—I struggled—I entreated.—But my eagerness left me neither voice nor language—all was drowned in the wretched cry which I had myself raised—Down with the priest of Baal—Slay Mattan—slay him were he between the altars!—Forced over the battlements, but struggling for life, I could see him cling to one of those projections which were formed to carry the water from the leads—but they hacked at his arms and hands.—I heard the heavy fall into the bottomless abyss below.—Excuse me—I cannot go on!"

"He may have escaped?"

"Oh! no, no, no—the tower was four stories in height. Even those who threw themselves into the lake from the lower windows, to escape by swimming, had no safety; for mounted troopers on the shore caught the same blood-thirsty humour which had seized the storming party, galloped around the margin of the lake, and shot those who were struggling for life in the water, or cut them down as they strove to get to land. They were all cut off and destroyed.—Oh! may the blood shed on that day remain silent!—Oh! that the earth may receive it in her recesses! Oh! that it may be mingled for ever with the dark waters of that lake, so that it may never cry for vengeance against those whose anger was fierce, and who slaughtered in their wrath!—And, oh! may the erring man be forgiven who came into their assembly, and lent his voice to encourage their cruelty!—Oh! Albany, my brother, my brother—I have lamented for thee even as David for Jonathan!"*

The good man sobbed aloud, and so much did Colonel Everard sympathize with his emotions, that he forebore to press him upon the subject of his own curiosity until the full tide of remorseful passion had for the time abated. It was, however, fierce and agitating, the more so, perhaps, that indulgence in strong mental feeling of any kind was foreign to the severe and ascetic character of the man, and was therefore the more overpowering when it had at once surmounted all restraints. Large tears flowed down the trembling features of his thin, and usually stern, or at least austere countenance; he eagerly returned the compression of Everard's hand, as if thankful for the sympathy which the caress implied.

Presently after, Master Holdenough wiped his eyes, withdrew his hand gently from that of Everard, shaking it kindly as they parted, and proceeded with more composure: "Forgive me this burst of passionate feeling, worthy Colonel. I am conscious it little becomes a man of my cloth, who should be the bearer of consolation to others, to give way in mine own person to an extremity of grief, weak at least, if indeed it is not sinful; for what are we, that we should weep and murmur touching that which is permitted? But Albany was to me as a brother. The happiest days of my life, ere my call to mingle myself in the strife of the land had awakened me to my duties, were spent in his company.—I—but I will make the rest of my story short."—Here he drew his chair close to that of Everard, and spoke in a solemn and mysterious tone of voice, almost lowered to a whisper—"I saw him last night."

"Saw *him*—saw whom?" said Everard. "Can you mean the person whom"——

* Michael Hudson, the *plain-dealing* chaplain of King Charles I., resembled, in his loyalty to that unfortunate monarch, the fictitious character of Doctor Rochecliffe; and the circumstances of his death were copied in the narrative of the Presbyterian's account of the slaughter of his school-fellow;—he was chosen by Charles I., along with John Ashburnham, as his guide and attendant, when he adopted the ill-advised resolution of surrendering his person to the Scots army.

He was taken prisoner by the Parliament, remained long in their custody, and was treated with great severity. He made his escape for about a year in 1647; was retaken, and again escaped in 1648, and, heading an insurrection of cavaliers, seized on a strong moated house in Lincolnshire, called Woodford House. He gained the place without resistance; and there are among Peck's Desiderata Curiosa several accounts of his death, among which we shall transcribe that of Bishop Kenneth, as the most correct and concise:—

"I have been on the spot," saith his Lordship, "and made all possible inquiries, and find that the relation given by Mr. Wood may be a little rectified and supplied.

"Mr. Hudson and his party did not fly to Woodford, but had quietly taken possession of it, and held it for a garrison, with a good party of horse, who made a stout defence, and frequent sallies, against a party of the Parliament at Stamford, till the colonel commanding them sent a stronger detachment, under a captain, his own kinsman, who was shot from the house, upon which the colonel himself came up to renew the attack, and to demand surrendry, and brought them to capitulate upon terms of safe quarter. But the colonel, in base revenge, commanded that they should not spare that rogue Hudson. Upon which Hudson fought his way up to the leads; and when he saw they were pushing in upon him, threw himself over the battlements (another account says, he caught hold of a spout or outstone,) and hung by the hands as intending to fall into the moat beneath, till they cut off his wrists and let him drop, and then ran down to hunt him in the water, where they found him paddling with his stumps, and barbarously knocked him on the head."—PECK'S *Desiderata Curiosa*, Book ix.

Other accounts mention he was refused the poor charity of coming to die on land, by one Egborough, servant to Mr. Spinks, the intruder into the parsonage. A man called Walker, a chandler or grocer, cut out the tongue of the unfortunate divine, and showed it as a trophy through the country. But it was remarked, with vindictive satisfaction, that Egborough was killed by the bursting of his own gun; and that Walker, obliged to abandon his trade through poverty, became a scorned mendicant.

For some time a grave was not vouchsafed to the remains of this brave and loyal divine, till one of the other party said, "Since he is dead, let him be buried."

"Whom I saw so ruthlessly slaughtered," said the clergyman—"My ancient college-friend—Joseph Albany."

"Master Holdenough, your cloth and your character alike must prevent your jesting on such a subject as this."

"Jesting!" answered Holdenough; "I would as soon jest on my death-bed—as soon jest upon the Bible."

"But you must have been deceived," answered Everard, hastily; "this tragical story necessarily often returns to your mind, and in moments when the imagination overcomes the evidence of the outward senses, your fancy must have presented to you an unreal appearance. Nothing more likely, when the mind is on the stretch after something supernatural, than that the imagination should supply the place with a chimera, while the over-excited feelings render it difficult to dispel the delusion."

"Colonel Everard," replied Holdenough, with austerity, "in discharge of my duty I must not fear the face of man; and, therefore, I tell you plainly, as I have done before with more observance, that when you bring your carnal learning and judgment, as it is but too much your nature to do, to investigate the hidden things of another world, you might as well measure with the palm of your hand the waters of the Isis. Indeed, good sir, you err in this, and give men too much pretence to confound your honourable name with witch-advocates, free-thinkers, and Atheists, even with such as this man Bletson, who, if the discipline of the church had its hands strengthened, as it was in the beginning of the great conflict, would have been long ere now cast out of the pale, and delivered over to the punishment of the flesh, that his spirit might, if possible, be yet saved."

"You mistake, Master Holdenough," said Colonel Everard; "I do not deny the existence of such preternatural visitations, because I cannot, and dare not, raise the voice of my own opinion against the testimony of ages, supported by such learned men as yourself. Nevertheless, though I grant the possibility of such things, I have scarce yet heard of an instance in my days so well fortified by evidence, that I could at once and distinctly say, This must have happened by supernatural agency, and not otherwise."

"Hear, then what I have to tell," said the divine, "on the faith of a man, a Christian, and, what is more, a servant of our Holy Church; and therefore, though unworthy, an elder and a teacher among Christians.—I had taken my post yester evening in the half-furnished apartment, wherein hangs a huge mirror, which might have served Goliath of Gath to have admired himself in, when clothed from head to foot in his brazen armour. I the rather chose this place, because they informed me it was the nearest habitable room to the gallery in which they say you had been yourself assailed that evening by the Evil One.—Was it so, I pray you?"

"By some one with no good intentions I was assailed in that apartment. So far," said Colonel Everard, "you were correctly informed."

"Well, I chose my post as well as I might, even as a resolved general approaches his camp, and casts up his mound as nearly as he can to the besieged city. And, of a truth, Colonel Everard, if I felt some sensation of bodily fear,—*for* even Elias, and the prophets, who commanded the elements, had a portion in our frail nature, much more such a poor sinful being as myself—yet was my hope and my courage high; and I thought of the texts which I might use, not in the wicked sense of periapts, or spells, as the blinded Papists employ them, together with the sign of the cross, and other fruitless forms, but as nourishing and supporting that true trust and confidence in the blessed promises, being the true shield of faith wherewith the fiery darts of Satan may be withstood and quenched. And thus armed and prepared, I sat me down to read, at the same time to write, that I might compel my mind to attend to those subjects which became the situation in which I was placed, as preventing any unlicensed excursions of the fancy, and leaving no room for my imagination to brood over idle fears. So I methodized, and *wrote down what* I thought meet for the time, and peradventure some hungry souls may yet profit by the food which I then prepared."

"It was wisely and worthily done, good and reverend sir," replied Colonel Everard; "I pray you to proceed."

"While I was thus employed, sir, and had been upon the matter for about three hours, not yielded to weariness, a strange thrilling came over my senses,—and the large and old-fashioned apartment seemed to wax larger, more gloomy, and more cavernous, while the air of the night grew more cold and chill; I know not if it was that the fire began to decay, or whether there cometh before such things as were then about to happen, a breath and atmosphere, as it were, of terror, as Job saith in a well-known passage, 'Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made my bones to shake;' and there was a tinkling noise in my ears, and a dizziness in my brain, so that I felt like those who call for aid when there is no danger, and was even prompted to flee, when I saw no one to pursue. It was then that something seemed to pass behind me, casting a reflection on the great mirror before which I had placed my writing-table, and which I saw by assistance of the large standing light which was then in front of the glass. And I looked up, and I saw in the glass distinctly the appearance of a man—as sure as these words issue from my mouth, it was no other than the same Joseph Albany—the companion of my youth—he whom I had seen precipitated down the battlements of Clidesthrough Castle into the deep lake below!"

"What did you do?"

"It suddenly rushed on my mind," said the divine, "that the stoical philosopher Athenodorus had eluded the horrors of such a vision by patiently pursuing his studies; and it shot at the same time across my mind, that I, a Christian divine, and a Steward of the Mysteries, had less reason to fear evil, and better matter on which to employ my thoughts, than was possessed by a Heathen, who was blinded even by his own wisdom. So, instead of betraying any alarm, or even turning my head around, I pursued my writing, but with a beating heart, I admit, and with a throbbing hand."

"If you could write at all," said the Colonel, "with such an impression on your mind, you may take the head of the English army for dauntless resolution."

"Our courage is not our own, Colonel," said the divine, "and not as ours should it be vaunted of. And again, when you speak of this strange vision as an impression on my fancy, and not a reality obvious to my senses, let me tell you once more, your worldly wisdom is but foolishness touching the things that are not worldly."

"Did you not look again upon the mirror?" said the Colonel.

"I did, when I had copied out the comfortable text, 'Thou shalt tread down Satan under thy feet.'"

"And what did you then see?"

"The reflection of the same Joseph Albany," said Holdenough, "passing slowly as from behind my chair, the same in member and lineament that I had known him in his youth, excepting that his cheek had the marks of the more advanced age at which he died, and was very pale."

"What did you then?"

"I turned from the glass, and plainly saw the figure which had made the reflection in the mirror retreating towards the door, not fast, nor slow, but with a gliding, steady pace. It turned again when near the door, and again showed me its pale, ghastly countenance, before it disappeared. But how it left the room, whether by the door, or otherwise, my spirits were too much hurried to remark exactly; nor have I been able, by any effort of recollection, distinctly to remember."

"This is a strange, and, as coming from you, a most excellently well-attested apparition," answered Everard. "And yet, Master Holdenough, if the other world has been actually displayed, as you apprehend, and I will not dispute the possibility, assure yourself there are also wicked men concerned in these machinations. I myself have undergone

some rencontres with visitants who possessed bodily strength, and wore, I am sure, earthly weapons."

"Oh! doubtless, doubtless," replied Master Holdenough; Beelzebub loves to charge with horse and foot mingled, as was the fashion of the old Scottish gene al, Davie Leslie. He has his devils in the body as well as his devils disembodied, and uses the one to support and back the other."

"It may be as you say, reverend sir," answered the Colonel.—"But what do you advise in this case?"

"For that I must consult with my brethren," said the divine; "and if there be but left in our borders five ministers of the true kirk, we will charge Satan in full body, and you shall see whether we have not power over him to resist till he shall flee from us. But failing that ghostly armament against these strange and unearthly enemies, truly I would recommend, that as a house of witchcraft and abomination, this polluted den of ancient tyranny and prostitution should be totally consumed by fire, lest Satan, establishing his headquarters so much to his mind, should find a garrison and a fastness from which he might sally forth to infest the whole neighbourhood. Certain it is, that I would recommend to no Christian soul to inhabit the mansion; and, if deserted, it would become a place for wizards to play their pranks, and witches to establish their Sabbath, and those, who, like Demas, go about after the wealth of this world, seeking for gold and silver to practise spells and charms to the prejudice of the souls of the covetous. Trust me, therefore, it were better that it were spoiled and broken down, not leaving one stone upon another."

"I say nay to that my good friend," said the Colonel; "for the Lord General hath permitted, by his license, my mother's brother, Sir Henry Lee, and his family, to return into the house of his fathers, being indeed the only roof under which he hath any chance of obtaining shelter for his gray hairs."

"And was this done by your advice, Markham Everard?" said the divine, austerely.

"Certainly it was," returned the Colonel.—"And wherefore should I not exert mine influence to obtain a place of refuge for the brother of my mother?"

"Now, as sure as thy soul liveth," answered the presbyter, "I had believed this from no tongue but thine own. Tell me, was it not this very Sir Henry Lee, who, by the force of his buff-coats and his green-jerkins, enforced the Papist Laic's order to remove the altar to the eastern end of the church at Woodstock?—and did not he swear by his beard, that he would hang in the very street of Woodstock whoever should deny to drink the King's health?—and is not his hand red with the blood of the saints?—and hath there been a ruffler in the field for prelacy and high prerogative more unmitigable or fiercer?"

"All this may have been as you say, good Master Holdenough," answered the Colonel; "but my uncle is now old and feeble, and hath scarce a single follower remaining, and his daughter is a being whom to look upon would make the sternest weep for pity; a being who"——

"Who is dearer to Everard," said Holdenough, "than his good name, his faith to his friends, his duty to his religion;—this is no time to speak with sugared lips. The paths in which you tread are dangerous. You are striving to raise the papistical candlestick which Heaven in its justice removed out of its place—to bring back to this hall of sorceries those very sinners who are bewitched with them. I will not permit the land to be abused by their witchcrafts.—They shall not come hither."

He spoke this with vehemence, and striking his stick against the ground; and the Colonel, very much dissatisfied, began to express himself haughtily in return. "You had better consider your power to accomplish your threats, Master Holdenough," he said, "before you urge them so peremptorily."

"And have I not the power to bind and to loose?" said the clergyman.

"*It is a power little* available, save over those of *your own church, said* Everard, with a tone some*thing contemptuous.*

"*Take heed—take heed,*" said the divine, who, though an excellent, was, as we have elsewhere seen, an irritable man.—"Do not insult me; but think honourably of the messenger, for the sake of Him whose commission he carries.—Do not, I say, defy me—I am bound to discharge my duty, were it to the displeasing of my twin brother."

"I can see naught your office has to do in the matter," said Colonel Everard; "and I, on my side, give you warning not to attempt to meddle beyond your commission."

"Right—you hold me already to be as submissive as one of your grenadiers," replied the clergyman, his acute features trembling with a sense of indignity, so as even to agitate his gray hair; "but beware, sir, I am not so powerless as you suppose. I will invoke every true Christian in Woodstock to gird up his loins, and resist the restoration of prelacy, oppression, and malignancy within our borders. I will stir up the wrath of the righteous against the oppressor—the Ishmaelite—the Edomite—and against his race, and against those who support him and encourage him to rear up his horn. I will call aloud, and spare not, and arouse the many whose love hath waxed cold, and the multitude who care for none of these things. There shall be a remnant to listen to me; and I will take the stick of Joseph, which was in the hand of Ephraim, and go down to cleanse this place of witches and sorcerers, and of enchantments, and will cry and exhort, saying—Will you plead for Baal?—will you serve him? Nay, take the prophets of Baal—let not a man escape!"

"Master Holdenough, Master Holdenough," said Colonel Everard, with much impatience, "by the tale yourself told me, you have exhorted upon that text once too often already."

The old man struck his palm forcibly against his forehead, and fell back into a chair as these words were uttered, as suddenly, and as much without power of resistance, as if the Colonel had fired a pistol through his head. Instantly regretting the reproach which he had suffered to escape him in his impatience, Everard hastened to apologize, and to offer every conciliatory excuse, however inconsistent, which occurred to him on the moment. But the old man was too deeply affected—he rejected his hand, lent no ear to what he said, and finally started up, saying sternly, "You have abused my confidence, sir—abused it vilely, to turn it into my own reproach; had I been a man of the sword, you dared not—But enjoy your triumph, sir, over an old man, and your father's friend—strike at the wound his imprudent confidence showed you."

"Nay, my worthy and excellent friend," said the Colonel——

"Friend!" answered the old man, vehemently—"We are foes, sir—foes now, and for ever!"

So saying, and starting from the seat into which he had rather fallen than thrown himself, he ran out of the room with a precipitation of step which he was apt to use upon occasions of irritable feeling, and which was certainly more eager than dignified, especially as he muttered while he ran, and seemed as if he were keeping up his own passion, by recounting over and over the offence which he had received.

"Soh!" said Colonel Everard, "and there was not strife enough between mine uncle and the people of Woodstock already, but I must needs increase it, by chafing this irritable and quick-tempered old man, eager as I knew him to be in his ideas of church government, and stiff in his prejudices respecting all who dissent from him! The mob of Woodstock will rise; for though he would not get a score of them to stand by him in any honest or intelligent purpose, yet let him cry havoc and destruction, and I will warrant he has followers enow. And my uncle is equally wild and unpersuadable. For the value of all the estate he ever had, he would not allow a score of troopers to be quartered in the house for defence; and if he be alone, or has but Joceline to stand by him, he will be as sure to fire upon those who come to attack the Lodge, as if he had a hundred men in garrison; and then what can chance but danger and bloodshed?"

This progress of melancholy anticipation was interrupted by the return of Master Holdenough, who hurrying into the room with the same precipitate pace a

which he had left it, ran straight up to the Colonel, and said, "Take my hand, Markham—take my hand hastily; for the old Adam is whispering at my heart, that it is a disgrace to hold it extended so long."

"Most heartily do I receive your hand, my venerable friend," said Everard, "and I trust in sign of renewed amity."

"Surely, surely"—said the divine, shaking his hand kindly; "thou hast, it is true, spoken bitterly, but thou hast spoken truth in good time; and I think—though your words were severe—with a good and kindly purpose. Verily, and of a truth, it were sinful in me again to be hasty in provoking violence, remembering that which you have upbraided me with"—

"Forgive me good Master Holdenough," said Colonel Everard, "it was a hasty word; I meant not in serious earnest to *upbraid*."

"Peace, I pray you, peace," said the divine; "I say the allusion to that which you have *most justly* upbraided me with—though the charge aroused the gall of the Old Man within me, the inward tempter being ever on the watch to bring us to his lure—ought, instead of being resented, to have been acknowledged by me as a favour, for so are the wounds of a friend termed faithful. And surely I, who have by one unhappy exhortation to battle and strife sent the living to the dead—and I fear brought back even the dead among the living—should now study peace and goodwill, and reconciliation of difference, leaving punishment to the Great Being whose laws are broken, and vengeance to Him who hath said, I will repay it."

The old man's mortified features lighted up with an humble confidence as he made this acknowledgment; and Colonel Everard, who knew the constitutional infirmities, and the early prejudices of professional consequence and exclusive party opinion, which he must have subdued ere arriving at such a tone of candour, hastened to express his admiration of his Christian charity, mingled with reproaches on himself for having so deeply injured his feelings.

"Think not of it—think not of it, excellent young man," said Holdenough; "we have both erred—I in suffering my zeal to outrun my charity, you, perhaps, in pressing hard on an old and peevish man, who had so lately poured out his sufferings into your friendly bosom. Be it all forgotten. Let your friends—if they are not deterred by what has happened at this manor of Woodstock—resume their habitation as soon as they will. If they can protect themselves against the powers of the air, believe me, that if I can prevent it by aught in my power, they shall have no annoyance from earthly neighbours; and assure yourself, good sir, that my voice is still worth something with the worthy Mayor, and the good Aldermen, and the better sort of housekeepers up yonder in the town, although the lower classes are blown about with every wind of doctrine. And yet farther, be assured, Colonel, that should your mother's brother, or any of his family, learn that they have taken up a rash bargain in returning to this unhappy and unhallowed house, or should they find any qualms in their own hearts and consciences which require a ghostly comforter, Nehemiah Holdenough will be as much at their command by night or day, as if they had been bred up within the holy pale of the church in which he is an unworthy minister; and neither the awe of what is fearful to be seen within these walls, nor his knowledge of their blinded and carnal state, as bred up under a prelatic dispensation, shall prevent him doing what lies in his poor abilities for their protection and edification."

"I feel all the force of your kindness, reverend sir," said Colonel Everard, "but I do not think it likely that my uncle will give you trouble on either score. He is a man much accustomed to be his own protector in temporal danger, and in spiritual doubts to trust to his own prayers and those of his Church."

"I trust I have not been superfluous in offering mine assistance," said the old man, something jealous that his proffered spiritual aid had been held rather intrusive. "I ask pardon if that is the case—I *humbly ask pardon—I would not* willingly be superfluous."

The Colonel hastened to appease this new alarm of the watchful jealousy of his consequence, which, joined with a natural heat of temper which he could not always subdue, were the good man's only faults.

They had regained their former friendly footing, when Roger Wildrake returned from the hut of Joceline, and whispered his master that his embassy had been successful. The Colonel then addressed the divine, and informed him, that as the Commissioners had already given up Woodstock, and as his uncle, Sir Henry Lee, proposed to return to the Lodge about noon, he would, if his reverence pleased, attend him up to the borough.

"Will you not tarry," said the reverend man, with something like inquisitive apprehension in his voice, "to welcome your relatives upon their return to this their house?"

"No, my good friend," said Colonel Everard; "the part which I have taken in these unhappy broils—perhaps also the mode of worship in which I have been educated—have so prejudiced me in mine uncle's opinion, that I must be for some time a stranger to his house and family."

"Indeed! I rejoice to hear it, with all my heart and soul," said the divine. "Excuse my frankness—I do indeed rejoice,—I had thought—no matter what I had thought,—I would not again give offence. But truly though the maiden hath a pleasant feature and he, as all men say, is in human things unexceptionable,—yet—but I give you pain—in sooth, I will say no more unless you ask my sincere and unprejudiced advice, which you shall command, but which I will not press on you superfluously. Wend we to the borough together—the pleasant solitude of the forest may dispose us to open our hearts to each other."

They did walk up to the little town in company, and, somewhat to Master Holdenough's surprise, the Colonel, though they talked on various subjects, did not request of him any ghostly advice on the subject of his love to his fair cousin, while, greatly beyond the expectation of the soldier, the clergyman kept his word, and, in his own phrase, was not so superfluous as to offer upon so delicate a point his unasked counsel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

> Then are the harpies gone—Yet ere we perch
> Where such foul birds have roosted, let us cleanse
> The foul obscenity they've left behind them.
>
> *Agamemnon.*

THE embassy of Wildrake had been successful, chiefly through the mediation of the Episcopal divine, whom we formerly found acting in the character of a chaplain to the family, and whose voice had great influence on many accounts with its master.

A little before high noon, Sir Henry Lee, with his small household, were again in unchallenged possession of their old apartments at the Lodge of Woodstock; and the combined exertions of Joceline Joliffe, of Phœbe, and of old Joan, were employed in putting to rights what the late intruders had left in great disorder.

Sir Henry Lee had, like all persons of quality of that period, a love of order amounting to precision, and felt like a fine lady whose dress has been disordered in a crowd, insulted and humiliated by the rude confusion into which his household goods had been thrown, and impatient till his mansion was purified from all marks of intrusion. In his anger he uttered more orders than the limited number of his domestics were likely to find time or hands to execute. "The villains have left such sulphureous steams behind them, too," said the old knight, "as if old Davie Leslie and the whole Scottish army had quartered among them."

"It may be near as bad," said Joceline, "for men say, for certain, it was the Devil came down bodily among them, and made them troop off."

"Then," said the knight, "is the Prince of Darkness a gentleman, as old Will Shakspeare says. He never interferes with those of his own coat, for the

Lees have been here, father and son, these five hundred years, without disquiet; and no sooner came these misbegotten churls, than he plays his own part among them."

"Well, one thing he and they have left us," said Joliffe, "which we may thank them for; and that is, such a well-filled larder and buttery as has been seldom seen in Woodstock Lodge this many a day;—carcasses of mutton, large rounds of beef, barrels of confectioners' ware, pipes and runlets of sack, muscadine, ale, and what not. We shall have a royal time on't through half the winter; and Joan must get to salting and pickling presently."

"Out, villain!" said the knight; "are we to feed on the fragments of such scum of the earth as these?—Cast them forth instantly!—Nay," checking himself, "that were a sin; but give them to the poor, or see them sent to the owners,—And, hark ye, I will none of their strong liquors—I would rather drink like a hermit all my life, than seem to pledge such scoundrels as these in their leavings, like a miserable drawer, who drains off the ends of the bottles after the guests have paid their reckoning, and gone off.—And, hark ye, I will taste no water from the cistern out of which these slaves have been serving themselves—fetch me down a pitcher from Rosamond's spring."

Alice heard this injunction, and well guessing there was enough for the other members of the family to do, she quietly took a small pitcher, and flinging a cloak around her, walked out in person to procure Sir Henry the water which he desired. Mean time, Joceline said, with some hesitation, "that a man still remained, belonging to the party of these strangers, who was directing about the removal of some trunks and mails which belonged to the Commissioners, and who could receive his honour's commands about the provisions."

"Let him come hither."—(The dialogue was held in the hall.)—"Why do you hesitate and drumble in that manner?"

"Only, sir," said Joceline, "only perhaps your honour might not wish to see him, being the same who, not long since"——

He paused.

"Sent my rapier a-hawking through the firmament, thou wouldst say?—Why, when did I take spleen at a man for standing his ground against me?—Roundhead as he is, man, I like him the better of that, not the worse. I hunger and thirst to have another turn with him. I have thought on his passado ever since, and I believe, were it to try again, I know a feat would control it.—Fetch him directly."

Trusty Tompkins was presently ushered in, bearing himself with an iron gravity, which neither the terrors of the preceding night, nor the dignified demeanour of the high-born personage before whom he stood, were able for an instant to overcome.

"How now, good fellow?" said Sir Henry; I would fain see something more of thy fence, which baffled me the other evening—but truly, I think the light was somewhat too faint for my old eyes—Take a foil, man—I walk here in the hall, as Hamlet says; and 'tis the breathing-time of day with me—Take a foil, then, in thy hand."

"Since it is your worship's desire," said the steward, letting fall his long cloak, and taking the foil in his hand.

"Now," said the knight, "if your fitness speaks, mine is ready. Methinks the very stepping on this same old pavement hath charmed away the gout which threatened me—Sa—sa—I tread as firm as a game cock!"

They began the play with great spirit; and whether the old knight really fought more coolly with the blunt than with the sharp weapon, or whether the steward gave him some grains of advantage in this merely sportive encounter, it is certain Sir Henry had the better in the assault. His success put him into excellent humour.

"*There,*" *said he,* "I found your trick,—nay, you *cheat me not twice the same way*—There was a very *palpable hit. Why, had* I had but light enough the *other night—But it skills not* speaking of it—Here we leave off. I must not fight, as we unwise cavaliers did with you roundhead rascals, beating you so often that we taught you to beat us at last.—And good now, tell me why you are leaving your larder so full here?—Do you think I or my family can use broken victuals?—What, have you no better employment for your rounds of sequestrated beef than to leave them behind you when you shift your quarters?"

"So please your honour," said Tomkins, "it may be that you desire not the flesh of beeves, of rams, or of goats. Nevertheless when you know that the provisions were provided and paid for out of your own rents and stock at Ditchley, sequestrated to the use of the state more than a year since, it may be you will have less scruple to use them for your own behoof."

"Rest assured that I shall," said Sir Henry; "and glad you have helped me to a share of mine own. Certainly I was an ass to suspect your masters of subsisting, save at honest men's expense."

"And as for the rumps of beeves," continued Tomkins, with the same solemnity, "there is a rump at Westminster, which will stand us of the army much hacking and hewing yet, ere it is discussed to our mind."

Sir Henry paused, as if to consider what was the meaning of this innuendo; for he was not a person of very quick apprehension. But having at length caught the meaning of it, he burst into an explosion of louder laughter than Joceline had seen him indulge in for a good while.

"Right, knave," he said, "I taste thy jest—It is the very moral of the puppetshow. Faustus raised the devil, as the Parliament raised the army—and then, as the devil flies away with Faustus, so will the army fly away with the Parliament—or the rump, as thou call'st it, or sitting part of the so-called Parliament.—And then, look you, friend, the very devil of all hath my willing consent to fly away with the army in its turn, from the highest general down to the lowest drum-boy.—Nay, never look fierce for the matter; remember there is day-light enough now for a game at sharps."

Trusty Tomkins appeared to think it best to suppress his displeasure; and observing that the wains were ready to transport the Commissioners' property to the borough, took a grave leave of Sir Henry Lee.

Mean time the old man continued to pace his recovered hall, rubbing his hands, and evincing greater signs of glee than he had shown since the fatal 30th of January.

"Here we are again in the old frank, Joliffe—well victualled too.—How the knave solved my point of conscience!—the dullest of them is a special casuist where the question concerns profit. Look out if there are not some of our own ragged regiment lurking about, to whom a bellyful would be a godsend, Joceline—Then his fence, Joceline—though the fellow fouins well—very sufficient well—But thou saw'st how I dealt with him when I had fitting light, Joceline?"

"Ay, and so your honour did," said Joceline. "You taught him to know the Duke of Norfolk from Saunders Gardiner. I'll warrant him he will not wish to come under your honour's thumb again."

"Why, I am waxing old," said Sir Henry; "but skill will not rust through age, though sinews must stiffen. But my age is like a lusty winter, as old Will says—frosty but kindly—And what if, old as we are, we live to see better days yet! I promise thee, Joceline, I love this jarring betwixt the rogues of the board and the rogues of the sword. When thieves quarrel, true men have a chance of coming by their own."

Thus triumphed the old cavalier, in the treble glory of having recovered his dwelling—regained, as he thought, his character as a man of fence, and finally, discovered some prospect of a change of times, in which he was not without hopes that something might turn up for the royal interest.

Mean while, Alice, with a prouder and a lighter heart than had danced in her bosom for several days, went forth with a gayety to which she of late had been a stranger, to contribute her assistance to the regulation and supply of the household, by bringing the fresh water wanted from fair Rosamond's well.

Perhaps she remembered, that when she was last

girl, her cousin Markham used, among others, to make her perform that duty, as presenting the character of some captive Trojan princess, condemned by her situation to draw the waters from some Grecian spring, for the use of the proud victor. At any rate, she certainly joyed to see her father reinstated in his ancient habitation; and the joy was not the less sincere, that she knew their return to Woodstock had been procured by means of her cousin, and that even in her father's prejudiced eyes, Everard had been in some degree exculpated of the accusations the old knight had brought against him; and that, if a reconciliation had not yet taken place, the preliminaries had been established on which such a desirable conclusion might easily be founded. It was like the commencement of a bridge; when the foundation is securely laid, and the piers raised above the influence of the torrent, the throwing of the arches may be accomplished in a subsequent season.

The doubtful fate of her only brother might have clouded even this momentary gleam of sunshine; but Alice had been bred up during the close and frequent contests of civil war, and had acquired the habit of hoping in behalf of those dear to her, until hope was lost. In the present case, all reports seemed to assure her of her brother's safety.

Besides these causes for gayety, Alice Lee had the pleasing feeling that she was restored to the habitation and the haunts of her childhood, from which she had not departed without much pain, the more felt, perhaps, because suppressed, in order to avoid irritating her father's sense of his misfortune. Finally, she enjoyed for the instant the gleam of self-satisfaction by which we see the young and well-disposed so often animated, when they can be, in common phrase, helpful to those whom they love, and perform at the moment of need some of those little domestic tasks, which age receives with so much pleasure from the dutiful hands of youth. So that, altogether, as she hasted through the remains and vestiges of a wilderness already mentioned, and from thence about a bow-shot into the Park, to bring a pitcher of water from Rosamond's spring, Alice Lee, her features enlivened and her complexion a little raised by the exercise, had, for the moment, regained the gay and brilliant vivacity of expression which had been the characteristic of her beauty in her earlier and happier days.

This fountain of old memory had been once adorned with architectural ornaments in the style of the sixteenth century, chiefly relating to ancient mythology. All these were now wasted and overthrown, and existed only as moss-covered ruins, while the living spring continued to furnish its daily treasures, unrivalled in purity, though the quantity was small, gushing out amid disjointed stones, and bubbling through fragments of ancient sculpture.

With a light step and laughing brow the young Lady of Lee was approaching the fountain usually so solitary, when she paused on beholding some one seated beside it. She proceeded, however, with confidence, though with a step something less gay, when she observed that the person was a female;—some menial perhaps from the town, whom a fanciful mistress occasionally despatched for the water of a spring, supposed to be peculiarly pure, or some aged woman, who made a little trade by carrying it to the better sort of families, and selling it for a trifle. There was no cause, therefore, for apprehension.

Yet the terrors of the times were so great, that Alice did not see a stranger even of her own sex without some apprehension. Denaturalized women had as usual followed the camps of both armies during the Civil War; who, on the one side with open profligacy and profanity, on the other with the fraudful tone of fanaticism or hypocrisy, exercised nearly in like degree their talents for murder or plunder. But it was broad daylight, the distance from the Lodge was but trifling, and although a little alarmed at seeing a stranger where she expected deep solitude, the daughter of the haughty old Knight had too much of the lion about her, to fear without some determined and decided cause.

Alice walked, therefore gravely on towards the fount, and composed her looks as she took a hasty glance of the female who was seated there, and addressed herself to her task of filling her pitcher.

The woman, whose presence had surprised and somewhat startled Alice Lee, was a person of the lower rank, whose red cloak, russet kirtle, handkerchief trimmed with Coventry blue, and a coarse steeple hat, could not indicate at best any thing higher than the wife of a small farmer, or, perhaps, the helpmate of a bailiff or hind. It was well if she proved nothing worse. Her clothes, indeed, were of good materials; but, what the female eye discerns with half a glance, they were indifferently adjusted and put on. This looked as if they did not belong to the person by whom they were worn, but were articles of which she had become the mistress by some accident, if not by some successful robbery. Her size, too, as did not escape Alice, even in the short perusal she afforded the stranger, was unusual; her features swarthy and singularly harsh, and her manner altogether unpropitious. The young lady almost wished, as she stooped to fill her pitcher, that she had rather turned back, and sent Joceline on the errand; but repentance was too late now, and she had only to disguise as well as she could her unpleasant feelings.

"The blessings of this bright day to one as bright as it is!" said the stranger, with no unfriendly, though a harsh voice.

"I thank you," said Alice in reply; and continued to fill her pitcher busily, by assistance of an iron bowl which remained still chained to one of the stones beside the fountain.

"Perhaps, my pretty maiden, if you would accept my help, your work would be sooner done," said the stranger.

"I thank you," said Alice; "but had I needed assistance, I could have brought those with me who had rendered it."

"I do not doubt of that, my pretty maiden," answered the female; "there are too many lads in Woodstock with eyes in their heads—No doubt you could have brought with you any one of them who looked on you, if you had listed?"

Alice replied not a syllable, for she did not like the freedom used by the speaker, and was desirous to break off the conversation.

"Are you offended, my pretty mistress?" said the stranger; "that was far from my purpose.—I will put my question otherwise—Are the good dames of Woodstock so careless of their pretty daughters as to let the flower of them all wander about the wild chase without a mother, or a somebody to prevent the fox from running away with the lamb?—that carelessness, methinks, shows small kindness."

"Content yourself, good woman, I am not far from protection and assistance," said Alice, who liked less and less the effrontery of her new acquaintance.

"Alas! my pretty maiden," said the stranger, patting with her large and hard hand the head which Alice had kept bended down towards the water which she was laving, "it would be difficult to hear such a pipe as yours at the town of Woodstock, scream as loud as you would."

Alice shook the woman's hand angrily off, took up her pitcher, though not above half full, and as she saw the stranger rise at the same time, said, not without fear doubtless, but with a natural feeling of resentment and dignity, "I have no reason to make my cries heard as far as Woodstock; were there occasion for my crying for help at all, it is nearer at hand."

She spoke not without a warrant; for, at the moment, broke through the bushes, and stood by her side, the noble hound Bevis; fixing on the stranger his eyes that glanced fire, raising every hair on his gallant mane as upright as the bristles of a wild boar when hard pressed, grinning till a case of teeth, which would have matched those of any wolf in Russia, were displayed in full array, and, without either barking or springing, seeming, by his low determined growl, to await but the signal for dashing at the female, whom he plainly considered as a suspicious person.

But the stranger was undaunted. "My pretty maiden," she said, "you have indeed a formidable guardian there, where cockneys or bumpkins are concerned; but we who have been at the wars know spells for taming such furious dragons; and therefore let not your four-footed protector go loose on me, for he is a noble animal, and nothing but self-defence would induce me to do him injury." So saying, she drew a pistol from her bosom, and cocked it—pointing it towards the dog, as if apprehensive that he would spring upon her.

"Hold, woman, hold!" said Alice Lee; "the dog will not do you harm.—Down, Bevis, couch down—And ere you attempt to hurt him, know he is the favourite hound of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, the keeper of Woodstock Park, who would severely revenge any injury offered to him."

"And you, pretty one, are the old knight's housekeeper, doubtless? I have often heard the Lees have good taste."

"I am his daughter, good woman."

"His daughter!—I was blind—but yet it is true, nothing less perfect could answer the description which all the world has given of Mistress Alice Lee. I trust that my folly has given my young mistress no offence, and that she will allow me, in token of reconciliation, to fill her pitcher, and carry it as far as she will permit."

"As you will, good mother; but I am about to return instantly to the Lodge, to which, in these times, I cannot admit strangers. You can follow me no farther than the verge of the wilderness, and I am already too long from home: I will send some one to meet and relieve you of the pitcher." So saying, she turned her back, with a feeling of terror which she could hardly account for, and began to walk quickly towards the Lodge, thinking thus to get rid of her troublesome acquaintance.

But she reckoned without her host; for in a moment her new companion was by her side, not running, indeed, but walking with prodigious long unwomanly strides, which soon brought her up with the hurried and timid steps of the frightened maiden. But her manner was more respectful than formerly, though her voice sounded remarkably harsh and disagreeable, and her whole appearance suggested an undefined, yet irresistible feeling of apprehension.

"Pardon a stranger, lovely Mistress Alice," said her persecutor, "that was not capable of distinguishing between a lady of your high quality and a peasant wench, and who spoke to you with a degree of freedom, ill-befitting your rank, certainly, and condition, and which, I fear, has given you offence."

"No offence whatever," replied Alice; "but, good woman, I am near home, and can excuse your farther company.—You are unknown to me."

"But it follows not," said the stranger, "that *your* fortunes may not be known to *me*, fair Mistress Alice. Look on my swarthy brow—England breeds none such—and in the lands from which I come, the sun which blackens our complexion, pours, to make amends, rays of knowledge into our brains which are denied to those of your lukewarm climate. Let me look upon your pretty hand,—[attempting to possess herself of it,]—and I promise you, you shall hear what will please you."

"I hear what does *not* please me," said Alice, with dignity; "you must carry your tricks of fortune-telling and palmistry to the women of the village—We of the gentry hold them to be either imposture or unlawful knowledge."

"Yet you would fain hear of a certain Colonel, I warrant you, whom certain unhappy circumstances have separated from his family; you would give better than silver if I could assure you that you would see him in a day or two—ay, perhaps sooner."

"I know nothing of what you speak, good woman; if you want alms, there is a piece of silver—it is all I have in my purse."

"It were a pity that I should take it," said the female; "*and yet give it me*—for the princess in the *fairy tale must ever deserve*, by her generosity, the *bounty of the benevolent fairy*, before she is rewarded *by her protection.*"

"Take it—take it—give me my pitcher," said Alice, "and begone,—yonder comes one of my father's servants.—What, ho!—Joceline—Joceline!"

The old fortune-teller hastily dropped something into the pitcher as she restored it to Alice Lee, and, plying her long limbs, disappeared speedily under cover of the wood.

Bevis turned, and backed, and showed some inclination to harass the retreat of this suspicious person, yet, as if uncertain, ran towards Joliffe, and fawned on him, as to demand his advice and encouragement. Joceline pacified the animal, and coming up to his young lady, asked her, with surprise, what was the matter, and whether she had been frightened? Alice made light of her alarm, for which, indeed she could not have assigned any very competent reason, for the manners of the woman, though bold and intrusive, were not menacing. She only said she had met a fortune-teller by Rosamond's Well, and had had some difficulty in shaking her off.

"Ah, the gipsy thief," said Joceline, "how well she scented there was food in the pantry!—they have noses like ravens, these strollers. Look you, Mistress Alice, you shall not see a raven, or a carrion-crow, in all the blue sky for a mile round you; but let a sheep drop suddenly down on the greensward, and before the poor creature's dead you shall see a dozen of such guests croaking, as if inviting each other to the banquet.—Just so it is with these sturdy beggars. You will see few enough of them when there's nothing to give, but when hough's in the pot, they will have share on't."

"You are so proud of your fresh supply of provender," said Alice, "that you suspect all of a design on't. I do not think this woman will venture near your kitchen, Joceline."

"It will be best for her health," said Joceline, "lest I give her a ducking for digestion.—But give me the pitcher, Mistress Alice—meeter I bear it than you.—How now? what jingles at the bottom? have you lifted the pebbles as well as the water?"

"I think the woman dropped something into the pitcher," said Alice.

"Nay, we must look to that, for it is like to be a charm, and we have enough of the devil's ware about Woodstock already—we will not spare for the water—I can run back and fill the pitcher." He poured out the water upon the grass, and at the bottom of the pitcher was found a gold ring, in which was set a ruby, apparently of some value.

"Nay, if this be not enchantment, I know not what is," said Joceline. "Truly, Mistress Alice, I think you had better throw away this gimcrack. Such gifts from such hands are a kind of press-money which the devil uses for enlisting his regiment of witches; and if they take but so much as a bean from him, they become his bond slaves for life—Ay, you look at the gewgaw, but to-morrow you will find a lead ring and a common pebble in its stead."

"Nay, Joceline, I think it will be better to find out that dark-complexioned woman, and return to her what seems of some value. So, cause inquiry to be made, and be sure you return her ring. It seems too valuable to be destroyed."

"Umph! that is always the way with women," murmured Joceline. "You will never get the best of them, but she is willing to save a bit of finery.—Well, Mistress Alice, I trust that you are too young and too pretty to be enlisted in a regiment of witches."

"I shall not be afraid of it till you turn conjurer," said Alice; "so hasten to the well, where you are like still to find the woman, and let her know that Alice Lee desires none of her gifts, any more than she did of her society."

So saying, the young lady pursued her way to the Lodge, while Joceline went down to Rosamond's Well to execute her commission. But the fortune-teller, or whoever she might be, was nowhere to be found; neither, finding that to be the case, did Joceline give himself much trouble in tracking her farther.

"If this ring, which I dare say the jade stole somewhere," said the under-keeper to himself, "be

worth a few nobles, it is better in honest hands than in those of vagabonds. My master has a right to all waifs and strays, and certainly such a ring, in possession of a gipsy, must be a waif. So I shall confiscate it without scruple, and apply the produce to the support of Sir Henry's household, which is like to be poor enough. Thank Heaven, my military experience has taught me how to carry hooks at my fingerends—that is trooper's law. Yet, hang it, after all, I had best take it to Mark Everard and ask his advice—I hold him now to be your learned counsellor in law where Mistress Alice's affairs are concerned, and my learned Doctor, who shall be nameless, for such as concern Church and State and Sir Henry Lee—And I'll give them leave to give mine umbles to the kites and ravens if they find me conferring my confidence where it is not safe."

CHAPTER XIX.

Being skilless in these parts, which, to a stranger,
Unguided and unfriended, often prove
Rough and inhospitable.—*Twelfth Night.*

THERE was a little attempt at preparation, now that the dinner hour was arrived, which showed that, in the opinion of its few but faithful domestics, the good knight had returned in triumph to his home.

The great tankard, exhibiting in bas-relief the figure of Michael subduing the arch enemy, was placed on the table, and Joceline and Phœbe dutifully attended; the one behind the chair of Sir Henry, the other to wait upon her young mistress, and both to make out, by formal and regular observance, the want of a more numerous train.

"A health to King Charles!" said the old knight, handing the massive tankard to his daughter; "drink it, my love, though it be rebel ale which they have left us. I will pledge thee; for the toast will excuse the liquor, had Noll himself brewed it."

The young lady touched the goblet with her lip, and returned it to her father, who took a copious draught.

"I will not say blessing on their hearts," said he; "though I must own they drank good ale."

"No wonder, sir; they came lightly by the malt, and need not spare it" said Joceline.

"Say'st thou?" said the knight; "thou shalt finish the tankard thyself for that very jest's sake." Nor was his follower slow in doing reason to the royal pledge. He bowed, and replaced the tankard, saying, after a triumphant glance at the sculpture, "I had a gibe with that same red-coat about the Saint Michael just now."

"Red-coat—ha! what red-coat?" said the hasty old man. "Do any of these knaves still lurk about Woodstock?—Quoit him down stairs instantly, Joceline.—Know we not Galloway nags?"

"So please you, he is in some charge here, and will speedily be gone.—It is he—he who had a rencontre with your honour in the wood."

"Ay, but I paid him off for it in the hall, as you yourself saw. I was never in better fence in my life, Joceline. That same steward fellow is not so utterly black-hearted a rogue as the most of them, Joceline. He fences well—excellent well. I will have thee try a bout in the hall with him to-morrow, though I think he will be too hard for thee. I know thy strength to an inch."

He might say this with some truth; for it was Joceline's fashion, when called on, as sometimes happened, to fence with his patron, just to put forth as much of his strength and skill as obliged the Knight to contend hard for the victory, which, in the long run, he always contrived to yield up to him, like a discreet serving-man.

"And what said this roundheaded steward of our great Saint Michael's standing cup?"

"Marry, he scoffed at our good saint, and said he was little better than one of the golden calves of Bethel. But I told him he should not talk so, until one of their own roundheaded saints had given the devil as complete a crossbuttock as Saint Michael had given him, as 'tis carved upon the cup there. I *trow that made him silent enough.* And then he would know whether your honour and Mistress Alice, not to mention old Joan and myself, since it is your honour's pleasure I should take my bed here, were not afraid to sleep in a house that had been so much disturbed. But I told him we feared no fiends or goblins, having the prayers of the church read every evening."

"Joceline," said Alice, interrupting him, "were thou mad? You know at what risk to ourselves and the good doctor the performance of that duty takes place."

"Oh, Mistress Alice," said Joceline, a little abashed, "you may be sure I spoke not a word of the doctor—No, no—I did not let him into the secret that we had such a reverend chaplain.—I think I know the length of this man's foot. We have had a jollification or so together. He is hand and glove with me, for as great a fanatic as he is."

"Trust him not too far," said the knight. "Nay, I fear thou hast been imprudent already, and that it will be unsafe for the good man to come here after nightfall, as proposed. These Independents have noses like bloodhounds, and can smell out a loyalist under any disguise."

"If your honour thinks so," said Joceline, "I'll watch for the doctor with good will, and bring him into the Lodge by the old condemned postern, and so up to this apartment; and sure this man Tomkins would never presume to come hither; and the doctor may have a bed in Woodstock Lodge, and he never the wiser; or, if your honour does not think that safe, I can cut his throat for you, and I would not mind it a pin."

"God forbid!" said the knight. "He is under our roof, and a guest, though not an invited one.—Go, Joceline; it shall be thy penance, for having given thy tongue too much license, to watch for the good doctor, and to take care of his safety while he continues with us. An October night or two in the forest would finish the good man."

"He is more like to finish our October than our October is to finish him," said the keeper; and withdrew under the encouraging smile of his patron.

He whistled Bevis along with him to share in his watch; and having received exact information where the clergyman was most likely to be found, assured his master that he would give the most pointed attention to his safety. When the attendants had withdrawn, having previously removed the remains of the meal, the old knight, leaning back in his chair, encouraged pleasanter visions than had of late passed through his imagination, until by degrees he was surprised by actual slumber; while his daughter, not venturing to move but on tiptoe, took some needlework, and bringing it close by the old man's side, employed her fingers on this task, bending her eyes from time to time on her parent, with the affectionate zeal, if not the effective power, of a guardian angel. At length, as the light faded away, and night came on, she was about to order candles to be brought. But, remembering how indifferent a couch Joceline's cottage had afforded, she could not think of interrupting the first sound and refreshing sleep which her father had enjoyed, in all probability, for the last two nights and days.

She herself had no other amusement, as she sat facing one of the great oriel windows, the same by which Wildrake had on a former occasion looked in upon Tomkins and Joceline while at their compotations, than watching the clouds, which a lazy wind sometimes chased from the broad disk of the harvest-moon, sometimes permitted to accumulate, and exclude her brightness. There is, I know not why, something peculiarly pleasing to the imagination, in contemplating the Queen of Night, when she is *wading*, as the expression is, among the vapours which she has not power to dispel, and which on their side are unable entirely to quench her lustre. It is the striking image of patient virtue, calmly pursuing her path through good report and bad report, having that excellence in herself which ought to command all admiration, but bedimmed in the eyes of the world by suffering, by misfortune, by calumny.

As some such reflections, perhaps, were passing

through Alice's imagination, she became sensible, to her surprise and alarm, that some one had clambered up upon the window, and was looking into the room. The idea of supernatural fear did not in the slightest degree agitate Alice. She was too much accustomed to the place and situation; for folk do not see spectres in the scenes with which they have been familiar from infancy. But danger from marauders in a disturbed country was a more formidable subject of apprehension, and the thought armed Alice, who was naturally high-spirited, with such desperate courage, that she snatched a pistol from the wall, on which some fire-arms hung, and while she screamed to her father to awake, had the presence of mind to present it at the intruder. She did so the more readily, because she imagined she recognised in the visage, which she partially saw, the features of the woman whom she had met with at Rosamond's Well, and which had appeared to her peculiarly harsh and suspicious. Her father at the same time seized his sword and came forward, while the person at the window, alarmed at these demonstrations, and endeavouring to descend, missed footing, as had Cavaliero Wildrake before, and went down to the earth with no small noise. Nor was the reception on the bosom of our common mother either soft or safe; for, by a most terrific bark and growl, they heard that Bevis had come up and seized on the party, ere he or she could gain their feet.

"Hold fast, but worry not," said the old knight.—"Alice, thou art the queen of wenches! Stand fast here till I run down and secure the rascal."

"For God's sake, no, my dearest father!" Alice exclaimed; "Joceline will be up immediately—Hark! —I hear him."

There was indeed a bustle below, and more than one light danced to and fro in confusion, while those who bore them called to each other, yet suppressing their voices as they spoke, as men who would only be heard by those they addressed. The individual who had fallen under the power of Bevis was most impatient in his situation, and called with least precaution,—"Here, Lee—Forester—take the dog off, else I must shoot him!"

"If thou dost," said Sir Henry from the window, "I blow thy brains out on the spot—Thieves, Joceline, thieves! come up and secure this ruffian.—Bevis, hold on!"

"Back, Bevis; down, sir." cried Joceline.—"I am coming, I am coming, Sir Henry—Saint Michael, I shall go distracted!"

A terrible thought suddenly occurred to Alice,—could Joceline have become unfaithful, that he was calling Bevis off the villain, instead of encouraging the trusty dog to secure him? Her father, mean time, moved perhaps by some suspicion of the same kind, hastily stepped aside out of the moonlight, and pulled Alice close to him, so as to be invisible from without, yet so placed as to hear what should pass. The scuffle between Bevis and his prisoner seemed to be ended by Joceline's interference, and there was close whispering for an instant, as of people in consultation.

"All is quiet now," said one voice; "I will up and prepare the way for you."—And immediately a form presented itself on the outside of the window, pushed open the lattice and sprung into the parlour. But almost ere his step was on the floor, certainly before he had obtained any secure footing, the old knight, who stood ready with his rapier drawn, made a desperate pass, which bore the intruder to the ground. Joceline, who clambered up next with a dark lantern in his hand, uttered a dreadful exclamation, when he saw what had happened, crying out, "Lord in Heaven, he has slain his own son!"

"No, no—I tell you no," said the fallen young man, who was indeed young Albert Lee, the only son of the old knight—"I am not hurt.—No noise, on your lives —get lights instantly." At the same time, he started from the floor as quickly as he could, under the embarrassment of a cloak and doublet skewered as it were together by the rapier of the old knight, whose pass, most fortunately, had been diverted from the body of Albert by the interruption of his cloak, the blade passing right across his back, piercing the clothes, while the hilt coming against his side with the whole force of the lounge, had borne him to the ground.

Joceline all the while enjoined silence to every one, under the strictest conjurations. "Silence, as you would long live on earth—silence, as you would have a place in Heaven,—be but silent for a few minutes—all our lives depend on it."

Mean time he procured lights with inexpressible despatch, and they then beheld that Sir Henry, on hearing the fatal words, had sunk back on one of the large chairs, without either motion, colour, or sign of life.

"Oh, brother, how could you come in this manner?" said Alice.

"Ask no questions—Good God! for what am I reserved!" He gazed on his father as he spoke, who, with clay-cold features rigidly fixed, and his arms extended in the most absolute helplessness, looked rather the image of death upon a monument, than a being in whom existence was only suspended. "Was my life spared," said Albert, raising his hands with a wild gesture to Heaven, "only to witness such a sight as this!"

"We suffer what Heaven permits, young man—we endure our lives while Heaven continues them. Let me approach." The same clergyman who had read the prayers at Joceline's hut now came forward. "Get water," he said, "instantly." And the helpful hand and light foot of Alice, with the ready-witted tenderness which never stagnates in vain lamentations while there is any room for hope, provided with incredible celerity all that the clergyman called for.

"It is but a swoon," he said, on feeling Sir Henry's palm,—"a swoon produced from the instant and unexpected shock. Rouse thee up, Albert; I promise thee it will be nothing save a syncope—A cup, my dearest Alice, and a riband, or a bandage—I must take some blood—some aromatics, too, if they can be had, my good Alice."

But while Alice procured the cup and bandage, stripped her father's sleeve, and seemed by intuition even to anticipate every direction of the reverend doctor, her brother, hearing no word, and seeing no sign of comfort, stood with both hands clasped and elevated into the air, a monument of speechless despair. Every feature in his face seemed to express the thought, "Here lies my father's corpse, and it is I whose rashness has slain him!"

But when a few drops of blood began to follow the lancet—at first falling singly, and then trickling in a freer stream—when, in consequence of the application of cold water to the temples, and aromatics to the nostrils, the old man sighed feebly, and made an effort to move his limbs, Albert Lee changed his posture, at once to throw himself at the feet of the clergyman, and kiss, if he would have permitted him, his shoes and the hem of his raiment.

"Rise, foolish youth," said the good man, with a reproving tone; "must it be always thus with you?—Kneel to Heaven, not to the feeblest of its agents. You have been saved once again from great danger—would you deserve Heaven's bounty, remember you have been preserved for other purposes than you now think on. Begone you and Joceline, you have a duty to discharge; and be assured it will go better with your father's recovery that he see you not for a few minutes. Down—down to the wilderness, and bring in your attendant."

"Thanks, thanks, a thousand thanks," answered Albert Lee; and, springing through the lattice, he disappeared as unexpectedly as he had entered—At the same time Joceline followed him, and by the same road.

Alice, whose fears for her father were now something abated, upon this new movement among the persons of the scene, could not resist appealing to her venerable assistant. "Good doctor, answer me but one question—was my brother Albert here just now, or have I dreamed all that has happened for these ten minutes past? Methinks, but for your presence, I could suppose the whole had passed in my sleep—that horrible thrust—that deathlike, corpse-like old

an—that soldier in mute despair—I must indeed ve dreamed."

'If you have dreamed, my sweet Alice," said the ctor, "I wish every sicknurse had your property, ice you have been attending to our patient better ring your sleep, than most of these old dormice n do when they are most awake. But your dream me through the gate of horn, my pretty darling, ich you must remind me to explain to you at lei-e. Albert has really been here, and will be here ain."

'Albert!" repeated Sir Henry, "who names my ?"

'It is I, my kind patron," said the doctor; "permit to bind up your arm."

'My wound?—with all my heart, doctor," said Sir nry, raising himself, and gathering his recollection degrees. "I knew of old thou wert body-curer as ll as soul-curer, and served my regiment for sur-on as well as chaplain.—But where is the rascal I led?—I never made a fairer *stramacon* in my life. e shell of my rapier struck against his ribs. So id he must be, or my right hand has forgot its nning."

'Nobody was slain," said the doctor; "we must nk God for that, since there were none but friends slay. Here is a good cloak and doublet, though, unded in a fashion which will require some skill in lor-craft to cure. But I was your last antagonist, d took a little blood from you, merely to prepare u for the pleasure and surprise of seeing your son, o, though hunted pretty close, as you may believe, th made his way from Worcester hither, where, th Jocceline's assistance, we will care well enough his safety. It was even for this reason that I ssed you to accept of your nephew's proposal to urn to the old Lodge, where a hundred men might concealed, though a thousand were making search discover them. Never such a place for hide-and-k, as I shall make good when I can find means to lish my Wonders of Woodstock."

'But, my son—my dear son," said the knight, hall I not then instantly see him? and wherefore you not forewarn me of this joyful event?"

'Because I was uncertain of his motions," said the ctor, "and rather thought he was bound for the -side, and that it would be best to tell you of his e when he was safe on board, and in full sail for ance. We had appointed to let you know all when ame hither to-night to join you. But there is a l-coat in the house whom we care not to trust far-r than we could not help. We dared not, there-e, venture in by the hall; and so, prowling round building, Albert informed us, that an old prank his, when a boy, consisted of entering by this win-w. A lad who was with us would needs make the periment, as there seemed to be no light in the amber, and the moonlight without made us liable be detected. His foot slipped, and our friend Bevis ne upon us."

'In good truth, you acted simply," said Sir Henry, o attack a garrison without a summons. But all s is nothing to my son Albert—where is he?—Let see him."

'But, Sir Henry, wait," said the doctor, "till your tored strength"——

'A plague of my restored strength, man!" an-ered the knight, as his old spirit began to awaken thin him.—"Dost not remember, that I lay on gehill-field all night, bleeding like a bullock from several wounds, and wore my armour within six eks? and you talk to me of the few drops of blood it follow such a scratch as a cat's claw might have ade!"

'Nay, if you feel so courageous," said the doctor, will fetch your son—he is not far distant."

So saying, he left the apartment, making a sign to ce to remain, in case any symptoms of her fa-r's weakness should return.

t was fortunate, perhaps, that Sir Henry never med to recollect the precise nature of the alarm, ich had at once, and effectually as the shock of the nderbolt, for the moment suspended his faculties. *mething he said more than once of* being certain he had done mischief with that *stramacon*, as h called it; but his mind did not recur to that danger, as having incurred by his son. Alice, glad to see that her father appeared to have forgotten a circumstance so fearful, (as men often forget the blow, or other sudden cause, which has thrown them into a swoon,) readily excused herself from throwing much light on the matter, by pleading the general confusion. And in a few minutes, Albert cut off all farther inquiry, by entering the room, followed by the doctor, and throwing himself alternately into the arms of his father and of his sister.

CHAPTER XX.

The boy is—hark ye, sirrah—what's your name?—
Oh, Jacob—ay, I recollect—the same.—CRABBE.

THE affectionate relatives were united as those who, meeting under great adversity, feel still the happiness of sharing it in common. They embraced again and again, and gave way to those expansions of the heart, which at once express and relieve the pressure of mental agitation. At length the tide of emotion began to subside; and Sir Henry, still holding his recovered son by the hand, resumed the command of his feelings which he usually practised.

"So you have seen the last of our battles, Albert," he said, "and the King's colours have fallen for ever before the rebels?"

"It is but even so," said the young man—"the last cast of the die was thrown, and, alas! lost, at Worcester; and Cromwell's fortune carried it there, as it has wherever he has shown himself."

"Well—it can but be for a time—it can but be for a time,"—answered his father; "the devil is potent, they say, in raising and gratifying favourites, but he can grant but short leases.—And the King—the King, Albert—the King—in my ear—close, close!"

"Our last news were confident that he had escaped from Bristol."

"Thank God for that—thank God for that!" said the knight. "Where didst thou leave him?"

"Our men were almost all cut to pieces at the bridge," Albert replied; "but I followed his Majesty, with about five hundred other officers and gentlemen, who were resolved to die around him, until, as our numbers and appearance drew the whole pursuit after us, it pleased his Majesty to dismiss us, with many thanks and words of comfort to us in general, and some kind expressions to most of us in especial. He sent his royal greeting to you, sir, in particular, and said more than becomes me to repeat."

"Nay, I will hear it every word, boy," said Sir Henry; "is not the certainty that thou hast discharged thy duty, and that King Charles owns it, enough to console me for all we have lost and suffered, and wouldst thou stint me of it from a false shamefacedness?—I will have it out of thee, were it drawn from thee with cords!"

"It shall need no such compulsion," said the young man—"It was his Majesty's pleasure to bid me tell Sir Henry Lee, in his name, that if his son could not go before his father in the race of loyalty, he was at least following him closely, and would soon move side by side."

"Said he so?" answered the knight—"Old Victor Lee will look down with pride on thee, Albert!—But I forget—you must be weary and hungry."

"Even so, sir," said Albert; "but these are things which of late I have been in the habit of enduring for safety's sake."

"Joceline!—what ho, Joceline!"

The under keeper entered, and received orders to get supper prepared directly.

"My son and Dr. Rochecliffe are half starving," said the knight.

"And there is a lad, too, below," said Joceline; "a page, he says, of Colonel Albert's, whose belly rings cupboard too, and that to no common tune; for I think he could eat a horse, as the Yorkshireman says, behind the saddle. He had better eat at the sideboard; for he has devoured a whole loaf of bread and butter, as fast as Phœbe could cut it, and it has not staid his stomach for a minute—and truly I think yo

had better keep him under your own eyes, for the steward beneath might ask him troublesome questions if he went below—And then he is impatient, as all your gentlemen pages are, and is saucy among the women."

"Whom is it he talks of?—what page hast thou got, Albert, that bears himself so ill?" said Sir Henry.

"The son of a dear friend, a noble lord of Scotland, who followed the great Montrose's banner—afterwards joined the King in Scotland, and came with him as far as Worcester. He was wounded the day before the battle, and conjured me to take this youth under my charge, which I did, something unwillingly; but I could not refuse a father, perhaps on his deathbed, pleading for the safety of an only son."

"Thou hadst deserved a halter, hadst thou hesitated," said Sir Henry; "the smallest tree can always give some shelter,—and it pleases me to think the old stock of Lee is not so totally prostrate, but it may yet be a refuge for the distressed. Fetch the youth in;—he is of noble blood, and these are no times of ceremony—he shall sit with us at the same table, page though he be; and if you have not schooled him handsomely in his manners, he may not be the worse of some lessons from me."

"You will excuse his national drawling accent, sir?" said Albert, "though I know you like it not."

"I have small cause, Albert," answered the knight—"small cause.—Who stirred up these disunions?—the Scots. Who strengthened the hands of Parliament, when their cause was well-nigh ruined?—the Scots again. Who delivered up the King, their countryman, who had flung himself upon their protection?—the Scots again. But this lad's father, you say, has fought on the part of the noble Montrose; and such a man as the great Marquis may make amends for the degeneracy of a whole nation."

"Nay, father," said Albert, "and I must add, that though this lad is uncouth and wayward, and, as you will see, something wilful, yet the King has not a more zealous friend in England; and, when occasion offered, he fought stoutly, too, in his defence—I marvel he comes not!"

"He hath taken the bath," said Joceline, "and nothing less would serve than that he should have it immediately—the supper, he said, might be got ready in the mean time; and he commands all about him as if he were in his father's old castle, where he might have called long enough, I warrant, without any one to hear him."

"Indeed?" said Sir Henry, "this must be a forward chick of the game, to crow so early.—What is his name?"

"His name?—it escapes me every hour, it is so hard a one," said Albert—"Kerneguy is his name—Louis Kerneguy; his father was Lord Killstewers, of Kincardineshire."

"Kerneguy, and Killstewers, and Kin—what d'ye call it?—Truly," said the knight, "these northern men's names and titles smack of their origin—they sound like a north-west wind, rumbling and roaring among heather and rocks."

"It is but the asperites of the Celtic and Saxon dialects," said Dr. Rochecliffe, "which, according to Verstegan, still linger in those northern parts of the island.—But peace—here comes supper, and Master Louis Kerneguy."

Supper entered accordingly, borne in by Joceline and Phœbe, and after it, leaning on a huge knotty stick, and having his nose in the air like a questing hound—for his attention was apparently more fixed on the good provisions that went before him, than any thing else—came Master Kerneguy, and seated himself, without much ceremony, at the lower end of the table.

He was a tall, rawboned lad, with a shock head of hair, fiery red, like many of his country, while the harshness of his national features was increased by the contrast of his complexion, turned almost black by the exposure to all sorts of weather, which, in that skulking and rambling mode of life, the fugitive royalists had been obliged to encounter. His address was by no means prepossessing, being a mixture of awkwardness and forwardness, and showing, in a remarkable degree, how a want of easy address may be consistent with an admirable stock of assurance. His face intimated having received some recent scratches, and the care of Dr Rochecliffe had decorated it with a number of patches, which even enhanced its natural plainness. Yet the eyes were brilliant and expressive, and amid his ugliness—for it amounted to that degree of irregularity—the face was not deficient in some lines which expressed both sagacity and resolution.

The dress of Albert himself was far beneath his quality, as the son of Sir Henry Lee, and commander of a regiment in the royal service; but that of his page was still more dilapidated. A disastrous green jerkin, which had been changed to a hundred hues by sun and rain, so that the original could scarce be discovered, huge clouterly shoes, leathern breeches—such as were worn by hedgers—coarse gray worsted stockings, were the attire of the honourable youth, whose limping gait, while it added to the ungainliness of his manner, showed, at the same time, the extent of his sufferings. His appearance bordered so much upon what is vulgarly called the queer, that even with Alice it would have excited some sense of ridicule, had not compassion been predominant.

The grace was said; and the young Squire of Ditchley, as well as Dr. Rochecliffe, made an excellent figure at a meal, the like of which, in quality and abundance, did not seem to have lately fallen to their share. But their feats were child's-play to those of the Scottish youth. Far from betraying any symptoms of the bread and butter with which he had attempted to close the orifice of his stomach, his appetite appeared to have been sharpened by a nine days' fast; and the knight was disposed to think that the very genius of famine himself, come forth from his native regions of the north, was in the act of honouring him with a visit, while, as if afraid of losing a moment's exertion, Master Kerneguy never looked either to right or left, or spoke a single word to any at table.

"I am glad to see that you have brought a good appetite for our country fare, young gentleman," said Sir Henry.

"Bread of gude! sir," said the page, "an ye'll find flesh, I'se find appetite conforming, ony day o' the year. But the truth is, sir, that the appeteesement has been coming on for three days or four, and the meat in this southland of yours has been scarce, and hard to come by; so, sir, I'm making up for lost time, as the piper of Sligo said, when he eat a hail side o' mutton."

"You have been country-bred, young man," said the knight, who, like others of his time, held the reins of discipline rather tight over the rising generation; "at least, to judge from the youths of Scotland whom I have seen at his late Majesty's court in former days;—they had less appetite, and more—more"—As he sought the qualifying phrase, which might supply the place of "good manners," his guest closed the sentence in his own way—"And more meat, it may be—the better luck theirs."

Sir Henry stared and was silent. His son seemed to think it time to interpose—"My dear father," he said, "think how many years have run since the Thirty-eighth, when the Scottish troubles first began, and I am sure that you will not wonder that, while the Barons of Scotland have been, for one cause or other, perpetually in the field, the education of their children at home must have been much neglected, and that young men of my friend's age know better how to use a broadsword, or to toss a pike, than the decent ceremonials of society."

"The reason is a sufficient one," said the knight, "and, since thou sayest thy follower Kernigo can fight, we'll not let him lack victuals, a God's name.—See, he looks angrily still at yonder cold loin of mutton—for God's sake put it all on his plate!"

"I can bide the bit and the buffet," said the honourable Master Kerneguy—"a hungry tike ne'er minds a blaud with a rough bane."

"Now, God ha'e mercy, Albert, but if this be the son of a Scots peer," said Sir Henry to his son, in a

low tone of voice, "I would not be the English ploughman who would change manners with him, for his ancient blood, and his nobility, and his estate to boot, an he has one. He has eaten, as I am a Christian, near four pounds of solid butcher's meat, and with the grace of a wolf tugging at the carcass of a dead horse.—Oh, he is about to drink at last—Soh!—he wipes his mouth, though,—and dips his fingers in the ewer—and dries them, I profess, with the napkin!—there is some grace in him, after all.

"Here is wussing all your vera gude healths!" said the youth of quality, and took a draught in proportion to the solids which he had sent before; he then flung his knife and fork awkwardly on the trencher, which he pushed back towards the centre of the table, extending his feet beneath it till they rested on their heels, folded his arms on his well-replenished stomach, and, lolling back in his chair, looked much as if he was about to whistle himself asleep.

"Soh!" said the knight—"the honourable Master Kernigo hath laid down his arms.—Withdraw these things, and give us our glasses—Fill them around, Joceline; and if the devil or the whole Parliament were within hearing, let them hear Henry Lee of Ditchley drink a health to King Charles, and confusion to his enemies!"

"Amen!" said a voice from behind the door.

All the company looked at each other in astonishment, at a response so little expected. It was followed by a solemn and peculiar tap, such as a kind of freemasonry had introduced among royalists, and by which they were accustomed to make themselves and their principles known to each other, when they met by accident.

"There is no danger," said Albert, knowing the sign—"it is a friend;—yet I wish he had been at a greater distance just now."

"And why, my son, should you wish the absence of one true man, who may, perhaps, wish to share our abundance, on one of those rare occasions when we have superfluity at our disposal?—Go, Joceline see who knocks—and, if a safe man, admit him."

"And if otherwise," said Joceline, "methinks I shall be able to prevent his troubling the good company."

"No violence, Joceline, on your life;" said Albert Lee; and Alice echoed, "For God's sake, no violence!"

"No unnecessary violence at least," said the good knight; "for if the time demands it, I will have it seen that I am master of my own house." Joceline Joliffe nodded assent to all parties, and went on tiptoe to exchange one or two other mysterious symbols and knocks, ere he opened the door. It may be here remarked, that this species of secret association, with its signals of union, existed among the more dissolute and desperate class of cavaliers, men habituated to the dissipated life which they had been accustomed to in an ill-disciplined army, where every thing like order and regularity was too apt to be accounted a badge of puritanism. These were the "roaring boys" who met in hedge alehouses, and when they had by any chance obtained a little money or a little credit, determined to create a counter-revolution by declaring their sittings permanent, and proclaimed, in the words of one of their choicest ditties,—

> "We'll drink till we bring
> In triumph back the king."

The leaders and gentry, of a higher description and more regular morals, did not indeed partake such excesses, but they still kept their eye upon a class of persons, who, from courage and desperation, were capable of serving on an advantageous occasion the fallen cause of royalty; and recorded the lodges and blind taverns at which they met, as wholesale merchants know the houses of call of the mechanics whom they may have occasion to employ, and can tell where they may find them when need requires. It is scarce necessary to add, that among the lower class, and sometimes even among the higher, there were men found capable of betraying the projects and conspiracies of their associates, whether well or indifferently combined, to the governors of the state. Cromwell, in particular, had gained some correspondents of this kind of the highest rank, and of the most undoubted character, among the royalists, who, if they made scruple of impeaching or betraying individuals who confided in them, had no hesitation in giving the government such general information as served to enable him to disappoint the purposes of any plot or conspiracy.

To return to our story. In much shorter time than we have spent in reminding the reader of these historical particulars, Joliffe had made his mystic communication; and being duly answered as by one of the initiated, he undid the door, and there entered our old friend Roger Wildrake, roundhead in dress, as his safety and his dependence on Colonel Everard compelled him to be, but that dress worn in a most cavalier-like manner, and forming a stronger contrast than usual with the demeanour and language of the wearer, to which it was never very congenial.

His puritanic hat, the emblem of that of Ralpho in the prints to Hudibras, or, as he called it, his felt umbrella, was set most knowingly on one side of the head, as if it had been a Spanish hat and feather; his straight square-caped sad-coloured cloak was flung gayly on one shoulder, as if it had been of three-piled taffeta, lined with crimson silk; and he paraded his huge calf-skin boots, as if they had been silken hose and Spanish leather shoes, with roses on the instep. In short, the airs which he gave himself, of a most thorough-paced wild gallant and cavalier, joined to a glistening of self-satisfaction in his eye, and an inimitable swagger in his gait, which completely announced his thoughtless, conceited, and reckless character, formed a most ridiculous contrast to his gravity of attire.

It could not, on the other hand, be denied, that in spite of the touch of ridicule which attached to his character, and the loose morality which he had learned in the dissipation of town pleasures, and afterwards in the disorderly life of a soldier, Wildrake had points about him both to make him feared and respected. He was handsome, even in spite of his air of debauched effrontery; a man of the most decided courage, though his vaunting rendered it sometimes doubtful; and entertained a sincere sense of his political principles, such as they were, though he was often so imprudent in asserting and boasting of them, as, joined with his dependence on Colonel Everard, induced prudent men to doubt his sincerity.

Such as he was, however, he entered the parlour of Victor Lee, where his presence was any thing but desirable to the parties present, with a jaunty step, and a consciousness of deserving the best possible reception. This assurance was greatly aided by circumstances which rendered it obvious, that if the jocund cavalier had limited himself to one draught of liquor that evening, in terms of his vow of temperance, it must have been a very deep and long one.

"Save ye, gentlemen, save ye.—Save you, good Sir Henry Lee, though I have scarce the honour to be known to you.—Save you, worthy doctor, and a speedy resurrection to the fallen Church of England."

"You are welcome, sir, said Sir Henry Lee, whose feelings of hospitality, and of the fraternal reception due to a royalist sufferer, induced him to tolerate this intrusion more than he might have done otherwise. "If you have fought or suffered for the King, sir, it is an excuse for joining us, and commanding our services in any thing in our power—although at present we are a family-party.—But I think I saw you in waiting upon Master Markham Everard, who calls himself Colonel Everard.—If your message is from him, you may wish to see me in private?"

"Not at all, Sir Henry, not at all. It is true, as my ill hap will have it, that being on the stormy side of the hedge—like all honest men—you understand me, Sir Henry—I am glad, as it were, to gain something from my old friend and comrade's countenance—not by truckling or disowning my principles, sir—I defy such practices;—but, in short, by doing him any kindness in my power when he is pleased to call on me. So I came down here with a message from him to the old roundheaded son of a —— (I beg the young lady's pardon, from the crown of her head down to the very

toes of her slipper)—And so, sir, chancing as I was stumbling out in the dark, I heard you give a toast, sir which warmed my heart, sir, and ever will, sir, till death chills it; and so I made bold to let you know there was an honest man within hearing."

Such was the self-introduction of Master Wildrake, to which the knight replied, by asking him to sit down, and take a glass of sack to his Majesty's glorious restoration. Wildrake, at this hint, squeezed in without ceremony beside the young Scotsman, and not only pledged his landlord's toast, but seconded its import by volunteering a verse or two of his favourite loyal ditty,—"The King shall enjoy his own again." The heartiness which he threw into his song opened still farther the heart of the old knight, though Albert and Alice looked at each other with looks resentful of the intrusion, and desirous to put an end to it. The honourable Master Kerneguy either possessed that happy indifference of temper which does not deign to notice such circumstances, or he was able to assume the appearance of it to perfection, as he sat sipping sack, and cracking walnuts, without testifying the least sense that an addition had been made to the party. Wildrake, who liked the liquor and the company, showed no unwillingness to repay his landlord, by being at the expense of the conversation.

"You talk of fighting and suffering, Sir Henry Lee—Lord help us, we have all had our share. All the world knows what Sir Henry Lee has done from Edgefield downwards, wherever a loyal sword was drawn, or a loyal flag fluttered.—Ah, God help us! I have done something too.—My name is Roger Wildrake of Squattlesea-mere, Lincoln—not that you are ever like to have heard it before, but I was captain in Lunsford's light horse, and afterwards with Goring. I was a child-eater, sir—a babe-bolter."

"I have heard of your regiment's exploits, sir; and perhaps you may find I have seen some of them, if we should spend ten minutes together—And I think I have heard of your name too.—I beg to drink your health, Captain Wildrake of Squattlesea-mere, Lincolnshire."

"Sir Henry, I drink yours in this pint bumper, and upon my knee; and I would do as much for that young gentleman"—(looking at Albert)—"and the squire of the green cassock too, holding it for green, as the colours are not to my eyes altogether clear and distinguishable."

It was a remarkable part of what is called by theatrical folk the by-play of this scene, that Albert was conversing apart with Doctor Rochecliffe in whispers, even more than the divine seemed desirous of encouraging;—yet, to whatever their private conversation referred, it did not deprive the young Colonel of the power of listening to what was going forward in the party at large, and interfering from time to time, like a watch-dog, who can distinguish the slightest alarm, even when employed in the engrossing process of taking his food.

"Captain Wildrake," said Albert, "we have no objection—I mean my friend and I—to be communicative on proper occasions; but you, sir, who are so d'd a sufferer, must needs know, that at such casual meetings as this, men do not mention their names unless they are specially wanted. It is a point of conscience, sir, to be able to say, if your principal, Captain Everard or Colonel Everard, if he be a Colonel, should examine you upon oath, I did not know who the persons were whom I heard drink such and such toasts."

"Faith, I have a better way of it, worthy sir," answered Wildrake; "I never can, for the life of me, remember that there were any such and such toasts drunk at all—It's a strange gift of forgetfulness I have."

"Well, sir," replied the younger Lee; "but we, who have unhappily more tenacious memories, would willingly abide by the more general rule."

"Oh, sir," answered Wildrake, "with all my heart. I intrude on no man's confidence, d—n me—and I *only spoke for civility's* sake, having the purpose of *drinking your health* in a good fashion."—(Then he *broke forth into melody*)—

"'Then let the health go round, a-round, a-round, a-round
Then let the health go round:
For though your stocking be of silk,
Your knee shall kiss the ground, a-ground, a-ground, a-ground,
Your knee shall kiss the ground.'"

"Urge it no farther," said Sir Henry, addressing his son; "Master Wildrake is one of the old school—one of the tantivy boys; and we must bear a little, for if they drink hard they fought well. I will never forget how a party came up and rescued us clerks of Oxford, as they called the regiment I belonged to, out of a cursed embroglio during the attack on Brentford. I tell you we were enclosed with the cockneys' pikes both front and rear, and we should have come off but ill, had not Lunsford's light horse, the babe-eaters as they called them, charged up to the pike's point, and brought us off."

"I am glad you thought on that, Sir Henry," said Wildrake; "and do you remember what the officer of Lunsford's said?"

"I think I do," said Sir Henry smiling.

"Well, then, did he not call out, when the women were coming down, howling like sirens as they were—'Have none of you a plump child that you could give us, to break our fast upon?'"

"Truth itself!" said the knight; "and a great fat woman stepped forward with a baby, and offered it to the supposed cannibal."

All at the table, Master Kerneguy excepted, who seemed to think that good food of any kind required no apology, held up their hands in token of amazement.

"Ay," said Wildrake, "the——a-hem!—I crave the lady's pardon again, from tip of top-knot to hem of farthingale—but the cursed creature proved to be a parish nurse, who had been paid for the child half a year in advance. Gad, I took the baby out of the bitch-wolf's hand; and I have contrived, though God knows I have lived in a skeldering sort of way myself, to breed up bold Breakfast, as I call him, ever since.—It was paying dear for a jest, though."

"Sir, I honour you for your humanity," said the old knight—"Sir, I thank you for your courage—Sir, I am glad to see you here," said the good knight, his eyes watering almost to overflowing. "So you were the wild officer who cut us out of the toils?—Oh, sir, had you but stopped when I called on you, and allowed us to clear the streets of Brentford with our musketeers, we would have been at London Stone that day! But your good-will was the same."

"Ay, truly was it," said Wildrake who now sat triumphant and glorious in his easy chair; "And here is to all the brave hearts, sir, that fought and fell in that same storm of Brentford. We drove all before us like chaff, till the shops, where they sold strong waters, and other temptations, brought us up—Gad, sir, we, the babe-eaters, had too many acquaintances in Brentford, and our stout Prince Rupert was ever better at making way than drawing off. Gad, sir, for my own poor share, I did but go into the house of a poor widow lady, who maintained a charge of daughters, and whom I had known of old, to get my horse fed, a morsel of meat, and so forth, when these cockney pikes of the artillery ground, as you very well call them, rallied, and came in with their armed heads, as boldly as so many Cotswold rams. I sprang down stairs—got to my horse—but, egad, I fancy all my troop had widows and orphan maidens to comfort as well as I, for only five of us got together. We cut our way through successfully—and Gad, gentlemen, I carried my little Breakfast on the pommel before me; and there was such a hollowing and screeching, as if the whole town thought I was to kill, roast, and eat the poor child, so soon as I got to quarters. But devil a cockney charged up to my bonny boy, poor lass, to rescue little cake-bread; they only cried haro, and out upon me."

"Alas! alas!" said the knight, "we made ourselves seem worse than we were; and we were too bad to deserve God's blessing even in a good cause. But it is needless too look back—we did not deserve victories when God gave them, for we never improved them like good soldiers, or like Christian men; and so we gave them to canting, scoundrels the ad vantage of

us, for they assumed, out of mere hypocrisy, the discipline and orderly behaviour which we, who drew our swords in a better cause, ought to have practised out of true principle. But here is my hand, Captain. I have often wished to see the honest fellow who charged up so smartly in our behalf, and I reverence you for the care you took of the poor child. I am glad this dilapidated place has still some hospitality to offer you, although we cannot treat you to roasted babes or stewed sucklings—eh, Captain?"

"Troth, Sir Henry, the scandal was sore against us on that score. I remember Lacy, who was an old play-actor, and a lieutenant in ours, made drollery on it in a play which was sometimes acted at Oxford, when our hearts were something up, called, I think, the Old Troop."*

So saying, and feeling more familiar as his merits were known, he hitched his chair up against that of the Scottish lad, who was seated next him, and who, in shifting his place, was awkward enough to disturb, in his turn, Alice Lee, who sat opposite, and, a little offended, or at least embarrassed, drew her chair away from the table.

"I crave pardon," said the honourable Master Kerneguy; "but sir," to Master Wildrake, "ye hae e'en garr'd me hurt the young lady's shank."

"I crave your pardon, sir, and much more that of the fair lady, as is reasonable; though, rat me, sir, if it was I set your chair a-trundling in that way. Zooks, sir, I have brought with me no plague, nor pestilence, nor other infectious disorder, that ye should have started away as if I had been a leper, and discomposed the lady, which I would have prevented with my life, sir. Sir, if ye be northern born, as your tongue bespeaks, egad, it was I ran the risk in drawing near you; so there was small reason for you to bolt."

"Master Wildrake," said Albert, interfering, "this young gentleman is a stranger as well as you, under protection of Sir Henry's hospitality, and it cannot be agreeable for my father to see disputes arise among his guests. You may mistake the young gentleman's quality from his present appearance—this is the Honourable Master Louis Kerneguy, sir, son of my Lord Killstewers of Kincardineshire, one who has fought for the King, young as he is."

"No dispute shall rise through me, sir—none through me," said Wildrake; "your exposition sufficeth, sir.—Master Louis Girnigo, son of my Lord Kilsteer, in Gringardenshire, I am your humble slave, sir, and drink your health, in token that I honour you, and all true Scots who draw their Andrew Ferraras on the right side, sir."

"I'se beholden to you, and thank you, sir," said the young man, with some haughtiness of manner, which hardly corresponded with his rusticity; "and I wuss your health in a ceevil way."

Most judicious persons would have here dropped the conversation; but it was one of Wildrake's marked peculiarities, that he could never let matters stand when they were well. He continued to plague the shy, proud, and awkward lad with his observations. "You speak your national dialect pretty strongly, Master Girnigo," said he, "but I think not quite the language of the gallants that I have known among the Scottish cavaliers—I knew, for example, some of the Gordons, and others of good repute, who always put an *f* for the *wh*, as *faat* for *what*, *fan* for *when*, and the like."

Albert Lee here interposed, and said that the provinces of Scotland, like those of England, had their different modes of pronunciation.

"You are very right, sir," said Wildrake. "I reckon myself, now, a pretty good speaker of their cursed jargon—no offence, young gentleman; and yet, when I took a turn with some of Montrose's folk, in the South Hielands, as they call their beastly wildernesses, (no offence again,) I chanced to be by myself and to lose my way, when I said to a shepherd-fellow, making my mouth as wide, and my voice as broad as I could, *whore am I ganging till?*—confound me if the fellow could answer me, unless, indeed, he was sulky, as the bumpkins will be now and then to the gentlemen of the sword."

* Cannibalism imputed to the Cavaliers.—The terrors preceding the civil wars, which agitated the public mind, rendered the grossest and most exaggerated falsehoods current among the people. When Charles I. appointed Sir Thomas Lunsford to the situation of Lord Lieutenant of the Tower, the celebrated John Lilburn takes to himself the credit of exciting the public hatred against this officer and Lord Digby, as pitiless bravoes of the most bloody-minded description, from whom the people were to expect nothing but bloodshed and massacre. Of Sir Thomas Lunsford, in particular, it was reported that his favourite food was the flesh of children, and he was painted like an ogre in the act of cutting a child into steaks and broiling them. The colonel fell at the siege of Bristol in 1645, but the same calumny pursued his remains, and the credulous multitude were told,

"The post who came from Coventry,
Riding in a red rocket,
Did tidings tell how Lunsford fell,
A child's hand in his pocket."

Many allusions to this report, as well as to the credulity of those who believed it, may be found in the satires and lampoons of the time, although, says Dr. Grey, Lunsford was a man of great sobriety, industry, and courage. Butler says, that the preachers

"Made children with their lives to run for't,
As bad as Bloodybones or Lunsford."

But this extraordinary report is chiefly insisted upon in a comedy called the *Old Troop*, written by John Lacy, the comedian. The scene is laid during the civil wars of England, and the persons of the drama are chiefly those who were in arms for the king. They are represented as plundering the country without mercy, which Lacy might draw from the life, having, in fact, begun his career as a lieutenant of cavalry, in the service of Charles I. The troopers find the peasants loath to surrender to them their provisions, on which, in order to compel them, they pretended to be in earnest in the purpose of eating their children. A scene of coarse but humorous comedy is then introduced, which Dean Swift had not, perhaps, forgotten, when he recommended the eating of the children of the poor as a mode of relieving the distresses of their parents.

"*Lieutenant.* Second me and I'll make them bring out all they have, I warrant you. Do but talk as if we used to eat children.—Why, look you, good woman, we do believe you are poor, so we'll make a shift with our old diet—you have children in the town?

"*Woman.* Why do you ask, sir?

"*Lieutenant. Only have two or three to supper. Flea-flint, we have the best way of cooking children.*

"*Flea-flint.* I can powder them to make you taste your liquor. I am never without a dried child's tongue or ham.

"*Woman.* Oh! bless me!

"*Flea-flint.* Mine's but the ordinary way; but Foordfarm is the man; he makes you the savourest pie of a child chaldron that was ever eat.

"*Lieutenant.* A plague! all the world cannot cook a child like Mr. Raggou, (a French cook or messman to the troop, and the buffoon of the piece.)

"*Raggou.* Begar, me think so; for vat was me bred in the King of Mogul's kitchen? dere we kill twenty child of a day. Take you one child by both his two heels, and put his head between your two knees, and take your knife and slice off all buttocks,—so fashion; begar, that make a de best Scots collop in de world.

"*Lieutenant.* Ah, he makes the best pottage of a child's head and feet, however: but you must boil it with bacon—Wo man, you must get bacon.

"*Woman.* O Lud—yes, sir!

"*Ford.* And then it must be very young.

"*Lieutenant.* Yes, yes.—Good woman, it must be a fine squab child, of half a year old—a man child, dost hear?"—*'tis Old Troop, Act III.*

After a good deal more to this purpose, the villagers determine to carry forth their sheep, poultry, &c. to save their children. In the mean time, the Cavaliers are in some danger of being cross-bit, as they then called it; that is, caught in their own snare. A woman enters, who announces herself thus:—

"*Woman.* By your leave, your good worships, I have made bold to bring you in some provisions.

"*Ford.* Provisions! where, where is this provision?

"*Woman.* Here, if it please you, I have brought you a couple of fine fleshy children.

"*Cornet.* Was ever such a horrid woman! what shall we do?

"*Woman.* Truly, gentlemen, they are fine squab children: shall I turn them up?—they have the bravest brawn and buttocks.

"*Lieutenant.* No, no; but, woman, art thou not troubled to part with thy children?

"*Woman.* Alas, sir, they are none of mine, they are only nurse children.

"*Lieutenant.* What a beast is this!—whose children are they?

"*Woman.* A laundress that owes me for a year's nursing; I hope they'll prove excellent meat; they are twins too.

"*Raggou.* Aha, but I but begar we never eat no twin child, the law forbid that."—*Ibidem.*

In this manner the Cavaliers escape from the embarrassing consequences of their own stratagem, which, as the reader will perceive, has been made use of in the text.

This was familiarly spoken, and though partly addressed to Albert, was still more directed to his immediate neighbour, the young Scotsman, who seemed, from bashfulness, or some other reason, rather shy of his intimacy. To one or two personal touches from Wildrake's elbow, administered during his last speech, by way of a practical appeal to him in particular, he only answered, "Misunderstandings were to be expected when men converse in national decalects."

Wildrake, now considerably drunker than he ought to have been in civil company, caught up the phrase, and repeated it: "Misunderstanding, sir—Misunderstanding, sir! I do not know how I am to construe that, sir; but to judge from the information of these scratches on your honourable visnomy, I should augur that you had been of late at misunderstanding with the cat, sir."

"You are mistaken, then, friend, for it was with the dowg," answered the Scotsman, dryly, and cast a look towards Albert.

"We had some trouble with the watch-dogs in entering so late in the evening," said Albert, in explanation, "and this youth had a fall among some rubbish, by which he came by these scratches."

"And now, dear Sir Henry," said Dr. Rochecliffe, "allow us to remind you of your gout, and our long journey. I do it the rather that my good friend your son has been, during the whole time of supper, putting questions to me aside, which had much better be reserved till to-morrow—May we therefore ask permission to retire to our night's rest?"

"These private committees in a merry meeting," said Wildrake, "are a solecism in breeding. They always put me in mind of the cursed committees at Westminster. But shall we to roost before we rouse the night-owl with a catch?"

"Aha, canst thou quote Shakspeare?" said Sir Henry, pleased at discovering a new good quality in his acquaintance, whose military services were otherwise but just able to counterbalance the intrusive freedom of his conversation. "In the name of merry Will," he continued,—"whom I never saw, though I have seen many of his comrades, as Alleyn, Hemmings, and so on,—we will have a single catch, and one rouse about, and then to bed."

After the usual discussion about the choice of the song, and the parts which each was to bear, they united their voices in trolling a loyal glee, which was popular among the party at the time, and in fact believed to be composed by no less a person than Doctor Rochecliffe himself.

GLEE FOR KING CHARLES.

Bring the bowl which you boast,
Fill it up to the brim;
'Tis to him we love most,
And to all who love him.
Brave gallants, stand up,
And avaunt, ye base carles!
Were there death in the cup,
Here's a health to King Charles!

Though he wanders through dangers,
Unaided, unknown,
Dependent on strangers,
Estranged from his own;
Though 'tis under our breath,
Amidst forfeits and perils,
Here's to honour and faith,
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honours abound
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword;
But the time shall come round,
When, mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,
The loud trumpets shall sound
Here's a health to King Charles!

After this display of loyalty, and a final libation, the party took leave of each other for the night. Sir Henry offered his old acquaintance Wildrake a bed for the evening, who weighed the matter somewhat in this fashion: "Why, to speak truth, my patron will expect me at the borough—but then he is used to my staying out of doors a-nights. Then there's the *Devil, that they say haunts* Woodstock; but with the *blessing of this reverend* doctor, I defy him and all *his works—I saw him not* when I slept here twice before, *and I am sure if he was* absent then, he has not come back with Sir Henry Lee and his family. So I accept your courtesy, Sir Henry, and I thank you as a cavalier of Lunsford should thank one of the fighting clerks of Oxon. God bless the King! I care not who hears it, and confusion to Noll and his red nose!" Off he went accordingly with a bottle-swagger, guided by Jocceline, to whom Albert, in the mean time, had whispered, to be sure to quarter him far enough from the rest of the family.

Young Lee then saluted his sister, and, with the formality of those times, asked and received his father's blessing with an affectionate embrace. His page seemed desirous to imitate one part of his example, but was repulled by Alice, who only replied to his offered salute with a curtsey. He next bowed his head in an awkward fashion to her father, who wished him a good night. "I am glad to see, young man," he said, "that you have at least learned the reverence due to age. It should always be paid, sir; because in doing so you render that honour to others which you will expect yourself to receive when you approach the close of your life. More will I speak with you at leisure, on your duties as a page, which office in former days used to be the very school of chivalry; whereas of late, by the disorderly times, it has become little better than a school of wild and disordered license; which made rare Ben Jonson exclaim"——

"Nay, father," said Albert, interposing, "you must consider this day's fatigue, and the poor lad is almost asleep on his legs—to-morrow, he will listen with more profit to your kind admonitions.—And you, Louis, remember at least one part of your duty—take the candles and light us—here Jocceline comes to show us the way. Once more, good-night, good Doctor Rochecliffe—good-night, all."

CHAPTER XXI.

Groom. Hail, noble prince!
King Richard. Thanks, noble peer!
The cheapest of us is a groat to dear.—*Richard II.*

ALBERT and his page were ushered by Joceline to what was called the Spanish Chamber, a huge old scrambling bedroom, rather in a dilapidated condition, but furnished with a large standing-bed for the master, and a truckle-bed for the domestic, as was common at a much later period in old English houses, where the gentleman often required the assistance of a groom of the chambers to help him to bed, if the hospitality had been exuberant. The walls were covered with hangings of cordovan leather, stamped with gold, and representing fights between the Spaniards and Moriscoes, bull-feasts, and other sports peculiar to the Peninsula, from which it took its name of the Spanish Chamber. These hangings were in some places entirely torn down, in others defaced and hanging in tatters. But Albert stopped not to make observations, anxious, it seemed, to get Joceline out of the room; which he achieved by hastily answering his offers of fresh fuel, and more liquor, in the negative, and returning, with equal conciseness, the under keeper's good wishes for the evening. He at length retired, somewhat unwillingly, and as if he thought that his young master might have bestowed a few more words upon a faithful old retainer after so long absence.

Joliffe was no sooner gone, than, before a single word was spoken between Albert Lee and his page, the former hastened to the door, examined lock, latch, and bolt, and made them fast, with the most scrupulous attention. He superadded to these precautions that of a long screw-bolt, which he brought out of his pocket, and which he screwed on to the staple in such a manner as to render it impossible to withdraw it, or open the door, unless by breaking it down. The page held a light to him during the operation, which his master went through with much exactness and dexterity. But when Albert arose from his knee, on which he had rested during the accomplishment of this task, the manner of the companions was on the sudden entirely changed towards each other. The honourable Master Kerneguy, from a cubbish lout of a raw Scotsman, seemed to have acquired at once all the grace and ease of motion and manner, which could be given by an acquaintance of the earliest

nd most familiar kind with the best company of the ime.

He gave the light he held to Albert, with the easy ndifference of a superior, who rather graces than roubles his dependant by giving him some slight ervice to perform. Albert, with the greatest appearnce of deference, assumed in his turn the character f torch-bearer, and lighted his page across the chamer, without turning his back upon him as he did so. He then set the light on a table by the bedside, and pproaching the young man with deep reverence, reeived from him the soiled green jacket, with the same rofound respect as if he had been a first lord of the edchamber, or other officer of the household of the ighest distinction, disrobing his Sovereign of the Mantle of the Garter. The person to whom this ceremony was addressed endured it for a minute or two with profound gravity, and then bursting out a-laughng, exclaimed to Albert, "What a devil means all his formality?—thou complimentest with these miserable rags as if they were silks and sables, and with poor Louis Kerneguy as if he were the King of Great Britain?"

"And if your Majesty's commands, and the circumstances of the time, have made me for a moment seem to forget that you are my sovereign, surely I may be permitted to render my homage as such while you are in your own royal palace of Woodstock?"

"Truly," replied the disguised monarch, "the sovereign and the palace are not ill matched;—these tattered hangings and my ragged jerkin suit each other admirably.—*This* Woodstock!—*this* the bower where the royal Norman revelled with the fair Rosamond Clifford!—Why, it is a place of assignation for owls!" Then, suddenly recollecting himself, with his natural courtesy, he added, as if fearing he might have hurt Albert's feelings—"But the more obscure and retired, it is the fitter for our purpose, Lee; and if it does seem to be a roost for owls, as there is no denying, why we know it has nevertheless brought up eagles."

He threw himself as he spoke, upon a chair, and indolently, but gracefully, received the kind offices of Albert, who undid the coarse buttonings of the leathern gamashes which defended his legs, and spoke to him the whilst:—"What a fine specimen of the olden time is your father, Sir Henry! It is strange I should not have seen him before;—but I heard my father often speak of him as being among the flower of our real old English gentry. By the mode in which he began to school me, I can guess you had a tight taskmaster of him, Albert—I warrant you never wore hat in his presence, eh?"

"I never cocked it at least in his presence, please your Majesty, as I have seen some youngsters do," answered Albert; "indeed if I had, it must have been a stout beaver to have saved me from a broken head."

"Oh, I doubt it not," replied the King; "a fine old gentleman—but with that, methinks, in his countenance, that assures you he would not hate the child in sparing the rod.—Hark ye, Albert—Suppose the same glorious Restoration come round,—which, if drinking to its arrival can hasten it, should not be far distant,—for in that particular our adherents never neglect their duty,—suppose it come, therefore, and that thy father, as must be of course, becomes an Earl and one of the Privy Council, odds-fish, man, I shall be as much afraid of him as ever was my grandfather Henry Quatre of old Sully.—Imagine there were such a trinket now about the Court as the fair Rosamond, or La Belle Gabrielle, what a work there would be of pages, and grooms of the chamber, to get the pretty rogue clandestinely shuffled out by the back stairs, like a prohibited commodity, when the step of the Earl of Woodstock was heard in the antechamber!"

"I am glad to see your Majesty so merry after your fatiguing journey."

"The fatigue was nothing, man," said Charles; "a kind welcome and a good meal made amends for all that. But they must have suspected thee of bringing *a wolf from the braes of Badenoch* along with *me, instead of a two-legged being*, with no more than *the usual allowance of mortal stowage* for provisions. I was really ashamed of my appetite; but thou knowest I had eat nothing for twenty-four hours, save the raw egg you stole for me from the old woman's hen-roost—I tell thee, I blushed to show myself so ravenous before that high-bred and respectable old gentleman your father, and the very pretty girl your sister—or cousin, is she?"

"She is my sister," said Albert Lee, dryly, and addded, in the same breath, "Your Majesty's appetite suited well enough with the character of a raw northern lad.—Would your Majesty now please to retire to rest?"

"Not for a minute or two," said the King, retaining his seat. "Why, man, I have scarce had my tongue unchained to-day; and to talk with that northern twang, and besides, the fatigue of being obliged to speak every word in character,—Gad, it's like walking as the galley slaves do on the Continent, with a twenty-four pound shot chained to their legs—they may drag it along, but they cannot move with comfort. And, by the way, thou art slack in paying me my well-deserved tribute of compliments on my counterfeiting.—Did I not play Louis Kerneguy as round as a ring?"

"If your Majesty asks my serious opinion, perhaps I may be forgiven if I say your dialect was somewhat too coarse for a Scottish youth of high birth, and your behaviour perhaps a little too churlish. I thought too—though I pretend not to be skilful—that some of your Scottish sounded as if it were not genuine."

"Not genuine?—there is no pleasing thee, Albert.—Why, who should speak genuine Scottish but myself?—Was I not their King for a matter of ten months? and if I did not get knowledge of their language, I wonder what else I got by it. Did not east country, and south country, and west country, and Highlands, craw, croak, and shriek about me, as the deep guttural, the broad drawl, and the high sharp yelp predominated by turns?—Odds-fish, man, have I not been speeched at by their orators, addressed by their senators, rebuked by their kirkmen? Have I not sat on the cutty stool, mon, [again assuming the northern dialect,] and thought it grace of worthy Mas John Gillespie, that I was permitted to do penance in mine own privy chamber, instead of the face of the congregation? and wilt thou tell me, after all, that I cannot speak Scottish enough to baffle an Oxon Knight and his family?"

"May it please your Majesty,—I began by saying I was no judge of the Scottish language."

"Pshaw—it is mere envy; just so you said at Norton's, that I was too courteous and civil for a young page—now you think me too rude."

"And there is a medium, if one could find it," said Albert, defending his opinion in the same tone in which the King attacked him; "so this morning, when you were in the woman's dress, you raised your petticoats rather unbecomingly high, as you waded through the first little stream; and when I told you of it, to mend the matter, you draggled through the next without raising them at all."

"O, the devil take the woman's dress!" said Charles; "I hope I shall never be driven to that disguise again. Why, my ugly face was enough to put gowns, caps, and kirtles, out of fashion for ever—the very dogs fled from me—Had I passed any hamlet that had but five huts in it, I could not have escaped the cucking-stool. I was a libel on womanhood. These leathern conveniences are none of the gayest, but they are *propria quæ maribus*; and right glad am I to be repossessed of them. I can tell you too, my friend, I shall resume all my masculine privileges with my proper habiliments; and as you say I have been too coarse to-night, I will behave myself like a courtier to Mistress Alice to-morrow. I made a sort of acquaintance with her a'ready, when I seemed to be of the same sex with herself, and found out there are other Colonels in the wind besides you, Colonel Albert Lee."

"May it please your Majesty," said Albert—and then stopped short, from the difficulty of finding words to express the unpleasant nature of his feelings. They could not escape Charles; but he proceed

without scruple. "I pique myself on seeing as far into the hearts of young ladies as most folk, though God knows they are sometimes too deep for the wisest of us. But I mentioned to your sister in my character of fortune-teller,—thinking, poor simple man, that a country girl must have no one but her brother to dream about,—that she was anxious about a certain Colonel. I had hit the theme, but not the person; for I alluded to you, Albert; and I presume the blush was too deep ever to be given to a brother. So up she got, and away she flew from me like a lapwing. I can excuse her—for, looking at myself in the well, I think if I had met such a creature as I seemed, I should have called fire and fagot against it.—Now, what think you, Albert—who can this Colonel be, that more than rivals you in your sister's affection?"

Albert, who well knew that the King's mode of thinking, where the fair sex was concerned, was far more gay than delicate, endeavoured to put a stop to the present topic, by a grave answer.

"His sister," he said, "had been in some measure educated with the son of her maternal uncle, Markham Everard; but as his father and he himself had adopted the cause of the roundheads, the families had in consequence been at variance; and any projects which might have been formerly entertained, were of course long since dismissed on all sides."

"You are wrong, Albert, you are wrong," said the King, pitilessly pursuing his jest. "You Colonels, whether you wear blue or orange sashes, are too pretty fellows to be dismissed so easily, when once you have acquired an interest. But Mistress Alice, so pretty, and who wishes the restoration of the King with such a look and accent, as if she were an angel whose prayers must needs bring it down, must not be allowed to retain any thoughts of a canting roundhead—What say you—will you give me leave to take her to task about it?—After all, I am the party most concerned in maintaining true allegiance among my subjects; and if I gain the pretty maiden's good-will, that of the sweetheart's will soon follow. This was jolly King Edward's way—Edward the Fourth, you know. The king-making Earl of Warwick—the Cromwell of his day—dethroned him more than once; but he had the hearts of the merry dames of London, and the purses and veins of the cockneys bled freely, till they brought him home again. How say you?—shall I shake off my northern slough, and speak with Alice in my own character, showing what education and manners have done for me, to make the best amends they can for an ugly face?"

"May it please your Majesty," said Albert, in an altered and embarrassed tone, "I did not expect"—

Here he stopped, not able to find words adequate at the same time to express his sentiments, and respectful enough to the King, while in his father's house, and under his own protection.

"And what is it that Master Lee does not expect?" said Charles, with marked gravity on his part.

Again Albert attempted a reply, but advanced no farther than, "I would hope, if it please your Majesty"—when he again stopped short, his deep and hereditary respect for his sovereign, and his sense of the hospitality due to his misfortunes preventing his giving utterance to his irritated feelings.

"And what does Colonel Albert Lee hope?" said Charles, in the same dry and cold manner in which he had before spoken.—"No answer?—Now, *I hope* that Colonel Lee does not see in a silly jest any thing offensive to the honour of his family, since methinks that were an indifferent compliment to his sister, his father, and himself, not to mention Charles Stewart, whom he calls his King; and *I expect*, that I shall not be so hardly construed, as to be supposed capable of forgetting that Mistress Alice Lee is the daughter of my faithful subject and host, and the sister of my guide and preserver.—Come, come, Albert," he added, changing at once to his naturally frank and unceremonious manner, "you forget how long I have been *abroad, where men, women,* and children, talk gallantry *morning, noon, and* night, with no more serious thought than just to pass away the time; and I *forget too, that you are of the* old-fashioned English school, a son after Sir Henry's own heart, and don't understand raillery upon such subjects.—But I ask your pardon, Albert, sincerely, if I have really hurt you."

So saying, he extended his hand to Colonel Lee, who, feeling he had been rather too hasty in construing the King's jest in an unpleasant sense, kissed it with reverence, and attempted an apology.

"Not a word—not a word," said the good-natured Prince, raising his penitent adherent as he attempted to kneel; "we understand each other. You are somewhat afraid of the gay reputation which I acquired in Scotland; but I assure you, I will be as stupid as you, or your cousin Colonel could desire, in presence of Mrs. Alice Lee, and only bestow my gallantry, should I have any to throw away, upon the pretty little waiting-maid who attended at supper—unless you should have monopolized her ear for your own benefit, Colonel Albert."

"It is monopolized, sure enough, though not by me, if it please your Majesty, but by Joceline Joliffe, the under-keeper, whom we must not disoblige, as we have trusted him so far already, and may have occasion to repose even entire confidence in him. I half think he suspects who Louis Kerneguy may in reality be."

"You are an engrossing set, you wooers of Woodstock," said the King, laughing. "Now, if I had a fancy, as a Frenchman would not fail to have in such a case, to make pretty speeches to the deaf old woman I saw in the kitchen, as a *pis-aller*, I dare say I should be told that *her* ear was engrossed for Dr. Rochecliffe's sole use?"

"I marvel at your Majesty's good spirits," said Albert, "that, after a day of danger, fatigue, and accidents, you should feel the power of amusing yourself thus."

"That is to say, the groom of the chambers wishes his Majesty would go to sleep?—Well, one word or two on more serious business, and I have done.—I have been completely directed by you and Rochecliffe—I have changed my disguise from female to male upon the instant, and altered my destination from Hampshire to take shelter here—Do you still hold it the wiser course?"

"I have great confidence in Dr. Rochecliffe," replied Albert, "whose acquaintance with the scattered royalists enables him to gain the most accurate intelligence. His pride in the extent of his correspondence, and the complication of his plots and schemes for your Majesty's service, is indeed the very food he lives upon; but his sagacity is equal to his vanity. I repose, besides, the utmost faith in Joliffe. Of my father and sister I would say nothing; yet I would not, without reason, extend the knowledge of your Majesty's person farther than it is indispensably necessary."

"Is it handsome in me," said Charles, pausing, "to withhold my full confidence from Sir Henry Lee?"

"Your Majesty heard of his almost death-swoon of last night—what would agitate him most deeply must not be hastily communicated."

"True; but are we safe from a visit of the redcoats—they have them in Woodstock as well as in Oxford?" said Charles.

"Dr. Rochecliffe says, not unwisely," answered Lee, "that it is best sitting near the fire when the chimney smokes; and that Woodstock, so lately in possession of the sequestrators, and still in the vicinity of the soldiers, will be less suspected, and more carelessly searched, than more distant corners, which might seem to promise more safety. Besides," he added, "Rochecliffe is in possession of curious and important news concerning the state of matters at Woodstock, highly favourable to your Majesty's being concealed in the palace for two or three days, till shipping is provided. The Parliament, or usurping Council of State, had sent down sequestrators, whom their own evil consciences, assisted, perhaps, by the tricks of some daring cavaliers, had frightened out of the Lodge, without much desire to come back again.—Then the more formidable usurper, Cromwell, had granted a warrant of possession to Col. Everard, who had only used it for the purpose of repossessing the

uncle in the Lodge, and who kept watch in person at the little borough, to see that Sir Henry was not disturbed."

"What! Mistress Alice's Colonel?" said the King—"that sounds alarming;—for grant that he keeps the other fellows at bay, think you not, Master Albert, he will have a hundred errands a-day to bring him here in person?"

"Dr. Rochecliffe says," answered Lee, "the treaty between Sir Henry and his nephew binds the latter not to approach the Lodge, unless invited;—indeed, it was not without great difficulty, and strongly arguing the good consequences it might produce to your Majesty's cause, that my father could be prevailed on to occupy Woodstock at all: but be assured he will be in no hurry to send an invitation to the Colonel."

"And be you assured that the Colonel will come without waiting for one," said Charles. "Folk cannot judge rightly where sisters are concerned—they are too familiar with the magnet to judge of its powers of attraction. Everard will be here, as if drawn by cart-ropes—fetters, not to talk of promises, will not hold him—and then, methinks, we are in some danger."

"I hope not," said Albert. "In the first place, I know Markham is a slave to his word; besides, were any chance to bring him here, I think I could pass your Majesty upon him without difficulty, as Louis Kerneguy. Then, although my cousin and I have not been on good terms for these some years, I believe him incapable of betraying your Majesty; and lastly, if I saw the least danger of it, I would, were he ten times the son of my mother's sister, run my sword through his body, ere he had time to execute his purpose."

"There is but another question," said Charles, "and I will release you, Albert:—You seem to think yourself secure from search. It may be so; but, in any other country, this tale of goblins which is flying about would bring down priests and ministers of justice to examine the reality of the story, and mobs of idle people to satisfy their curiosity."

"Respecting the first, sir, we hope and understand that Colonel Everard's influence will prevent any immediate inquiry, for the sake of preserving undisturbed the peace of his uncle's family; and as for any one coming without some sort of authority, the whole neighbours have so much love and fear of my father, and are, besides, so horribly alarmed about the goblins of Woodstock, that fear will silence curiosity."

"On the whole, then," said Charles, "the chances of safety seem to be in favour of the plan we have adopted, which is all I can hope for in a condition where absolute safety is out of the question. The Bishop recommended Dr. Rochecliffe as one of the most ingenious, boldest, and most loyal sons of the Church of England; you, Albert Lee, have marked your fidelity by a hundred proofs. To you and your local knowledge I submit myself. And now, prepare our arms—alive I will not be taken;—yet I will not believe that a son of the King of England, and heir of her throne, could be destined to danger in his own palace, and under the guard of the loyal Lees."

Albert Lee laid pistols and swords in readiness by the King's bed and his own; and Charles, after some slight apology, took his place in the larger and better bed, with a sigh of pleasure, as from one who had not lately enjoyed such an indulgence. He bid good night to his faithful attendant, who deposited himself on his truckle; and both monarch and subject were soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER XXII.

Give Sir Nicholas Threlkeld praise;
Hear it, good man, old in days,
Thou tree of succour and of rest
To this young bird that was distress'd;
Beneath thy branches he did stay;
And he was free to sport and play,
When falcons were abroad for prey.
WORDSWORTH.

THE fugitive Prince slept, in spite of danger, with *the profound repose which youth and fatigue inspire. But the young cavalier, his guide* and guard, spent a more restless night, starting from time to time, and listening; anxious, notwithstanding Doctor Rochecliffe's assurances, to procure yet more particular knowledge concerning the state of things around them, than he had been yet able to collect.

He rose early after daybreak; but although he moved with as little noise as was possible, the slumbers of the haunted Prince were easily disturbed. He started up in his bed, and asked if there was any alarm.

"None, please your Majesty," replied Lee; "only, thinking on the questions your Majesty was asking last night, and the various chances there are of your Majesty's safety being endangered from unforeseen accidents, I thought of going thus early, both to communicate with Doctor Rochecliffe, and to keep such a look-out as befits the place, where are lodged for the time the fortunes of England. I fear I must request of your Majesty, for your own gracious security, that you have the goodness to condescend to secure the door with your own hand after I go out."

"Oh, talk not to Majesty, for Heaven's sake, dear Albert!" answered the poor King, endeavouring in vain to put on a part of his clothes in order to traverse the room.—"When a King's doublet and hose are so ragged that he can no more find his way into them than he could have travelled through the forest of Deane without a guide, good faith, there should be an end of Majesty, until it chances to be better accommodated. Besides, there is the chance of these big words bolting out at unawares, when there are ears to hear them whom we might think dangerous."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," said Lee, who had now succeeded in opening the door; from which he took his departure, leaving the King, who had hustled along the floor for that purpose, with his dress wofully ill arranged, to make it fast again behind him, and begging him in no case to open to any one, unless he or Rochecliffe were of the party who summoned him.

Albert then set out in quest of Doctor Rochecliffe's apartment, which was only known to himself and the faithful Joliffe, and had at different times accommodated that steady churchman with a place of concealment, when, from his bold and busy temper, which led him into the most extensive and hazardous machinations on the King's behalf, he had been strictly sought after by the opposite party. Of late, the inquest after him had died entirely away, as he had prudently withdrawn himself from the scene of his intrigues. Since the loss of the battle of Worcester, he had been afloat again, and more active than ever; and had, by friends and correspondents, and especially the Bishop of——, been the means of directing the King's flight towards Woodstock, although it was not until the very day of his arrival that he could promise him a safe reception at that ancient mansion.

Albert Lee, though he revered both the undaunted spirit and ready resources of the bustling and intriguing churchman, felt he had not been enabled by him to answer some of Charles's questions yesternight, in a way so distinct as one trusted with the King's safety ought to have done; and it was now his object to make himself personally acquainted, if possible, with the various bearings of so weighty a matter, as became a man on whom so much of the responsibility was likely to descend.

Even his local knowledge was scarce adequate to find the Doctor's secret apartment, had he not traced his way after a genial flavour of roasted game through divers blind passages, and up and down certain very useless stairs, through cupboards and hatchways, and so forth, to a species of sanctum sanctorum, where Joceline Joliffe was ministering to the good doctor a solemn breakfast of wild-fowl with a cup of small beer spiced with a sprig of rosemary, which Doctor Rochecliffe preferred to all strong potations. Beside him sat Bevis on his tail, slobbering and looking amiable, moved by the rare smell of the breakfast, which had quite overcome his native dignity of disposition.

The chamber in which the doctor had established himself was a little octangular room, with walls

great thickness, within which were fabricated various issues, leading in different directions, and communicating with different parts of the building. Around him were packages with arms, and near him one small barrel, as it seemed, of gunpowder; many papers in different parcels, and several keys for correspondence in cipher; two or three scrolls covered with hieroglyphics were also beside him, which Albert took for plans of nativity; and various models of machinery, in which Doctor Rochecliffe was an adept. There were also tools of various kinds, masks, cloaks, and a dark lantern, and a number of other indescribable trinkets belonging to the trade of a daring plotter in dangerous times. Last, there was a casket with gold and silver coin of different countries, which was left carelessly open, as if it were the least of Doctor Rochecliffe's concern, although his habits in general announced narrow circumstances, if not actual poverty. Close by the divine's plate lay a Bible and Prayerbook, with some proof-sheets, as they are technically called, seemingly fresh from the press. There was also within the reach of his hand a dirk, or Scottish poniard, a powder-horn, and a musketoon, or blunderbuss, with a pair of handsome pocket-pistols. In the midst of this miscellaneous collection, the doctor sat eating his breakfast, with great appetite, as little dismayed by the various implements of danger around him, as a workman is when accustomed to the perils of a gunpowder manufactory.

"Soh, young gentleman," he said, getting up and extending his hand, "are you come to breakfast with me in good fellowship, or to spoil my meal this morning, as you did my supper last night, by asking untimely questions?"

"I will pick a bone with you, with all my heart," said Albert; "and if you please, doctor, I would ask some questions which seem not quite untimely."

So saying, he sat down, and assisted the doctor in giving a very satisfactory account of a brace of wild-ducks and a leash of teal. Bevis, who maintained his place with great patience and insinuation, had his share of a collop, which was also placed on the well-furnished board; for, like most high-bred dogs, he declined eating waterfowl.

"Come hither, then, Albert Lee," said the doctor, laying down his knife and fork, and plucking the towel from his throat, so soon as Joceline was withdrawn; "thou art still the same lad thou wert when I was thy tutor—never satisfied with having got a grammar rule, but always persecuting me with questions why the rule stood so, and not otherwise—over-curious after information which thou couldst not comprehend, as Bevis slobbered and whined for the duck-wing, which he could not eat."

"I hope you will find me more reasonable, doctor," answered Albert; "and at the same time, that you will recollect I am not now *sub ferula*, but am placed in circumstances where I am not at liberty to act upon the *ipse dixit* of any man, unless my own judgment be convinced. I shall deserve richly to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, should any misfortune happen by my misgovernment in this business."

"And it is therefore, Albert, that I would have thee trust the whole to me, without interfering. Thou sayst, forsooth, thou art not *sub ferula*; but recollect that while you have been fighting in the field, I have been plotting in the study—that I know all the combinations of the King's friends, ay, and all the motions of his enemies, as well as a spider knows every mesh of his web. Think of my experience, man. Not a cavalier in the land but has heard of Rochecliffe the Plotter. I have been a main limb in every thing that has been attempted since forty-two—penned declarations, conducted correspondence, communicated with chiefs, recruited followers, commissioned arms, levied money, appointed rendezvouses. I was in the Western Rising; and before that, in the City Petition, and in Sir John Owen's stir in Wales; in short, almost in every plot for the King, since Tomkins and Challoner's matter."

"But were not all these plots unsuccessful?" said Albert; "and were not Tomkins and Challoner *hanged, doctor?*"

"*Yes, my young friend,*" answered the doctor, gravely, "as many others have been with whom I have acted; but only because they did not follow my advice implicitly. You never heard that I was hanged myself."

"The time may come, doctor," said Albert; "The pitcher goes oft to the well—The proverb, as my father would say, is somewhat musty. But I, too, have some confidence in my own judgment; and, much as I honour the church, I cannot altogether subscribe to passive obedience. I will tell you in one word what points I must have explanation on; and it will remain with you to give it, or to return a message to the King that you will not explain your plan; in which case, if he acts by my advice, he will leave Woodstock, and resume his purpose of getting to the coast without delay."

"Well, then," said the doctor, "thou suspicious monster, make thy demands, and, if they be such as I can answer without betraying confidence, I will reply to them."

"In the first place, then, what is all this story about ghosts, and witchcrafts, and apparitions? and do you consider it as safe for his Majesty to stay in a house subject to such visitations, real or pretended?"

"You must be satisfied with my answer *in verbo sacerdotis*—the circumstances you allude to will not give the least annoyance to Woodstock during the King's residence. I cannot explain farther; but for this I will be bound, at the risk of my neck."

"Then," said Lee, "we must take Doctor Rochecliffe's bail that the devil will keep the peace towards our Sovereign Lord the King—good. Now there lurked about this house the greater part of yesterday, and perhaps slept here, a fellow called Tomkins—a bitter Independent, and a secretary, or clerk, or something or other, to the regicide dog Desborough. The man is well known—a wild ranter in religious opinions, but in private affairs far-sighted, cunning, and interested even as any rogue of them all."

"Be assured we will avail ourselves of his crazy fanaticism to mislead his wicked cunning;—a child may lead a hog if it has wit to fasten a cord to the ring in its nose," replied the doctor.

"You may be deceived," said Albert; "the age has many such as this fellow, whose views of the spiritual and temporal world are so different, that they resemble the eyes of a squinting man; one of which, oblique and distorted, sees nothing but the end of his nose, while the other, instead of partaking the same defect, views strongly, sharply, and acutely, whatever is subjected to its scrutiny."

"But we will put a patch on the better eye," said the doctor, "and he shall only be allowed to speculate with the imperfect optic. You must know, this fellow has always seen the greatest number, and the most hideous apparitions; he has not the courage of a cat in such matters, though stout enough when he hath temporal antagonists before him. I have placed him under the charge of Joceline Joliffe, who, betwixt plying him with sack and ghost-stories, would make him incapable of knowing what was done, if you were to proclaim the King in his presence."

"But why keep such a fellow here at all?"

"Oh, sir, content you;—he lies leaguer, as a sort of ambassador for his worthy masters, and we are secure from any intrusion so long as they get all the news of Woodstock from trusty Tomkins."

"I know of Joceline's honesty well," said Albert; "and if he can assure me that he will keep a watch over this fellow, I will so far trust in him. He does not know the depth of the stake, 'tis true, but that my life is concerned will be quite enough to keep him vigilant.—Well, then, I proceed:—What if Markham Everard comes down on us?"

"We have his word to the contrary," answered Rochecliffe—"his word of honour transmitted by his friend;—Do you think it likely he will break it?"

"I hold him incapable of doing so," answered Albert; "and, besides, I think Markham would make no bad use of any thing which might come to his knowledge—Yet God forbid we should be under the necessity of trusting any who ever wore the Parliament's colours in a matter of such dear concernment!"

!" said the doctor. "Are your doubts
ow?"
have an objection," said Albert, "to yon-
dent rakehelly fellow, styling himself a
who pushed himself on our company last
d gained my father's heart by a story of
i of Brentford, which I dare say the rogue
."
nistake him, dear Albert," replied Roche-
oger Wildrake, although till of late I only
i by name, is a gentleman, was bred at the
Court, and spent his estate in the King's

her in the devil's service," said Albert. "It
lows as he, who, sunk from the license of
ary habits into idle debauched ruffians, in-
nd with riots and robberies, brawl in hedge
and cellars where strong waters are sold at
and, with their deep oaths, their hot loy-
their drunken valour, make decent men
the very name of cavalier."
' said the doctor, "it is but too true; but
you expect? When the higher and more
lasses are broken down and mingled un-
hably with the lower orders, they are apt
e most valuable marks of their quality in
d confusion of morals and manners—just
lful of silver medals will become defaced
oured if jumbled about among the vulgar
in. Even the prime medal of all, which
ts would so willingly wear next our very
s not, perhaps, entirely escaped some de-
—But let other tongues than mine speak
bject."
ee paused deeply after having heard these
ations on the part of Rochecliffe.—"Doc-
said, "it is generally agreed, even by some
k you may occasionally have been a
busy in putting men upon dangerous

---

od forgive them who entertain so false an
me!" said the doctor.
That, nevertheless, you have done and
ore in the King's behalf than any man of
ion."
do me but justice there," said Doctor
e—"absolute justice."
herefore disposed to abide by your opinion,
igs considered, you think it safe that we
main at Woodstock."
s not the question," answered the divine.
what is the question, then?" replied the
lier.
er any safer course can be pointed out.
say, that the question must be compara-
the point of option. Absolute safety is—
hile!—out of the question on all sides. Now,
dstock is, fenced and guarded as at present,
most preferable place of concealment."
h," replied Albert, "I give up to you the
is to a person whose knowledge of such
affairs, not to mention your age and expe-
more intimate and extensive than mine

lo well," answered Rochecliffe; "and if
acted with the like distrust of their own
, and confidence in competent persons,
better for the age. This makes Under-
par himself up within his fortalise, and
e himself to his high tower." (Here he
und his cell with an air of self-compla-
'he wise man foreseeth the tempest, and
self."
'" said Albert, "let our foresight serve
more precious than either of us.—Let me
you have well considered whether our pre-
ge should remain in society with the family,
himself to some of the more hidden corners
se?"
" said the Doctor, with an air of deep re-
I think he will be safest as Louis Kerneguy,
mself close beside you"———
it will be necessary," added Albert, "that
oad a little, and show myself in some dis-
tant part of the country, lest, coming here in quest of me, they should find higher game."

"Pray do not interrupt me—Keeping himself close beside you or your father, in or near to Victor Lee's apartment, from which you are aware he can make a ready escape, should danger approach.—This occurs to me as best for the present—I hope to hear of the vessel to-day—to-morrow at farthest."

Albert Lee bid the active but opinionated man good-morrow; admiring how this species of intrigue had become a sort of element in which the doctor seemed to enjoy himself, notwithstanding all that the poet has said concerning the horrors which intervene betwixt the conception and execution of a conspiracy.

In returning from Doctor Rochecliffe's sanctuary, he met with Joceline, who was anxiously seeking him. "The young Scotch gentleman," he said, in a mysterious manner, "has arisen from bed, and, hearing me pass, he called me into his apartment."

"Well," replied Albert, "I will see him presently."

"And he asked me for fresh linen and clothes. Now, sir, he is like a man who is quite accustomed to be obeyed, so I gave him a suit which happened to be in a wardrobe in the west tower, and some of your linen to conform; and when he was dressed, he commanded me to show him to the presence of Sir Henry Lee and my young lady.—I would have said something, sir, about waiting till you came back, but he pulled me good-naturedly by the hair, (as, indeed, he has a rare humour of his own,) and told me, he was guest to Master Albert Lee, and not his prisoner;—so, sir, though I thought you might be displeased with me for giving him the means of stirring abroad, and perhaps being seen by those who should not see him, what could I say?"

"You are a sensible fellow, Joceline, and comprehend always what is recommended to you.—This youth will not be controlled, I fear, by either of us; but we must look the closer after his safety—You keep your watch over that prying fellow the steward?"

"Trust him to my care—on that side have no fear—But ah, sir! I would we had the young Scot in his old clothes again, for the riding-suit of yours which he now wears hath set him off in other-guess fashion."

From the manner in which the faithful dependent expressed himself, Albert saw that he suspected who the Scottish page in reality was; yet he did not think it proper to acknowledge to him a fact of such importance, secure as he was equally of his fidelity, whether explicitly trusted to the full extent, or left to his own conjectures. Full of anxious thought, he went to the apartment of Victor Lee, in which Joliffe told him he would find the party assembled. The sound of laughter, as he laid his hand on the lock of the door almost made him start, so singularly did it jar with the doubtful and melancholy reflections which engaged his own mind. He entered, and found his father in high good-humour, laughing and conversing freely with his young charge, whose appearance was, indeed, so much changed to the better in externals, that it seemed scarce possible a night's rest, a toilet, and a suit of decent clothes, could have done so much in his favour in so short a time. It could not, however, be imputed to the mere alteration of dress, although that, no doubt, had its effect. There was nothing splendid in that which Louis Kerneguy (we continue to call him by his assumed name) now wore. It was merely a riding-suit of gray cloth, with some silver lace, in the fashion of a country gentleman of the time. But it happened to fit him very well, and to become his very dark complexion, especially as he now held up his head, and used the manners, not only of a well-behaved but of a highly-accomplished gentleman. When he moved, his clumsy and awkward limp was exchanged for a sort of shuffle, which, as it might be the consequence of a wound in those perilous times, had rather an interesting than an ungainly effect. At least it was as genteel an expression that the party had been overhard travelled, as the most polite pedestrian could propose to himself.

The features of the Wanderer were harsh as ever, but his red shock peruke, for such it proved, was laid

aside, his sable elf-locks were trained, by a little of Joceline's assistance, into curls, and his fine black eyes shone from among the shade of these curls, and corresponded with the animated, though not handsome, character of the whole head. In his conversation, he had laid aside all the coarseness of dialect which he had so strongly affected on the preceding evening; and although he continued to speak a little Scotch, for the support of his character as a young gentleman of that nation, yet it was not in a degree which rendered his speech either uncouth or unintelligible, but merely afforded a certain Doric tinge essential to the personage he represented. No person on earth could better understand the society in which he moved; exile had made him acquainted with life in all its shades and varieties—his spirits, if not uniform, were elastic—he had that species of Epicurean philosophy, which, even in the most extreme difficulties and dangers, can in an interval of ease, however brief, avail itself of the enjoyments of the moment—he was, in short, in youth and misfortune, as afterwards in his regal condition, a good-humoured but hard-hearted voluptuary—wise, save where his passions intervened—beneficent, save when prodigality had deprived him of the means, or prejudice of the wish, to confer benefits—his faults such as might often have drawn down hatred, but that they were mingled with so much urbanity, that the injured person felt it impossible to retain the full sense of his wrongs.

Albert Lee found the party, consisting of his father, sister, and the supposed page, seated by the breakfast-table, at which he also took his place. He was a pensive and anxious beholder of what passed, while the page, who had already completely gained the heart of the good old cavalier, by mimicking the manner in which the Scottish divines preached in favour of Ma gude Lord Marquis of Argyle and the Solemn League and Covenant, was now endeavouring to interest the fair Alice by such anecdotes, partly of warlike and perilous adventure, as possessed the same degree of interest for the female ear which they have had ever since Desdemona's days. But it was not only of dangers by land and sea that the disguised page spoke; but much more, and much oftener, on foreign revels, banquets, balls, where the pride of France, of Spain, or of the Low Countries, was exhibited in the eyes of their most eminent beauties. Alice being a very young girl, who, in consequence of the Civil War, had been almost entirely educated in the country, and often in great seclusion, it was certainly no wonder that she should listen with willing ears, and a ready smile, to what the young gentleman, their guest, and her brother's protegé, told with so much gayety, and mingled with such a shade of dangerous adventure, and occasionally of serious reflection, as prevented the discourse from being regarded as merely light and frivolous.

In a word, Sir Henry Lee laughed, Alice smiled from time to time, and all were satisfied but Albert, who would himself, however, have been scarce able to allege a sufficient reason for his depression of spirits.

The materials of breakfast were at last removed, under the active superintendence of the neat-handed Phœbe, who looked over her shoulder, and lingered more than once, to listen to the fluent discourse of their new guest, whom, on the preceding evening, she had, while in attendance at supper, accounted one of the most stupid inmates to whom the gates of Woodstock had been opened since the times of Fair Rosamond.

Louis Kerneguy then, when they were left only four in the chamber, without the interruption of domestics, and the successive bustle occasioned by the discussion and removal of the morning meal, became apparently sensible, that his friend and ostensible patron Albert ought not altogether to be suffered to drop to leeward in the conversation, while he was himself successfully engaging the attention of those members of his family to whom he had become so recently known. He went behind his chair, therefore, and, leaning on the back, said with a good-humoured tone, which made his purpose entirely eligible,—

"Either my good friend, guide, and patron, has heard worse news this morning than he cares to tell us, or he must have stumbled over my tattered jerkin and leathern hose, and acquired, by contact, the whole mass of stupidity which I threw off last night with those most dolorous garments. Cheer up, my dear Colonel Albert, if your affectionate page may presume to say so—you are in company with those whose society, dear to strangers, must be doubly so to you. Odd-fish, man, cheer up! I have seen you gay on a biscuit and a mouthful of water-cresses—dont let your heart fail you on Rhenish-wine and venison."

"Dear Louis," said Albert, rousing himself into exertion, and somewhat ashamed of his own silence, "I have slept worse, and been astir earlier than you."

"Be it so," said his father; "yet I hold it no good excuse for your sullen silence. Albert, you have met your sister and me, so long separated from you, so anxious on your behalf, almost like mere strangers, and yet you are returned safe to us, and you find us well."

"Returned indeed—but for safety, my dear father, that word must be a stranger to us Worcester folk for some time. However, it is not my own safety about which I am anxious."

"About whose, then, should you be anxious?—All accounts agree that the King is safe out of the dog's jaws."

"Not without some danger, though," muttered Louis, thinking of his encounter with Bevis on the preceding evening.

"No, not without danger, indeed," echoed the knight; "but, as old Will says,—

> 'There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
> That treason dares not peep at what it would.'

No, no—thank God, that's cared for; our Hope and Fortune is escaped, so all news affirm, escaped from Bristol—if I thought otherwise, Albert, I should be as sad as you are. For the rest of it, I have lurked a month in this house when discovery would have been death, and that is no longer since than after Lord Holland and the Duke of Buckingham's rising at Kingston; and hang me, if I thought once of twisting my brow into such a tragic fold as yours, but cocked my hat at misfortune as a cavalier should."

"If I might put in a word," said Louis, "it would be to assure Colonel Albert Lee that I verily believe the King would think his own hap, wherever he may be, much the worse that his best subjects were seized with dejection on his account."

"You answer boldly on the king's part, young man," said Sir Henry.

"Oh, my father was meikle about the King's hand," answered Louis, recollecting his present character.

"No wonder, then," said Sir Henry, "that you have so soon recovered your good spirits and good breeding, when you heard of his Majesty's escape. Why, you are no more like the lad we saw last night, than the best hunter I ever had was like a dray-horse."

"Oh, there is much in rest, and food, and grooming," answered Louis. "You would hardly know the tired jade you dismounted from last night, when she is brought out prancing and neighing the next morning, rested, refreshed, and ready to start again—especially if the brute hath some good blood, for such pick up once fast."

"Well, then, but since thy father was a courtier, and thou hast learned, I think, something of the trade, tell us a little, Master Kerneguy, about him we love most to hear about—the King; we are all safe and secret, you need not be afraid. He was a hopeful youth; I trust his flourishing blossom now gives promise of fruit?"

As the knight spoke, Louis bent his eyes on the ground, and seemed at first uncertain what to answer. But admirable at extricating himself from such dilemmas, he replied, "That he really could not presume to speak on such a subject in the presence of his patron, Colonel Albert Lee, who must be a much better judge of the character of King Charles than he could pretend to be."

Albert was accordingly next assailed by the knight, seconded by Alice, for some account of his Majesty's character.

"I will speak but according to facts," said Albert; "and then I must be acquitted of partiality. If the King had not possessed enterprise and military skill, he never would have attempted the expedition to Worcester;—had he not had personal courage, he had not so long disputed the battle that Cromwell almost judged it lost. That he possesses prudence and patience, must be argued from the circumstances attending his flight; and that he has the love of his subjects, is evident, since, necessarily known to many, he has been betrayed by none."

"For shame, Albert!" replied his sister; "is that the way a good cavalier doles out the character of his Prince, applying an instance at every concession, like a pedlar measuring linen with his rod?—Out upon you!—no wonder you were beaten, if you fought as coldly for your King as you now talk for him."

"I did my best to trace a likeness from what I have seen and known of the original, sister Alice," replied her brother.—"If you would have a fancy portrait, you must get an artist of more imagination than I have to draw it for you."

"I will be that artist myself," said Alice, "and, in my portrait, our Monarch shall show all that he ought to be, having such high pretensions—all that he must be, being so loftily descended—all that I am sure he is, and that every loyal heart in the kingdom ought to believe him."

"Well said, Alice," quoth the old knight.—"Look thou upon this picture, and on this!—Here is our young friend shall judge. I wager my best nag—that is, I would wager him had I one left—that Alice proves the better painter of the two.—My son's brain is still misty. I think, since his defeat—he has not got the smoke of Worcester out of it. Plague on thee!—a young man, and cast down for one beating! Had you been banged twenty times like me, it had been time to look grave.—But come, Alice, forward; the colours are mixed on your pallet—forward with something that shall show like one of Vandyke's living portraits, placed beside the dull dry presentation there of our ancestor Victor Lee."

Alice, it must be observed, had been educated by her father in the notions of high, and even exaggerated loyalty, which characterized the cavaliers, and she was really an enthusiast in the royal cause. But besides, she was in good spirits at her brother's happy return, and wished to prolong the gay humour, in which her father had of late scarcely ever indulged.

"Well then," she said, "though I am no Apelles, I will try to paint an Alexander, such as I hope, and am determined to believe, exists in the person of our exiled sovereign, soon I trust to be restored. And I will not go farther than his own family. He shall have all the chivalrous courage, all the warlike skill, of Henry of France, his grandfather, in order to place him on the throne;—all his benevolence, love of his people, patience even of unpleasing advice, sacrifice of his own wishes and pleasures to the commonweal, that, seated there, he may be blest while living, and so long remembered when dead, that for ages after it shall be thought sacrilege to breathe an aspersion against the throne which he has occupied! Long after he is dead, while there remains an old man who has seen him, were the condition of that survivor no higher than a groom or a menial, his age shall be provided for at the public charge, and his gray hairs regarded with more distinction than an earl's coronet, because he remembers the second Charles, the monarch of every heart in England!"

While Alice spoke, she was hardly conscious of the presence of any one save her father and brother; for the page withdrew himself somewhat from the circle, and there was nothing to remind her of him. She gave the reins, therefore, to her enthusiasm, and as the tears glittered in her eye, and her beautiful features became animated, she seemed like a descended cherub proclaiming the virtues of a patriot monarch. The person chiefly interested in her description held himself back, as we have said, and concealed his own features, yet so as to preserve a full view of the beautiful speaker.

Albert Lee, conscious in whose presence this eulogium was pronounced, was much embarrassed; but his father, all whose feelings were flattered by the panegyric, was in rapture.

"So much for the *King*, Alice," he said; "and now for the *Man*."

"For the man," replied Alice in the same tone, "need I wish him more than the paternal virtues of his unhappy father, of whom his worst enemies have recorded, that if moral virtues and religious faith were to be selected as the qualities which merited a crown, no man could plead the possession of them in a higher or more indisputable degree. Temperate, wise, and frugal, yet munificent in rewarding merit—a friend to letters and the muses, but a severe discourager of the misuse of such gifts—a worthy gentleman—a kind master—the best friend, the best father, the best Christian"—— Her voice began to falter, and her father's handkerchief was already at his eyes.

"He was, girl—he was!" exclaimed Sir Henry; "but no more on't, I charge ye—no more on't—enough;—let his son but possess his virtues, with better advisers, and better fortunes, and he will be all that England, in her warmest wishes, could desire."

There was a pause after this; for Alice felt as if she had spoken too frankly and too zealously, for her sex and youth. Sir Henry was occupied in melancholy recollections on the fate of his late sovereign, while Kerneguy and his supposed patron felt embarrassed, perhaps from a consciousness that the real Charles fell far short of his ideal character, as designed in such glowing colours. In some cases, exaggerated or unappropriate praise becomes the most severe satire.

But such reflections were not of a nature to be long willingly cherished by the person, to whom they might have been of great advantage. He assumed a tone of raillery, which is, perhaps, the readiest mode of escaping from the feelings of self-reproof. "Every cavalier," he said, "should bend his knee to thank Mistress Alice Lee for having made such a flattering portrait of the King their master, by laying under contribution for his benefit the virtues of all his ancestors;—only there was one point he would not have expected a female painter to have passed over in silence. When she made him, in right of his grandfather and father, a master of royal and individual excellences, why could she not have endowed him at the same time with his mother's personal charms?—Why should not the son of Henrietta Maria, the finest woman of her day, add the recommendations of a handsome face and figure to his internal qualities?—he had the same hereditary title to good looks as to mental qualifications; and the picture, with such an addition, would be perfect in its way—and God send it might be a resemblance!"

"I understand you, Master Kerneguy," said Alice, "but I am no fairy, to bestow, as those do in the nursery tales, gifts which Providence has denied. I am woman enough to have made inquiries on the subject, and I know the general report is, that the King, to have been the son of such handsome parents, is unusually hard-favoured."

"Good God, sister!" said Albert, starting impatiently from his seat.

"Why, you yourself told me so," said Alice, surprised at the emotion he testified; "and you said"—

"This is intolerable," muttered Albert—"I must out to speak with Joceline without delay—Louis," (with an imploring look to Kerneguy,) "you will surely come with me?"

"I would with all my heart," said Kerneguy, smiling maliciously; "but you see how I suffer still from lameness.—Nay, nay, Albert," he whispered, resisting young Lee's attempts to prevail on him to leave the room, "can you suppose I am fool enough to be hurt by this?—on the contrary, I have a desire of profiting by it."

"May God grant it!" said Lee to himself, as he left the room—"it will be the first lecture you ever profited by; and the devil confound the pluts ens.

plotters who made me bring you to this place!" So saying, he carried his discontent forth into the Park.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> For there, they say, he daily doth frequent
> With unrestrained loose companions;
> While he, young, wanton, and effeminate boy,
> Takes on the point of honour, to support
> So dissolute a crew.—*Richard II.*

The conversation which Albert had in vain endeavoured to interrupt, flowed on in the same course after he had left the room. It entertained Louis Kerneguy; for personal vanity, or an over sensitiveness to deserved reproof, were not among the faults of his character, and were indeed incompatible with an understanding, which, combined with more strength of principle, steadiness of exertion, and self-denial, might have placed Charles high on the list of English monarchs. On the other hand, Sir Henry listened with natural delight to the noble sentiments uttered by a being so beloved as his daughter. His own parts were rather steady than brilliant; and he had that species of imagination which is not easily excited without the action of another, as the electrical globe only scintillates when rubbed against its cushion. He was well pleased, therefore, when Kerneguy pursued the conversation, by observing that Mistress Alice Lee had not explained how the same good fairy that conferred moral qualities, could not also remove corporeal blemishes.

"You mistake, sir," said Alice. "I confer nothing. I do but attempt to paint our King such as I *hope* he is—such as I am sure he *may* be, should he himself desire to be so. The same general report which speaks of his countenance as unprepossessing, describes his talents as being of the first order. He has, therefore, the means of arriving at excellence, should he cultivate them sedulously and employ them usefully—should he rule his passions and be guided by his understanding. Every good man cannot be wise; but it is in the power of every wise man, if he pleases, to be as eminent for virtue as for talent."

Young Kerneguy rose briskly, and took a turn through the room; and ere the knight could make any observation on the singular vivacity in which he had indulged, he threw himself again into his chair, and said, in rather an altered tone of voice—"It seems, then, Mistress Alice Lee, that the good friends who have described this poor King to you, have been as unfavourable in their account of his morals as of his person?"

"The truth must be better known to you, sir," said Alice, "than it can be to me. Some rumours there have been which accuse him of a license, which, whatever allowance flatterers make for it, does not, to say the least, become the son of the Martyr—I shall be happy to have these contradicted on good authority."

"I am surprised at your folly," said Sir Henry Lee, "in hinting at such things, Alice; a pack of scandal, invented by the rascals who have usurped the government—a thing devised by the enemy."

"Nay, sir," said Kerneguy, laughing, "we must not let our zeal charge the enemy with more scandal than they actually deserve. Mistress Alice has put the question to me. I can only answer, that no one can be more devotedly attached to the King than I myself, that I am very partial to his merits and blind to his defects;—and that, in short, I would be the last man in the world to give up his cause where it was tenable. Nevertheless, I must confess, that if all his grandfather of Navarre's morals have not descended to him, this poor King has somehow inherited a share of the specks that were thought to dim the lustre of that great Prince—that Charles is a little soft-hearted or so, where beauty is concerned.—Do not blame him too severely, pretty Mistress Alice; when a man's hard fate has driven him among thorns, *t were surely hard to prevent him from trifling with the few roses he may find among them?*"

Alice, who probably thought the conversation had *gone far enough, rose* while Master Kerneguy was speaking, and was leaving the room before he had finished, without apparently hearing the interrogation with which he concluded. Her father approved of her departure, not thinking the turn which Kerneguy had given to the discourse altogether fit for her presence; and, desirous civilly to break off the conversation, "I see," he said, "this is about the time, when, as Will says, the household affairs will call my daughter hence; I will therefore challenge you, young gentleman, to stretch your limbs in a little exercise with me, either at single rapier, or rapier and poniard, back-sword, spadroon, or your national weapons of broadsword and target; for all, or any of which, I think we shall find implements in the hall."

It would be too high a distinction, Master Kerneguy said, for a poor page to be permitted to try a passage of arms with a knight so renowned as Sir Henry Lee, and he hoped to enjoy so great an honour before he left Woodstock; but at the present moment his lameness continued to give him so much pain, that he should shame himself in the attempt.

Sir Henry then offered to read him a play of Shakspeare, and for this purpose turned up King Richard II. But hardly had he commenced with

> "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster,"

when the young gentleman was seized with such an incontrollable fit of the cramp as could only be relieved by immediate exercise. He therefore begged permission to be allowed to saunter abroad for a little while, if Sir Henry Lee considered he might venture without danger.

"I can answer for the two or three of our people that are still left about the place," said Sir Henry; "and I know my son has disposed them so as to be constantly on the watch. If you hear the bell toll at the Lodge, I advise you to come straight home by the way of the King's oak, which you see in yonder glade towering above the rest of the trees. We will have some one stationed there to introduce you secretly into the house."

The page listened to these cautions with the impatience of a schoolboy, who, desirous of enjoying his holiday, hears without marking the advice of tutor or parent, about taking care not to catch cold and so forth.

The absence of Alice Lee had removed all which had rendered the interior of the Lodge agreeable, and the mercurial young page fled with precipitation from the exercise and amusement which Sir Henry had proposed. He girded on his rapier, and threw his cloak, or rather that which belonged to his borrowed suit, about him, bringing up the lower part so as to muffle the face and show only the eyes over it, which was a common way of wearing them in those days, both in streets, in the country, and in public places, when men had a mind to be private, and to avoid interruption from salutations and greetings in the market-place. He hurried across the open space which divided the front of the Lodge from the wood, with the haste of a bird escaped from the cage, which, though joyful at its liberation, is at the same time sensible of its need of protection and shelter. The wood seemed to afford these to the human fugitive, as it might have done to the bird in question.

When under the shadow of the branches, and within the verge of the forest, covered from observation, yet with the power of surveying the front of the Lodge, and all the open ground before it, the supposed Louis Kerneguy meditated on his escape.

"What an infliction—to fence with a gouty old man, who knows not, I dare say, a trick of the sword, which was not familiar in the days of old Vincent Saviolo! or, as a change of misery, to hear him read one of those wildernesses of scenes which the English call a play, from prologue to epilogue—from Enter the first to the final *Exeunt omnes*—an unparalleled horror—a penance which would have made a dungeon darker, and added dulness even to Woodstock!"

Here he stopped and looked around, then continued his meditations—"So then, it was here that the gay old Norman secluded his pretty mistress—I warrant, without having seen her, that Rosamond Clifford was

never half so handsome as that lovely Alice Lee. And what a soul there is in the girl's eye!—with what abandonment of all respects, save that expressing the interest of the moment, she poured forth her tide of enthusiasm! Were I to be long here, in spite of prudence, and half-a-dozen very venerable obstacles besides, I should be tempted to try to reconcile her to the indifferent visage of this same hard-favoured Prince.—Hard-favoured?—it is a kind of treason for one who pretends to so much loyalty, to say so of the King's features, and in my mind deserves punishment. Ah, pretty Mistress Alice! many a Mistress Alice before you has made dreadful exclamations on the irregularities of mankind, and the wickedness of the age, and ended by being glad to look out for apologies for their own share in them. But then her father—the stout old cavalier—my father's old friend—should such a thing befall, it would break his heart! Break a pudding's end—he has more sense. If I give his grandson a title to quarter the arms of England, what matter if a bar sinister is drawn across them? —Pshaw! far from an abatement, it is a point of addition—the heralds in their next visitation will place him higher in the roll for it. Then, if he did wince a little at first, does not the old traitor deserve it;—first, for his disloyal intention of punching mine anointed body black and blue with his vile foils—and secondly, his atrocious complot with Will Shakspeare, a fellow as much out of date as himself, to read me to death with five acts of a historical play, or chronicle, 'being the piteous Life and Death of Richard the Second?' Odds-fish, my own life is piteous enough, as I think; and my death may match it, for aught I see coming yet. Ah, but then the brother—my friend—my guide—my guard—So far as this little proposed intrigue concerns him, such practising would be thought not quite fair. But your bouncing, swaggering revengeful brothers exist only on the theatre. Your dire revenge, with which a brother persecuted a poor fellow who had seduced his sister, or been seduced by her, as the case might be, as relentlessly as if he had trodden on his toes without making an apology, is entirely out of fashion, since Dorset killed the Lord Bruce many a long year since.* Pshaw! when a King is the offender, the bravest man sacrifices nothing by pocketing a little wrong which he cannot personally resent. And in France, there is not a noble house, where each individual would not cock his hat an inch higher, if they could boast of such a left-handed alliance with the Grand Monarque."

Such were the thoughts which rushed through the mind of Charles, at his first quitting the Lodge of Woodstock, and plunging into the forest that surrounded it. His profligate logic, however, was not the result of his natural disposition, nor received without scruple by his sound understanding. It was a train of reasoning which he had been led to adopt from his too close intimacy with the witty and profligate youth of quality by whom he had been surrounded. It arose from the evil communication with Villiers, Wilmot, Sedley, and others, whose genius was destined to corrupt that age, and the Monarch on whom its character afterwards came so much to depend. Such men, bred amidst the license of civil war, and without experiencing that curb which in ordinary times the authority of parents and relations imposes upon the headlong passions of youth, were practised in every species of vice, and could recommend it as well by precept as by example, turning into pitiless ridicule all those nobler feelings which withhold men from gratifying lawless passion. The events of the King's life had also favoured his reception of this Epicurean doctrine. He saw himself, with the highest claims to sympathy and assistance, coldly regarded by the Courts which he visited, rather as a permitted suppliant, than an exiled monarch. He beheld his own rights and claims treated with scorn and indifference; and, in the same proportion, he was reconciled to the hard-hearted and selfish course of dissipation, which promised him immediate indulgence. If this was obtained at the expense of the happiness of others, should he of all men be scrupulous upon the subject, since he treated others only as the world treated him?

But although the foundations of this unhappy system had been laid, the Prince was not at this early period so fully devoted to it as he was found to have become, when a door was unexpectedly opened for his restoration. On the contrary, though the train of gay reasoning which we have above stated, as if it had found vent in uttered language, did certainly arise in his mind, as that which would have been suggested by his favourite counsellors on such occasions, he recollected that what might be passed over as a peccadillo in France or the Netherlands, or turned into a diverting novel or pasquinade by the wits of his own wandering Court, was likely to have the aspect of horrid ingratitude and infamous treachery among the English gentry, and would inflict a deep, perhaps an incurable wound upon his interest, among the more aged and respectable part of his adherents. Then it occurred to him—for his own interest did not escape him, even in this mode of considering the subject—that he was in the power of the Lees, father and son, who were always understood to be at least sufficiently punctilious on the score of honour; and if they should suspect such an affront as his imagination had conceived, they could be at no loss to find means of the most ample revenge, either by their own hands, or by those of the ruling faction.

"The risk of reopening the fatal window at Whitehall, and renewing the tragedy of the Man in the Mask, were a worse penalty," was his final reflection, "than the old stool of the Scottish penance; and lovely though Alice Lee is, I cannot afford to intrigue at such a hazard. So, farewell, pretty maiden! unless, as sometimes has happened, thou hast a humour to throw thyself at thy King's feet, and then I am too magnanimous to refuse thee my protection.—Yet when I think of the pale clay-cold figure of the old man, as he lay last night extended before me, and imagine the fury of Albert Lee raging with impatience, his hand on a sword which only his loyalty prevents him from plunging into his sovereign's heart,—nay, the picture is too horrible! Charles must for ever change his name to Joseph, even if he were strongly tempted; which may fortune in mercy prohibit!"

To speak the truth of a Prince, more unfortunate in his early companions, and the callousness which he acquired by his juvenile adventures and irregular mode of life, than in his natural disposition, Charles came the more readily to this wise conclusion, because he was by no means subject to those violent and engrossing passions, to gratify which the world has been thought well lost. His amours, like many of the present day, were rather matters of habit and fashion, than of passion and affection; and in comparing himself in this respect to his grandfather Henry IV., he did neither his ancestor nor himself perfect justice. He was, to parody the words of a bard, himself actuated by the stormy passions which an intriguer often only stimulates,—

> None of those who loved so kindly,
> None of those who loved so blindly.—

An amour was with him a matter of amusement a regular consequence, as it seemed to him, of the ordinary course of things in society. He was not at the trouble to practise seductive arts, because he had seldom found occasion to make use of them; his high rank, and the profligacy of part of the female society with which he had mingled, rendering them unnecessary. Added to this, he had, for the same reason, seldom been crossed by the obstinate interference of relations, or even of husbands, who had generally seemed not unwilling to suffer such matters to take their course.

So that, notwithstanding his total looseness of principle, and systematic disbelief in the virtue of women and the honour of men, as connected with the character of their female relatives, Charles was not a person to have studiously introduced disgrace into a family, where a conquest might have been violently disputed, attained with difficulty, and accompanied with general distress, not to mention the

* This melancholy story may be found in the *Guardian*. An intrigue of *Lord Sackville, afterwards* Earl of Dorset, was the *cause of the fatal duel.*

excitation of all fiercer passions against the author of the scandal.

But the danger of the King's society consisted in his being much of an unbeliever in the existence of such cases as were likely to be imbittered by remorse on the part of the principal victim, or rendered perilous by the violent resentment of her connexions or relatives. He had even already found such things treated on the continent as matters of ordinary occurrence, subject, in all cases where a man of high influence was concerned, to an easy arrangement; and he was really, generally speaking, sceptical on the subject of severe virtue in either sex, and apt to consider it as a veil assumed by prudery in women, and hypocrisy in men, to extort a higher reward for their compliance.

While we are discussing the character of his disposition to gallantry, the Wanderer was conducted, by the walk he had chosen, through several whimsical turns, until at last it brought him under the windows of Victor Lee's apartment, where he descried Alice watering and arranging some flowers placed on the Oriel window, which was easily accessible by daylight, although at night he had found it a dangerous attempt to scale it. But not Alice only, her father also showed himself near the window, and beckoned him up. The family party seemed now more promising than before, and the fugitive Prince was weary of playing battledore and shuttlecock with his conscience, and much disposed to let matters go as chance should determine.

He climbed lightly up the broken ascent, and was readily welcomed by the old knight, who held activity in high honour. Alice also seemed glad to see the lively and interesting young man; and by her presence, and the unaffected mirth with which she enjoyed his sallies, he was animated to display those qualities of wit and humour, which nobody possessed in a higher degree.

His satire delighted the old gentleman, who laughed till his eyes ran over as he heard the youth, whose claims to his respect he little dreamed of, amusing him with successive imitations of the Scottish Presbyterian clergyman, of the proud and poor Hidalgo of the North, of the fierce and overweening pride and Celtic dialect of the mountain chief, of the slow and more pedantic Lowlander, with all of which his residence in Scotland had made him familiar. Alice also laughed and applauded, amused herself, and delighted to see that her father was so; and the whole party were in the highest glee, when Albert Lee entered, eager to find Louis Kerneguy, and to lead him away to a private colloquy with Doctor Rochecliffe, whose zeal, assiduity, and wonderful possession of information, had constituted him their master-pilot in those difficult times.

It is unnecessary to introduce the reader to the minute particulars of their conference. The information obtained was so far favourable, that the enemy seemed to have had no intelligence of the King's route towards the south, and remained persuaded that he had made his escape from Bristol, as had been reported, and as had indeed been proposed; but the master of the vessel prepared for the King's passage had taken the alarm, and sailed without his royal freight. His departure, however, and the suspicion of the service in which he was engaged, served to make the belief general, that the King had gone off along with him.

But though this was cheering, the Doctor had more unpleasant tidings from the sea-coast, alleging great difficulties in securing a vessel, to which it might be fit to commit a charge so precious; and, above all, requesting his Majesty might on no account venture to approach the shore, until he should receive advice that all the previous arrangements had been completely settled.

No one was able to suggest a safer place of residence than that which he at present occupied. Colonel Everard was deemed certainly not personally *unfriendly to the King*; and Cromwell, as was supposed, reposed in Everard an unbounded confidence. *The interior presented numberless hiding-places, and secret modes of exit*, known to no one but the ancient residents of the Lodge—nay, far better to Rochecliffe than to any of them; as, when Rector at the neighbouring town, his prying disposition as an antiquary had induced him to make very many researches among the old ruins—the results of which he was believed, in some instances, to have kept to himself.

To balance these conveniences, it was no doubt true that the Parliamentary Commissioners were still at no great distance, and would be ready to resume their authority upon the first opportunity. But no one supposed such an opportunity was likely to occur; and all believed, as the influence of Cromwell and the army grew more and more predominant, that the disappointed Commissioners would attempt nothing in contradiction to his pleasure, but wait with patience an indemnification in some other quarter for their vacated commissions. Report, through the voice of Master Joseph Tomkins, stated, that they had determined, in the first place, to retire to Oxford, and were making preparations accordingly. This promised still farther to insure the security of Woodstock. It was therefore settled, that the King, under the character of Louis Kerneguy, should remain an inmate of the Lodge, until a vessel should be procured for his escape, at the port which might be esteemed the safest and most convenient.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The deadliest snakes are those which, twined 'mongst flowers,
Blend their bright colouring with the varied blossoms,
Their fierce eyes glittering like the spangled dewdrop;
In all so like what nature has most harmless,
That sportive innocence, which dreads no danger,
Is poison'd unawares.—*Old Play.*

CHARLES (we must now give him his own name) was easily reconciled to the circumstances which rendered his residence at Woodstock advisable. No doubt he would much rather have secured his safety by making an immediate escape out of England; but he had been condemned already to many uncomfortable lurking-places, and more disagreeable disguises, as well as to long and difficult journeys, during which, between pragmatical officers of justice belonging to the prevailing party, and parties of soldiers whose officers usually took on them to act on their own warrant, risk of discovery had more than once become very imminent. He was glad, therefore, of comparative repose, and of comparative safety.

Then it must be considered, that Charles had been entirely reconciled to the society of Woodstock since he had become better acquainted with it. He had seen, that, to interest the beautiful Alice, and procure a great deal of her company, nothing more was necessary than to submit to the humours, and cultivate the intimacy, of the old cavalier her father. A few bouts at fencing, in which Charles took care not to put out his more perfect skill, and full youthful strength and activity—the endurance of a few scenes from Shakspeare, which the knight read with more zeal than taste—a little skill in music, in which the old man had been a proficient—the deference paid to a few old-fashioned opinions, at which Charles laughed in his sleeve—were all-sufficient to gain for the disguised Prince an interest in Sir Henry Lee, and to conciliate in an equal degree the good will of his lovely daughter.

Never were there two young persons who could be said to commence this species of intimacy with such unequal advantages. Charles was a libertine, who, if he did not in cold blood resolve upon prosecuting his passion for Alice to a dishonourable conclusion, was at every moment liable to be provoked to attempt the strength of a virtue, in which he was no believer. Then Alice, on her part, hardly knew even what was implied by the word libertine or seducer. Her mother had died early in the commencement of the Civil War, and she had been bred up chiefly with her brother and cousin; so that she had an unfearing and unsuspicious frankness of manner, upon which Charles was not unwilling or unlikely to put a construction favourable to his own views. Even Alice's love for her cousin—the first sensation which awakens

the most innocent and simple mind to feelings of shyness and restraint towards the male sex in general —had failed to excite such an alarm in *her* bosom. They were nearly related; and Everard, though young, was several years her elder, and had, from her infancy, been an object of her respect as well as of her affection. When this early and childish intimacy ripened into youthful love, confessed and returned, still it differed in some shades from the passion existing between lovers originally strangers to each other, until their affections have been united in the ordinary course of courtship. Their love was fonder, more familiar, more perfectly confidential; purer too, perhaps, and more free from starts of passionate violence, or apprehensive jealousy.

The possibility that any one could have attempted to rival Everard in her affection, was a circumstance which never occurred to Alice; and that this singular Scottish lad, whom she laughed with on account of his humour, and laughed at for his peculiarities, should be an object of danger or of caution, never once entered her imagination. The sort of intimacy to which she admitted Kerneguy was the same to which she would have received a companion of her own sex, whose manners she did not always approve, but whose society she found always amusing.

It was natural that the freedom of Alice Lee's conduct, which arose from the most perfect indifference, should pass for something approaching to encouragement in the royal gallant's apprehension, and that any resolutions he had formed against being tempted to violate the hospitality of Woodstock, should begin to totter, as opportunities for doing so became more frequent.

These opportunities were favoured by Albert's departure from Woodstock the very day after his arrival. It had been agreed in full council with Charles and Rochecliffe, that he should go to visit his uncle Everard in the county of Kent, and, by showing himself there, obviate any cause of suspicion which might arise from his residence at Woodstock, and remove any pretext for disturbing his father's family on account of their harbouring one who had been so lately in arms. He had also undertaken, at his own great personal risk, to visit different points on the sea-coast, and ascertain the security of different places for providing shipping for the King's leaving England.

These circumstances were alike calculated to procure the King's safety, and facilitate his escape. But Alice was thereby deprived of the presence of her brother, who would have been her most watchful guardian, but who had set down the King's light talk upon a former occasion to the gayety of his humour, and would have thought he had done his sovereign great injustice, had he seriously suspected him of such a breach of hospitality as a dishonourable pursuit of Alice would have implied.

There were, however, two of the household at Woodstock, who appeared not so entirely reconciled with Louis Kerneguy or his purposes. The one was Bevis, who seemed, from their first unfriendly rencontre, to have kept up a pique against their new guest, which no advances on the part of Charles were able to soften. If the page was by chance left alone with his young mistress, Bevis choose always to be of the party; came close by Alice's chair, and growled audibly when the gallant drew near her. "It is a pity," said the disguised Prince, "that your Bevis is not a bull-dog, that we might dub him a roundhead at once—He is too handsome, too noble, too aristocratic, to nourish those inhospitable prejudices against a poor houseless cavalier. I am convinced the spirit of Pym or Hampden has transmigrated into the rogue, and continues to demonstrate his hatred against royalty and all its adherents."

Alice would then reply, that Bevis was loyal in word and deed, and only partook her father's prejudices against the Scots, which, she could not but acknowledge, were tolerably strong.

"Nay, then," said the supposed Louis, "I must find some other reason, for I cannot allow Sir Bevis's resentment to rest upon national antipathy. So we will suppose that some gallant cavalier, who wended to the wars and never returned, has adopted this shape to look back upon the haunts he left so unwillingly, and is jealous at seeing even poor Louis Kerneguy drawing near to the lady of his lost affections." —He approached her chair as he spoke, and Bevis gave one of his deep growls.

"In that case they had best keep your distance," said Alice, laughing, "for the bite of a dog, possessed by the ghost of a jealous lover, cannot be very safe." And the King carried on the dialogue in the same strain, which, while it led Alice to apprehend nothing more serious than the apish gallantry of a fantastic boy, certainly induced the supposed Louis Kerneguy to think that he had made one of those conquests which often and easily fall to the share of sovereigns. Notwithstanding the acuteness of his apprehension, he was not sufficiently aware that the Royal Road to female favour is only open to monarchs when they travel in grand costume, and that when they woo incognito, their path of courtship is liable to the same windings and obstacles which obstruct the course of private individuals.

There was, besides Bevis, another member of the family, who kept a look-out upon Louis Kerneguy, and with no friendly eye. Phœbe Mayflower, though her experience extended not beyond the sphere of the village, yet knew the world much better than her mistress, and besides she was five years older. More knowing, she was more suspicious. She thought that odd-looking Scotch boy made more up to her young mistress than was proper for his condition of life; and, moreover, that Alice gave him a little more encouragement than Parthenia would have afforded to any such Jack-a-dandy, in the absence of Argalus —for the volume treating of the loves of these celebrated Arcadians was then the favourite study of swains and damsels throughout merry England. Entertaining such suspicions, Phœbe was at a loss how to conduct herself on the occasion, and yet resolved she would not see the slightest chance of the course of Colonel Everard's true love being obstructed, without attempting a remedy. She had a peculiar favour for Markham herself; and, moreover, he was, according to her phrase, as handsome and personable a young man as was in Oxfordshire; and this Scottish scarecrow was no more to be compared to him than chalk was to cheese. And yet she allowed that Master Girnigy had a wonderfully well-oiled tongue, and that such gallants were not to be despised. What was to be done?—she had no facts to offer, only vague suspicion; and was afraid to speak to her mistress, whose kindness, great as it was, did not, nevertheless, encourage familiarity.

She sounded Joceline; but he was, she knew not why, so deeply interested about this unlucky lad, and held his importance so high, that she could make no impression on him. To speak to the old knight, would have been to raise a general tempest. The worthy chaplain, who was at Woodstock, grand referee on all disputed matters, would have been the damsel's most natural resource, for he was peaceful as well as moral by profession, and politic by practice. But it happened he had given Phœbe unintentional offence by speaking of her under the classical epithet of *Rustica Fidele*, the which epithet, as she understood it not, she held herself bound to resent as contumelious, and declaring she was not fonder of a *fiddle* than other folk, had ever since shunned all intercourse with Doctor Rochecliffe which she could easily avoid.

Master Tomkins was always coming and going about the house under various pretexts; but he was a roundhead, and she was too true to the cavaliers to introduce any of the enemy as parties to their internal discords;—besides, he had talked to Phœbe herself in a manner which induced her to decline every thing in the shape of familiarity with him. Last of, Cavaliero Wildrake might have been consulted; but Phœbe had her own reasons for saying, as she did with some emphasis, that Cavaliero Wildrake was an impudent London rake. At length she resolved to communicate her suspicions to the party having most interest in verifying or confuting them.

"I'll let Master Markham Everard know that there

a wasp buzzing about his honeycomb," said Phœbe; "and, moreover, that I know that this young Scotch Scapegrace shifted himself out of a woman's into a man's dress at Goody Green's, and gave Goody Green's Dolly a gold-piece to say nothing about it;—and no more she did to any one but me, and she knows best herself whether she gave change for the gold or not—but Master Louis is a saucy jackanapes, and like enough to ask it."

Three or four days elapsed while matters continued in this condition—the disguised Prince sometimes thinking on the intrigue which Fortune seemed to have thrown in his way for his amusement, and taking advantage of such opportunities as occurred to increase his intimacy with Alice Lee; but much oftener harassing Doctor Rochecliffe with questions about the possibility of escape, which the good man finding himself unable to answer, secured his leisure against royal importunity, by retreating into the various unexplored recesses of the Lodge, known perhaps only to himself, who had been for nearly a score of years employed in writing the Wonders of Woodstock.

It chanced on the fourth day, that some trifling circumstance had called the knight abroad; and he had left the young Scotsman, now familiar in the family, along with Alice, in the parlour of Victor Lee. Thus situated, he thought the time not unpropitious for entering upon a strain of gallantry, of a kind which might be called experimental, such as is practised by the Croats in skirmishing, when they keep bridle in hand, ready to attack the enemy, or canter off without coming to close quarters, as circumstances may recommend. After using for nearly ten minutes a sort of metaphysical jargon, which might, according to Alice's pleasure, have been interpreted either into gallantry, or the language of serious pretension, and when he supposed her engaged in fathoming his meaning, he had the mortification to find, by a single and brief question, that he had been totally unattended to, and that Alice was thinking on any thing at the moment rather than the sense of what he had been saying. She asked him if he could tell what it was o'clock, and this with an air of real curiosity concerning the lapse of time, which put coquetry wholly out of the question.

"I will go look at the sun-dial, Mistress Alice," said the gallant, rising and colouring, through a sense of the contempt with which he thought himself treated.

"You will do me a pleasure, Master Kerneguy," said Alice, without the least consciousness of the indignation she had excited.

Master Louis Kerneguy left the room accordingly, not, however, to procure the information required, but to vent his anger and mortification, and to swear, with more serious purpose than he had dared to do before, that Alice should rue her insolence. Good-natured as he was, he was still a prince, unaccustomed to contradiction, far less to contempt, and his self-pride felt, for the moment, wounded to the quick. With a hasty step he plunged into the Chase, only remembering his own safety so far as to choose the deeper and sequestered avenues, where, walking on with the speedy and active step, which his recovery from fatigue now permitted him to exercise according to his wont, he solaced his angry purposes, by devising schemes of revenge on the insolent country coquette, from which no consideration of hospitality was in future to have weight enough to save her.

The irritated gallant passed

"The dial-stone, aged and green,"

without deigning to ask it a single question; nor could it have satisfied his curiosity if he had, for no sun happened to shine at the moment. He then hastened forward, muffling himself in his cloak, and assuming a stooping and slouching gait, which diminished his apparent height. He was soon involved in the deep and dim alleys of the wood, into which *he had insensibly plunged* himself, and was traversing *it at a great rate, without having* any distinct idea in *what direction he was going*, when suddenly his *course was arrested, first by* a loud halloo, and then by a summons to stand, accompanied by what seemed still more startling and extraordinary, the touch of a cane upon his shoulder, imposed in a good-humoured but somewhat imperious manner.

There were few symptoms of recognition which would have been welcome at this moment; but the appearance of the person who had thus arrested his course, was least of all that he could have anticipated as timely or agreeable. When he turned, on receiving the signal, he beheld himself close to a young man, nearly six feet in height, well made in joint and limb, but the gravity of whose apparel, although handsome and gentlemanlike, and a sort of precision in his habit, from the cleanness and stiffness of his band to the unsullied purity of his Spanish-leather shoes, bespoke a love of order which was foreign to impoverished and vanquished cavaliers, and proper to the habits of those of the victorious party, who could afford to dress themselves handsomely; and whose rule—that is, such as regarded the higher and more respectable classes—enjoined decency and sobriety of garb and deportment. There was yet another weight against the Prince in the scale, and one still more characteristic of the inequality in the comparison, under which he seemed to labour. There was strength in the muscular form of the stranger who had brought him to this involuntary parley, authority and determination in his brow, a long rapier on the left, and a poniard or dagger on the right side of his belt, and a pair of pistols stuck into it, which would have been sufficient to give the unknown the advantage, (Louis Kerneguy having no weapon but his sword,) even had his personal strength approached nearer than it did to that of the person by whom he was thus suddenly stopped.

Bitterly regretting the thoughtless fit of passion that brought him into his present situation, but especially the want of the pistols he had left behind, and which do so much to place bodily strength and weakness upon an equal footing, Charles yet availed himself of the courage and presence of mind, in which few of his unfortunate family had for centuries been deficient. He stood firm and without motion, his cloak still wrapped round the lower part of his face, to give time for explanation, in case he was mistaken for some other person.

This coolness produced its effect; for the other party said, with doubt and surprise on his part, "Joceline Joliffe, is it not?—If I know not Joceline Joliffe, I should at least know my own cloak."

"I am not Joceline Joliffe, as you may see, sir," said Kerneguy, calmly, drawing himself erect to show the difference of size, and dropping the cloak from his face and person.

"Indeed!" replied the stranger, in surprise; "then, Sir Unknown, I have to express my regret at having used my cane in intimating that I wished you to stop. From that dress, which I certainly recognise for my own, I concluded you must be Joceline in whose custody I had left my habit at the Lodge."

"If it had been Joceline, sir," replied the supposed Kerneguy, with perfect composure, "methinks you should not have struck so hard."

The other party was obviously confused by the steady calmness with which he was encountered. The sense of politeness dictated, in the first place, an apology for a mistake, when he thought he had been tolerably certain of the person. Master Kerneguy was not in a situation to be punctilious; he bowed gravely, as indicating his acceptance of the excuse offered, then turned, and walked, as he conceived, towards the Lodge; though he had traversed the woods which were cut with various alleys in different directions, too hastily to be certain of the real course which he wished to pursue.

He was much embarrassed to find that this did not get him rid of the companion whom he had thus involuntarily acquired. Walked he slow, walked he fast, his friend in the genteel but puritanic habit, strong in person, and well armed, as we have described him, seemed determined to keep him company, and, without attempting to join, or enter into conversation, never suffered him to outstrip his surveillance for more than two or three yards. The Wanderer mended his

ace; but although he was then, in his youth, as afterards in his riper age, one of the best walkers in Britain, the stranger, without advancing his pace to a un, kept fully equal to him, and his persecution beame so close and constant, and inevitable, that the ride and fear of Charles were both alarmed, and he egan to think that, whatever the danger might be of single-handed rencontre, he would nevertheless ave a better bargain of this tall satellite if they ettled the debate betwixt them in the forest, than f they drew near any place of habitation, where he man in authority was likely to find friends and oncurrence.

Betwixt anxiety, therefore, vexation, and anger, Charles faced suddenly round on his pursuer, as they eached a small narrow glade, which led to the little meadow over which presided the King's Oak, the ragged and scathed branches and gigantic trunk of which ormed a vista to the little wild avenue.

"Sir," said he to his pursuer, "you have already been guilty of one piece of impertinence towards me. You have apologized; and knowing no reason why you should distinguish me as an object of incivility, I have accepted your excuse without scruple. Is there any thing remains to be settled betwixt us, which causes you to follow me in this manner? If so, I shall be glad to make it a subject of explanation or satisfaction, as the case may admit of. I think you can owe me no malice; for I never saw you before to my knowledge. If you can give any good reason for asking it, I am willing to render you personal satisfaction. If your purpose is merely impertinent curiosity, I let you know that I will not suffer myself to be dogged in my private walks by any one."

"When I recognise my own cloak on another man's shoulders," replied the stranger, dryly, "methinks I have a natural right to follow, and see what becomes of it; for know, sir, though I have been mistaken as to the wearer, yet I am confident I had as good a right to stretch my cane across the cloak you are muffled in, as ever had any one to brush his own garments. If, therefore, we are to be friends, I must ask, for instance, how you came by that cloak, and where you are going with it? I shall otherwise make bold to stop you, as one who has sufficient commission to do so."

Oh, unhappy cloak, thought the Wanderer, ay, and thrice unhappy the idle fancy that sent me here with it wrapped around my nose, to pick quarrels and attract observation, when quiet and secrecy were peculiarly essential to my safety!

"If you will allow me to guess, sir," continued the stranger, who was no other than Markham Everard, "I will convince you, that you are better known than you think for."

Now, Heaven forbid! prayed the party addressed, in silence, but with as much devotion as ever he applied to a prayer in his life. Yet even in this moment of extreme urgency, his courage and composure did not fail; and he recollected it was of the utmost importance not to seem startled, and to answer so as, if possible, to lead the dangerous companion with whom he had met, to confess the extent of his actual knowledge or suspicions concerning him.

"If you know me, sir," he said, "and are a gentleman, as your appearance promises, you cannot be at a loss to discover to what accident you must attribute my wearing these clothes, which you say are yours."

"Oh, sir," replied Colonel Everard, his wrath in no sort turned away by the mildness of the stranger's answer, "we have learned our Ovid's Metamorphoses, and we know for what purposes young men of quality travel in disguise—we know that even female attire is resorted to on certain occasions—We have heard of Vertumnus and Pomona."

The Monarch, as he weighed these words, again uttered a devout prayer, that this ill-looking affair might have no deeper root than the jealousy of some admirer of Alice Lee, promising to himself, that, devotee as he was to the fair sex, he would make no *scruple of renouncing the fairest of Eve's daughters in order to get out of the present dilemma.*

"Sir," he said, "you seem to be a gentleman. I have no objection to tell you as such, that I also am of that class."

"Or somewhat higher, perhaps?" said Everard.

"A gentleman," replied Charles, "is a term which comprehends all ranks entitled to armorial bearings—A duke, a lord, a prince, is no more than a gentleman; and if in misfortune, as I am, he may be glad if that general term of courtesy is allowed him."

"Sir," replied Everard, "I have no purpose to entrap you to any acknowledgment fatal to your own safety. Nor do I hold it my business to be active in the arrest of private individuals, whose perverted sense of national duty may have led them into errors, rather to be pitied than punished by candid men. But if those who have brought civil war and disturbance into their native country, proceed to carry dishonour and disgrace into the bosom of families—if they attempt to carry on their private debaucheries to the injury of the hospitable roofs which afford them refuge from the consequences of their public crimes, do you think, my lord, that we shall bear it with patience?"

"If it is your purpose to quarrel with me," said the Prince, "speak it out at once like a gentleman. You have the advantage, no doubt, of arms, but it is not that odds which will induce me to fly from a single man. If, on the other hand, you are disposed to hear reason, I tell you in calm words, that I neither suspect the offence to which you allude, nor comprehend why you give me the title of my lord.

"You deny, then, being the Lord Wilmot?" said Everard.

"I may do so most safely," said the Prince.

"Perhaps you rather style yourself Earl of Rochester? We heard that the issuing of some such patent by the King of Scots was a step which your ambition proposed."

"Neither lord nor earl am I, as sure as I have a Christian soul to be saved. My name is"——

"Do not degrade yourself by unnecessary falsehood, my lord; and that to a single man, who, I promise you, will not invoke public justice to assist his own good sword, should he see cause to use it. Can you look at that ring, and deny that you are Lord Wilmot?"

He handed to the disguised Prince a ring which he took from his purse, and his opponent instantly knew it for the same he had dropped into Alice's pitcher at the fountain, obeying only, though imprudently, the gallantry of the moment, in giving a pretty gem to a handsome girl, whom he had accidentally frightened."

"I know the ring," he said; "it has been in my possession. How it should prove me to be Lord Wilmot, I cannot conceive; and beg to say, it bears false witness against me."

"You shall see the evidence," answered Everard; and resuming the ring, he pressed a spring ingeniously contrived in the collet of the setting, on which the stone flew back, and showed within it the cipher of Lord Wilmot beautifully engraved in miniature, with a coronet.—"What say you now, sir?"

"That probabilities are no proofs," said the Prince; "there is nothing here save what can be easily accounted for. I am the son of a Scottish nobleman, who was mortally wounded and made prisoner at Worcester fight. When he took leave, and bid me fly, he gave me the few valuables he possessed, and that among others. I have heard him talk of having changed rings with Lord Wilmot, on some occasion in Scotland, but I never knew the trick of the gem which you have shown me."

In this it may be necessary to say, Charles spoke very truly; nor would he have parted with it in the way he did, had he suspected it would be easily recognised. He proceeded after a minute's pause:—"Once more, sir,—I have told you much that concerns my safety—if you are generous, you will let me pass, and I may do you on some future day as good service. If you mean to arrest me, you must do so here, and at your own peril, for I will neither walk farther your way, nor permit you to dog me on mine. If you let me pass, I will thank you—if not, take to your weapon."

"Young gentleman," said Colonel Everard, "whether you be actually the gay young nobleman for whom I took you, you have made me uncertain; but, intimate as you say your family has been with him, I have little doubt that you are proficient in the school of debauchery, of which Wilmot and Villiers are professors, and their hopeful Master a graduated student. Your conduct at Woodstock, where you have rewarded the hospitality of the family by meditating the most deadly wound to their honour, has proved you too apt a scholar in such an academy. I intended only to warn you on this subject—it will be your own fault if I add chastisement to admonition."

"Warn me, sir!" said the Prince, indignantly, "and chastisement! This is presuming more on my patience than is consistent with your own safety —Draw, sir."—So saying, he laid his hand on his sword.

"My religion," said Everard, "forbids me to be rash in shedding blood—Go home, sir—be wise—consult the dictates of honour as well as prudence. Respect the honour of the house of Lee, and know there is one nearly allied to it, by whom your motions will be called to severe account."

"Aha!" said the Prince, with a bitter laugh, "I see the whole matter now—we have our roundheaded Colonel, our puritan cousin, before us—the man of texts and morals, whom Alice Lee laughs at so heartily. If your religion, sir, prevents you from giving satisfaction, it should prevent you from offering insult to a person of honour."

The passions of both were now fully up—they drew mutually, and began to fight, the Colonel relinquishing the advantage he could have obtained by the use of his fire-arms. A thrust of the arm, or a slip of the foot, might, at the moment, have changed the destinies of Britain, when the arrival of a third party broke off the combat.

CHAPTER XXV.

Stay—for the King has thrown his warder down.
Richard II.

THE combatants whom we left engaged at the end of the last chapter, made mutual passes at each other with apparently equal skill and courage. Charles had been too often in action, and too long a party as well as a victim to civil war, to find any thing new or surprising in being obliged to defend himself with his own hands; and Everard had been distinguished, as well for his personal bravery, as for the other properties of a commander. But the arrival of a third party prevented the tragic conclusion of a combat, in which the success of either party must have given him much cause for regretting his victory.

It was the old knight himself, who arrived, mounted upon a forest pony, for the war and sequestration had left him no steed of a more dignified description. He thrust himself between the combatants, and commanded them on their lives to hold. So soon as a glance from one to the other had ascertained to him whom he had to deal with, he demanded, "Whether the devils of Woodstock whom folk talked about had got possession of them both, that they were tilting at each other within the verge of the royal liberties?—Let me tell both of you," he said, "that while old Henry Lee is at Woodstock, the immunities of the Park shall be maintained as much as if the King were still on the throne. None shall fight duellos here, excepting the stags in their season. Put up, both of you, or I shall lug out as thirdsman, and prove perhaps the worst devil of the three!—As Will says—

'I'll so maul you and your toasting-irons,
That you shall think the devil has come from hell.'"

The combatants desisted from their encounter, but stood looking at each other sullenly, as men do in such a situation, each unwilling to seem to desire peace more than the other, and averse therefore to be the first to sheathe his sword.

"*Return your weapons*, gentlemen upon the spot," *said the knight still more peremptorily*; "one and *both of you, or you will* have something to do with *me, I promise you.* You may be thankful times are changed. I have known them such, that your insolence might have cost each of you your right hand, if not redeemed with a round sum of money.—Nephew, if you do not mean to alienate me for ever, I command you to put up.—Master Kerneguy, you are my guest. I request of you not to do me the insult of remaining with your sword drawn, where it is my duty to see peace observed."

"I obey you, Sir Henry," said the King, sheathing his rapier—"I hardly indeed know wherefore I was assaulted by this gentleman. I assure you, none respects the King's person or privileges more than myself—though the devotion is somewhat out of fashion."

"We may find a place to meet, sir," replied Everard, "where neither the royal person nor privileges can be offended."

"Faith, very hardly, sir," said Charles, unable to suppress the rising jest—"I mean, the King has so few followers, that the loss of the least of them might be some small damage to him; but, risking all that, I will meet you wherever there is fair field for a poor cavalier to get off in safety, if he has the luck in fight."

Sir Henry Lee's first idea had been fixed upon the insult offered to the royal demesne; he now began to turn his thoughts towards the safety of his kinsman, and of the young royalist, as he deemed him "Gentlemen," he said, "I must insist on this business being put to a final end. Nephew Markham, is this your return for my condescension in coming back to Woodstock on your warrant, that you should take an opportunity to cut the throat of my guest?"

"If you knew his purpose as well as I do,"—said Markham, and then paused, conscious that he might only incense his uncle without convincing him, as any thing he might say of Kerneguy's addresses to Alice was likely to be imputed to his own jealous suspicions—he looked on the ground, therefore, and was silent.

"And you, Master Kerneguy," said Sir Henry, "can you give me any reason why you seek to take the life of this young man, in whom, though unhappily forgetful of his loyalty and duty, I must yet take some interest, as my nephew by affinity?"

"I was not aware the gentleman enjoyed that honour, which certainly would have protected him from my sword," answered Kerneguy. "But the quarrel is his; nor can I tell any reason why he fixed it upon me, unless it were the difference of our political opinions."

"You know the contrary," said Everard; "you know that I told you you were safe from me as a fugitive royalist—and your last words showed you were at no loss to guess my connexion with Sir Henry. That, indeed, is of little consequence. I should debase myself did I use the relationship as a means of protection from you, or any one."

As they thus disputed, neither choosing to approach the real cause of quarrel, Sir Henry looked from the one to the other, with a peace-making countenance, exclaiming—

——"'Why, what an intricate impeach is this?
I think you both have drunk of Circe's cup.'

Come, my young masters, allow an old man to mediate between you. I am not shortsighted in such matters—The mother of mischief is no bigger than a gnat's wing; and I have known fifty instances in my own day, when, as Will says—

'Gallants have been confronted hardily,
In single opposition, hand to hand,'

in which, after the field was fought, no one could remember the cause of quarrel.—Tush! a small thing will do it—the taking of the wall—or the gentle rub of the shoulder in passing each other, or a hasty word, or a misconceived gesture—Come, forget your cause of quarrel, be what it will—you have had your breathing, and though you put up your rapiers unbloodied, that was no default of yours, but by command of your elder, and one who had right to use authority. In Malta, where the duello is punctiliously well understood, the persons engaged in a single combat are bound to halt on the command of a knight, or priest, or lady, and the quarrel so man-

is held as honourably terminated, and may revived.—Nephew, it is, I think, impossible u can nourish spleen against this young gen- for having fought for his king. Hear my proposal, Markham—You know I bear no though I have some reason to be offended ıu—Give the young man your hand in friend- nd we will back to the Lodge, all three r, and drink a cup of sack in token of recon- ."

:ham Everard found himself unable to resist proach towards kindness on his uncle's part. pected, indeed, what was partly the truth, that ıot entirely from reviving good-will, but also, s uncle thought, by such attention, to secure trality at least, if not his assistance, for the of the fugitive royalist. He was sensible that placed in an awkward predicament; and that ht incur the suspicions of his own party, for intercourse even with a near relation, who ed such guests. But, on the other hand, he : his services to the Commonwealth had been cient importance to outweigh whatever envy ırge on that topic. Indeed, although the Civil d divided families much, and in many various ct when it seemed ended by the triumph of the ans, the rage of political hatred began to re- d the ancient ties of kindred and friendship l at least a part of their former influence. eunions were formed; and those who, like l, adhered to the conquering party, often ex- iemselves for the protection of their deserted s.

ese things rushed through his mind, accom- with the prospect of a renewed intercourse with e, by means of which he might be at hand to her against every chance, either of injury or ıe held out his hand to the supposed Scottish ying at the same time, "That, for his part, he y ready to forget the cause of quarrel, or rather, der it as arising out of a misapprehension, and Master Kerneguy such friendship as might :tween honourable men, who had embraced i sides in politics."

le to overcome the feeling of personal dignity, rudence recommended to him to forget, Louis ay in return bowed low, but without accepting l's proffered hand.

had no occasion," he said, "to make any ex- to forget the cause of quarrel, for he had never le to comprehend it; but as he had not shunned leman's resentment, so he was now willing to : and return any degree of his favour, with e might be pleased to honour him."

rd withdrew his hand with a smile, and bowed ı to the salutation of the page, whose stiff re- of his advances he imputed to the proud pet- osition of a Scotch boy, trained up in extra- ideas of family consequence and personal nce, which his acquaintance with the world yet been sufficient to dispel.

lenry Lee, delighted with the termination of rel, which he supposed to be in deep deference wn authority, and not displeased with the op- y of renewing some acquaintance with his , who had, notwithstanding his political de- a warmer interest in his affections than he haps, himself aware of, said, in a tone of con- , "Never be mortified, young gentleman. I t went to my heart to part you, when I saw tching yourselves so handsomely, and in fair ıonour, without any malicious or bloodthirsty s. I promise you, had it not been for my duty ger here, and sworn to the office, I would ave been your umpire than your hinderance.— iished quarrel is a forgotten quarrel; and your hould have no further consequence excepting :tite it may have given you."

ying, he urged forward his pony, and moved ıph towards the Lodge by the nearest alley. almost touching the ground, the ball of his :sting in the stirrup,—the forepart of the thigh *round to the saddle,—the* heels turned out- *nd sunk as much as possible*,—his body pre- cisely erect,—the reins properly and systematically divided in his left hand, his right holding a riding-rod diagonally pointed towards the horse's left ear,—he seemed a champion of the menage, fit to have reined Bucephalus himself. His youthful companions, who attended on either hand like equerries, could scarce suppress a smile at the completely adjusted and systematic posture of the rider, contrasted with the wild and diminutive appearance of the pony, with its shaggy coat, and long tail and mane, and its keen eyes sparkling like red coals from amongst the mass of hair which fell over its small countenance. If the reader has the Duke of Newcastle's book on horsemanship, (*splendida mole!*) he may have some idea of the figure of the good knight, if he can conceive such a figure as one of the cavaliers there represented, seated, in all the graces of his art, on a Welsh or Exmoor pony, in its native savage state, without grooming or discipline of any kind; the ridicule being greatly enhanced by the disproportion of size betwixt the animal and its rider.

Perhaps the knight saw their wonder, for the first words he said after they left the ground were, "Pixie, though small, is mettlesome, gentlemen," (here he contrived that Pixie should himself corroborate the assertion, by executing a gambade,)—"he is diminutive, but full of spirit;—indeed, save that I am somewhat too large for an elfin horseman," (the knight was upwards of six feet high,) "I should remind myself, when I mount him, of the Fairy King, as described by Mike Drayton:—

> 'Himself he on an earwig set,
> Yet scarce upon his back could get,
> So oft and high he did curvet,
> Ere he himself did settle.
> He made him stop, and turn, and bound,
> To gallop, and to trot the round,
> He scarce could stand on any ground,
> He was so full of mettle.'"

"My old friend, Pixie!" said Everard, stroking the pony's neck, "I am glad that he has survived all these bustling days—Pixie must be above twenty years old, Sir Henry?"

"Above twenty years, certainly. Yes, nephew Markham, war is a whirlwind in a plantation, which only spares what is least worth leaving. Old Pixie and his old master have survived many a tall fellow, and many a great horse—neither of them good for much themselves. Yet, as Will says, an old man can do somewhat. So Pixie and I still survive."

So saying, he again contrived that Pixie should show some remnants of activity.

"Still survive?" said the young Scott, completing the sentence which the good knight had left unfinished—"ay, still servive,

> 'To witch the world with noble horsemanship.'"

Everard coloured, for he felt the irony; but not so his uncle, whose simple vanity never permitted him to doubt the sincerity of the compliment.

"Are you advised of that?" he said. "In King James's time, indeed, I have appeared in the tilt-yard, and there you might have said—

> 'You saw young Harry with his beaver up.'

As to seeing *old* Harry, why"——Here the knight paused, and looked as a bashful man in labour of a pun—"As to old Harry—why you might as well see the *devil*. You take me, Master Kerneguy—the devil, you know, is my namesake—ha—ha—ha!—Cousin Everard, I hope your precision is not startled by an innocent jest?"

He was so delighted with the applause of both his companions, that he recited the whole of the celebrated passage referred to, and concluded with defying the present age, bundle all its wits, Donne, Cowley, Waller, and the rest of them together, to produce a poet of a tenth part of the genius of old Will.

"Why, we are said to have one of his descendants among us—Sir William D'Avenant," said Louis Kerneguy; "and many think him as clever a fellow."

"What!" exclaimed Henry—"Will D'Avenant, whom I knew in the North, an officer under Newcastle, when the Marquis lay before Hull?—why, he was an honest cavalier, and wrote good doggerel enough; but how came he akin to Will Shakspeare, I trow?"

"Why," replied the young Scot, "by the same side

of the house, and after the old fashion, if D'Avenant speaks truth. It seems that his mother was a good-looking, laughing, buxom mistress of an inn between Stratford and London, at which Will Shakspeare often quartered as he went down to his native town; and that out of friendship and gossipred, as we say in Scotland, Will Shakspeare became godfather to Will D'Avenant; and not content with this spiritual affinity, the younger Will is for establishing some claim to a natural one, alleging that his mother was a great admirer of wit, and there were no bounds to her complaisance for men of genius."*

"Out upon the hound!" said Colonel Everard; "would he purchase the reputation of descending from poet, or from prince, at the expense of his mother's good fame?—his nose ought to be slit."

"That would be difficult," answered the disguised Prince, recollecting the peculiarity of the bard's countenance.†

"Will D'Avenant the son of Will Shakspeare!" said the knight, who had not yet recovered his surprise at the enormity of the pretension; "why, it reminds me of a verse in the puppetshow of Phaeton, where the hero complains to his mother—

> 'Besides, by all the village boys I'm sham'd;
> You the Sun's son, you rascal, you be d—d!';

I never heard such unblushing assurance in my life!—Will D'Avenant the son of the brightest and best poet that ever was, is, or will be!—But I crave your pardon, nephew—You, I believe, love no stageplays."

"Nay, I am not altogether so precise as you would make me, uncle. I have loved them perhaps too well in my time, and now I condemn them not altogether, or in gross, though I approve not their excesses and extravagances. I cannot, even in Shakspeare, but see many things both scandalous to decency and prejudicial to good manners—many things which tend to ridicule virtue, or to recommend vice,—at least to mitigate the hideousness of its features. I cannot think these fine poems are a useful study, and especially for the youth of either sex, in which bloodshed is pointed out as the chief occupation of the men, and intrigue as the sole employment of the women."

In making these observations, Everard was simple enough to think that he was only giving his uncle an opportunity of defending a favourite opinion, without offending him by a contradiction, which was so limited and mitigated. But here, as on other occasions, he forgot how obstinate his uncle was in his views, whether of religion, policy, or taste, and that it would be as easy to convert him to the Presbyterian form of government, or engage him to take the abjuration oath, as to shake his belief in Shakspeare. There was another peculiarity in the good knight's mode of arguing, which Everard, being himself of a plain and downright character, and one whose religious tenets were in some degree unfavourable to the suppressions and simulations often used in society, could never perfectly understand. Sir Henry, sensible of his natural heat of temper, was wont scrupulously to guard against it, and would for some time, when in fact much offended, conduct a debate with all the external appearance of composure, till the violence of his feelings would rise so high as to overcome and bear away the artificial barriers opposed to it, and rush down upon the adversary with accumulating wrath. It thus frequently happened, that, like a wily old general, he retreated in the face of his disputant in good order and by degrees, with so moderate a degree of resistance, as to draw on his antagonist's pursuit to the spot, where, at length, making a sudden and unexpected attack, with horse, foot, and artillery at once, he seldom failed to confound the enemy, though he might not overthrow him.

It was on this principle, therefore, that Everard's last observation, he disguised his feelings, and answered, with a tone where pe was called in to keep guard upon passion, "T doubtedly the Presbyterian gentry had given, the whole of these unhappy times, such pro humble, unaspiring, and unambitious desire public good, as entitled them to general credi sincerity of those very strong scruples which tertained against works, in which the noble ments of religion and virtue,—sentiments might convert hardened sinners, and be plac propriety in the mouths of dying saints and m happened, from the rudeness and coarse tast times, to be mixed with some broad jests, and matter, which lay not much in the way, e of those who painfully sought such stuff out, t might use it in villifying what was in itself d of the highest applause. But what he wish cially to know from his nephew was, whethe those gifted men who had expelled the learn lars and deep divines of the Church of Engla the pulpit, and now flourished in their stead, any inspiration from the muses, (if he migh profane a term without offence to Colonel E or whether they were not as sottishly and averse from elegant letters, as they were from nity and common sense?"

Colonel Everard might have guessed, by t cal tone in which this speech was delivere storm was mustering within his uncle's bosom he might have conjectured the state of the old feelings from his emphasis on the word Col which epithet, as that which most conne nephew with the party he hated, he never guished Everard, unless when his wrath was while, on the contrary, when disposed to be terms with him, he usually called him Kins Nephew Markham. Indeed, it was under sense that this was the case, and in the ho his cousin Alice, that the Colonel forbore ma answer to the harangue of his uncle, which h cluded just as the old knight had alighted at of the Lodge, and was entering the hall, foll his two attendants.

Phœbe at the same time made her appea the hall, and received orders to bring some rage" for the gentlemen. The Hebe of Wo failed not to recognise and welcome Everar almost imperceptible curtsey; but she did n her interest, as she designed, when she a knight as a question of course, whether manded the attendance of Mistress Alice. *No.* was the decided reply; and the ill-tim ference seemed to increase his previous against Everard for his depreciation of Sha "I would insist,"—said Sir Henry, resuming noxious subject, "were it fit for a poor di cavalier to use such a phrase towards a con of the conquering army,—upon knowing whe convulsion which has sent us saints and without end, has not also afforded us a pe enough both of gifts and grace to outshine Will, the oracle and idol of us blinded an cavaliers?"

"Surely, sir," replied Colonel Everard, " verses written by a friend of the Common we those, too, of a dramatic character, which, in an impartial scale, might equal even the Shakspeare, and which are free from the fus indelicacy with which that great bard wa times content to feed the coarse appetites of barous audience."

"Indeed!" said the knight, keeping down h with difficulty. "I should like to be acquain this masterpiece of poetry!—May we ask th of this distinguished person?"

"It must be Vicars, or Withers, at least," feigned page.

"No, Sir," replied Everard, "nor Drumm Hawthornden, nor Lord Stirling neither. the verses will vindicate what I say, if you wi allowance for indifferent recitation, for I am accustomed to speak to a battalion than to

* This gossiping tale is to be found in the variorum Shakspeare. D'Avenant did not much mind throwing out hints in which he sacrificed his mother's character to his desire of being held a descendant from the admirable Shakspeare.

† D'Avenant actually wanted the nose, the foundation of many a jest of the day.

‡ We observe this couplet in Fielding's farce of *Tumble-down-Dick, founded on the same classical story.* As it was current in *the time of the Commonwealth, it must have reached the author of Tom Jones by tradition—for* no one will suspect the present *author of making the anachronism.*

love the muses. The speaker is a lady benighted, who, having lost her way in a pathless forest, at first expresses herself agitated by the supernatural fears to which her situation gave rise."

"A play, too, and written by a roundhead author!" said Sir Henry in surprise.

"A dramatic production at least," replied his nephew; and began to recite simply, but with feeling, the lines now so well known, but which had then obtained no celebrity, the fame of the author resting upon the basis rather of his polemical and political publications, than on the poetry doomed in after days to support the eternal structure of his immortality.

"'These thoughts may startle, but will not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong-siding champion, Conscience.'"

"My own opinion, nephew Markham, my own opinion," said Sir Henry, with a burst of admiration; "better expressed, but just what I said when the scoundrelly roundheads pretended to see ghosts at Woodstock—Go on, I prithee."

Everard proceeded:—

"'Oh welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That he the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.—
Was I deceived or did a sable cloud,
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?"

"The rest has escaped me," said the reciter; "and I marvel I have been able to remember so much."

Sir Henry Lee, who had expected some effusion very different from those classical and beautiful lines, soon changed the scornful expression of his countenance, relaxed his contorted upper lip, and stroking down his beard with his left hand, rested the forefinger of the right upon his eyebrow, in sign of profound attention. After Everard had ceased speaking, the old man sighed as at the end of a strain of sweet music. He then spoke in a gentler manner than formerly.

"Cousin Markham," he said, "these verses flow sweetly, and sounded in my ears like the well-touched warbling of a lute. But thou knowest I am something slow of apprehending the full meaning of that which I hear for the first time. Repeat me these verses again, slowly and deliberately; for I always love to hear poetry twice, the first time for sound, and the latter time for sense."

Thus encouraged, Everard recited again the lines, with more hardihood and better effect; the knight distinctly understanding, and, from his looks and motions, highly applauding them.

"Yes!" he broke out when Everard was again silent—"Yes I *do* call that poetry—though it were even written by a Presbyterian, or an Anabaptist either. Ay, there were good and righteous people to be found even amongst the offending towns which were destroyed by fire. And certainly I have heard, though with little credence, (begging your pardon, cousin Everard,) that there are men among you who have seen the error of their ways in rebelling against the best and kindest of masters, and bringing it to that pass that he was murdered by a gang yet fiercer than themselves. Ay, doubtless the gentleness of spirit, and the purity of mind, which dictated those beautiful lines, has long ago taught a man so amiable to say, I have sinned, I have sinned. Yes, I doubt not so sweet a harp has been broken, even in remorse, for the crimes he was witness to; and now he sits drooping for the shame and sorrow of England,—all his noble rhymes, as Will says,

'Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh.'

Dost thou not think so, Master Kerneguy?"

"Not I, Sir Henry," answered the page, somewhat maliciously.

"What, dost not believe the author of these lines must needs be of the better file, and leaning to our *persuasion?*"

"*I think, Sir Henry,* that the poetry qualifies the author to write a play on the subject of Dame Potiphar and her recusant lover; and as for his calling—that last metaphor of the cloud in a black coat or cloak, with silver lining, would have dubbed him a tailor with me, only that I happened to know that he is a schoolmaster by profession, and by political opinions qualified to be Poet Laureate to Cromwell; for what Colonel Everard has repeated with such unction, is the production of no less celebrated a person than John Milton."

"John Milton!" exclaimed Sir Henry in astonishment—"What! John Milton the blasphemous and bloody-minded author of the *Defensio Populi Anglicani!*—the advocate of the infernal High Court of Fiends!—the creature and parasite of that grand impostor, that loathsome hypocrite, that detestable monster, that prodigy of the universe, that disgrace of mankind, that landscape of iniquity, that sink of sin, and that compendium of baseness, Oliver Cromwell!"

"Even the same John Milton," answered Charles; "schoolmaster to little boys, and tailor to the clouds, which he furnishes with suits of black, lined with silver, at no other expense than that of common sense."

"Markham Everard," said the old knight, "I will never forgive thee—never, never. Thou hast made me speak words of praise respecting one whose offal should fatten the region-kites—Speak not to me, sir, but begone! Am I, your kinsman and benefactor, a fit person to be juggled out of my commendation and eulogy, and brought to bedaub such a whitened sepulchre as the sophist Milton?"

"I profess," said Everard, "this is hard measure, Sir Henry. You pressed me—you defied me, to produce poetry as good as Shakspeare's. I only thought of the verses, not of the politics of Milton."

"O yes sir," replied Sir Henry, "we well know your power of making distinctions; you could make war against the King's prerogative, without having the least design against his person. Oh Heaven forbid! But Heaven will hear and judge you.—Set down the beverage, Phœbe"—(this was added by way of parenthesis to Phœbe, who entered with refreshment)—"Colonel Everard is not thirsty.—You have wiped your mouths, and said you have done no evil. But though you have deceived man, yet God you cannot deceive. And you shall wipe no lips in Woodstock, either after meat or drink, I promise you."

Charged thus at once with the faults imputed to his whole religious sect and political party, Everard felt too late of what imprudence he had been guilty in giving the opening by disputing his uncle's taste in dramatic poetry. He endeavoured to explain—to apologize.

"I mistook your purpose, honoured sir, and thought you really desired to know something of our literature; and in repeating what you deemed not unworthy your hearing, I profess I thought I was doing you pleasure, instead of stirring your indignation."

"O ay!" returned the knight with unmitigated rigour of resentment—"profess—profess—Ay, that is the new phrase of asseveration, instead of the profane adjuration of courtiers and cavaliers—Oh, sir, *profess* less and *practise* more—and so good-day to you.—Master Kerneguy, you will find beverage in my apartment."

While Phœbe stood gaping in admiration at the sudden quarrel which had arisen, Colonel Everard's vexation and resentment was not a little increased by the nonchalance of the young Scotsman, who, with his hands thrust into his pockets, (with a courtly affectation of the time,) had thrown himself into one of the antique chairs, and, though habitually too polite to laugh aloud, and possessing that art of internal laughter, by which men of the world learn to indulge their mirth without incurring quarrels, or giving direct offence, was at no particular trouble to conceal that he was exceedingly amused by the result of the Colonel's visit to Woodstock. Colonel Everard's patience, however, had reached bounds which it was very likely to surpass; for, though differing widely in politics, there was a resemblance betwixt the temper of the uncle and nephew.

"Damnation!" exclaimed the Colonel, in a tone which became a puritan as little as did the exclamation itself.

"Amen!" said Louis Kerneguy, but in a tone so soft and gentle, that the ejaculation seemed rather to escape him than to be designedly uttered.

"Sir!" said Everard, striding towards him in that sort of humour, when a man, full of resentment, would not unwillingly find an object on which to discharge it.

"*Plait il?*" said the page, in the most equable tone, looking up in his face with the most unconscious innocence.

"I wish to know, sir," retorted Everard, "the meaning of that which you said just now?"

"Only a pouring out of the spirit, worthy sir," returned Kerneguy—"a small skiff despatched to Heaven on my own account, to keep company with your holy petition just now expressed."

"Sir, I have known a merry gentleman's bones broke for such a smile as you wear just now," replied Everard.

"There, look you now!" answered the malicious page, who could not weigh even the thoughts of his safety against the enjoyment of his jest—"If you had stuck to your *professions*, worthy sir, you must have choked by this time; but your round execration bolted like a cork from a bottle of cider, and now allows your wrath to come foaming out after it, in the honest unbaptized language of common ruffians."

"For Heaven's sake, Master Girnegy," said Phœbe, "forbear giving the Colonel these bitter words! And do you, good Colonel Markham, scorn to take offence at his hands—he is but a boy."

"If the Colonel or you choose, Mistress Phœbe, you shall find me a man—I think the gentleman can say something to the purpose already.—Probably he may recommend to you the part of the Lady in Comus; and I only hope his own admiration of John Milton will not induce him to undertake the part of Samson Agonistes, and blow up this old house with execrations, or pull it down in wrath about our ears."

"Young man," said the Colonel, still in towering passion, "if you respect my principles for nothing else, be grateful for the protection which, but for them, you would not easily attain."

"Nay, then," said the attendant, "I must fetch those who have more influence with you than I have," and away tripped Phœbe; while Kerneguy answered Everard in the same provoking tone of calm indifference,—

"Before you menace me with a thing so formidable as your resentment, you ought to be certain whether I may not be compelled by circumstances to deny you the opportunity you seem to point at."

At this moment Alice, summoned no doubt by her attendant, entered the hall hastily.

"Master Kerneguy," she said, "my father requests to see you in Victor Lee's apartment."

Kerneguy arose and bowed, but seemed determined to remain till Everard's departure, so as to prevent any explanation betwixt the cousins.

"Markham," said Alice, hurriedly—"Cousin Everard—I have but a moment to remain here—for God's sake, do you instantly begone!—be cautious and patient—but do not tarry here—my father is fearfully incensed."

"I have had my uncle's word for that, madam," replied Everard, "as well as his injunction to depart, which I will obey without delay. I was not aware that you would have seconded so harsh an order quite so willingly; but I go, madam, sensible I leave those behind whose company is more agreeable."

"Unjust—ungenerous—ungrateful!" said Alice; but 'fearful her words might reach ears for which they were not designed, she spoke them in a voice so feeble, that her cousin, for whom they were intended, lost the consolation they were calculated to convey.

He bowed coldly to Alice, as taking leave, and said *with an air of that constrained* courtesy which sometimes covers among men of condition, the most deadly hatred, "*I believe*, Master Kerneguy, that I must make it convenient at present to suppress my own peculiar opinions on the matter which we have hinted at in our conversation, in which case I will send a gentleman, who, I hope, may be able to conquer yours."

The supposed Scotsman made him a stately, and at the same time a condescending bow, said he should expect the honour of his commands, offered his hand to Mistress Alice, to conduct her back to her father's apartment, and took a triumphant leave of his rival.

Everard, on the other hand, stung beyond his patience, and, from the grace and composed assurance of the youth's carriage, still conceiving him to be either Wilmot, or some of his compeers in rank and profligacy, returned to the town of Woodstock, determined not to be outboarded, even though he should seek redress by means which his principles forbade him to consider as justifiable.

CHAPTER XXVI.

——Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny—it hath been
The untimely emptying of many a throne,
And fall of many kings.——*Macbeth.*

WHILE Colonel Everard retreated in high indignation from the little refection, which Sir Henry Lee had in his good-humour offered, and withdrawn under the circumstances of provocation which we have detailed, the good old knight, scarce recovered from his fit of passion, partook of it with his daughter and guest, and shortly after, recollecting some silvan task, (for, though to little efficient purpose, he still regularly attended to his duties as Ranger,) he called Bevis, and went out, leaving the two young people together.

"Now," said the amorous Prince to himself, "that Alice is left without her lion, it remains to see whether she is herself of a tigress breed.—So, Sir Bevis has left his charge," he said aloud; "I thought the knights of old, those stern guardians of which he is so fit a representative, were more rigorous in maintaining a vigilant guard."

"Bevis," said Alice, "knows that his attendance on me is totally needless; and, moreover, he has other duties to perform, which every true knight prefers to dangling the whole morning by a lady's sleeve."

"You speak treason against all true affection," said the gallant; "a lady's lightest wish should to a true knight be more binding than aught excepting the summons of his sovereign. I wish, Mistress Alice, you would but intimate your slightest desire to me, and you should see how I have practised obedience."

"You never brought me word what o'clock it was this morning," replied the young lady, "and there I sat questioning of the wings of Time, when I should have remembered that gentlemen's gallantry can be quite as fugitive as Time himself. How do you know what your disobedience may have cost me and others? Pudding and pasty may have been burned to a cinder, for, sir, I practise the old domestic rule of visiting the kitchen; or I may have missed prayers, or I may have been too late for an appointment, simply by the negligence of Master Louis Kerneguy failing to let me know the hour of the day."

"O," replied Kerneguy, "I am one of those lovers who cannot endure absence—I must be eternally at the feet of my fair enemy—such, I think, is the title with which romances teach us to grace the fair and cruel to whom we devote our hearts and lives.—Speak for me, good lute," he added, taking up the instrument, "and show whether I know not my duty."

He sung, but with more taste than execution, the air of a French rondelai, to which some of the wits or sonnetteers, in his gay and roving train, had adapted English verses.

An hour with thee!—When earliest day
Dapples with gold the eastern gray,
Oh, what can frame my mind to bear
The toil and turmoil, cark and care,
New griefs which coming hours unfold,
And sad remembrance of the old?
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When burning June
Waves his red flag at pitch of noon;
What shall repay the faithful swain,
His labour on the sultry plain;
And more than cave or sheltering bough,
Cool feverish blood, and throbbing brow?—
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When sun is set,
O, what can teach me to forget
The thankless labours of the day;
The hopes, the wishes, flung away;
The increasing wants, and lessening gains,
The master's pride, who scorns my pains?
One hour with thee.

ruly, there is another verse," said the songster; I sing it not to you, Mistress Alice, because of the prudes of the court liked it not."

thank you, Master Louis," answered the young "both for your discretion in singing what has me pleasure, and in forbearing what might offend Though a country girl, I pretend to be so far of the mode, as to receive nothing which does not pass it among the better class there."

would," answered Louis, "that you were so confirmed in their creed, as to let all pass with o which court ladies would give currency."

nd what would be the consequence?" said Alice, perfect composure.

n that case," said Louis, embarrassed like a al who finds that his preparations for attack do eem to strike either fear or confusion into the y—"in that case you would forgive me, fair if I spoke to you in a warmer language than of mere gallantry—if I told you how much my was interested in what you consider as idle g—if I seriously owned it was in your power to me the happiest or the most miserable of human s."

faster Kerneguy," said Alice, with the same un- n nonchalance, "let us understand each other. little acquainted with high-bred manners, and I willing, I tell you plainly, to be accounted a silly ry girl, who, either from ignorance or conceit, is ed at every word of gallantry addressed to her young man, who, for the present, has nothing to do than coin and circulate such false compli- s. But I must not let this fear of seeming rustic wkwardly timorous carry me too far; and being ant of the exact limits, I will take care to stop n them."

trust, madam," said Kerneguy, "that however ely you may be disposed to judge of me, your e will not punish me too severely for an offence, hich your charms are alone the occasion?"

fear me out, sir, if you please," resumed Alice. ve listened to you when you spoke *en berger*— ny complaisance has been so great, as to answer *n bergère*—for I do not think any thing except de can come of dialogues between Lindor and neton; and the principal fault of the style is its me and tiresome silliness and affectation. But you begin to kneel, offer to take my hand, and with a more serious tone, I must remind you of eal characters. I am the daughter of Sir Henry sir; and you are, or profess to be, Master Louis eguy, my brother's page, and a fugitive for shelter r my father's roof, who incurs danger by the our he affords you, and whose household, there- ought not to be disturbed by your unpleasing rtunities."

would to Heaven, fair Alice," said the King, t your objections to the suit which I am urging, n jest, but most seriously, as that on which my iness depends, rested only on the low and pre- us station of Louis Kerneguy!—Alice, thou hast oul of thy family, and must needs love honour. no more the needy Scottish page, whom I have, ny own purposes, personated, than I am the ward lout, whose manners I adopted on the first of our acquaintance. This hand, poor as I seem, confer a coronet."

Keep it," said Alice, "for some more ambitious sel, my lord,—for such I conclude is your title, if romance be true,—I would not accept your hand, I you *confer a duchy*."

n one sense, lovely Alice, you have neither over- rated my power nor my affection. It is your King—it is Charles Stewart who speaks to you!—he can confer duchies, and if beauty can merit them, it is that of Alice Lee. Nay, nay—rise—do not kneel—it is for your sovereign to kneel to thee, Alice, to whom he is a thousand times more devoted, than the wanderer Louis dared venture to profess himself. My Alice has, I know, been trained up in those principles of love and obedience to her sovereign, that she cannot in conscience or in mercy, inflict on him such a wound as would be implied in the rejection of his suit."

In spite of all Charles's attempts to prevent her, Alice had persevered in kneeling on one knee, until she had touched with her lip the hand with which he attempted to raise her. But this salutation ended, she stood upright, with her arms folded on her bosom—her looks humble, but composed, keen and watchful, and so possessed of herself, so little flattered by the communication which the King had supposed would have been overpowering, that he scarce knew in what terms next to urge his solicitation.

"Thou art silent—thou art silent," he said, "my pretty Alice. Has the King no more influence with thee than the poor Scottish page?"

"In one sense, every influence," said Alice; "for he commands my best thoughts, my best wishes, my earnest prayers, my devoted loyalty, which, as the men of the House of Lee have been ever ready to testify with the sword, so are the women bound to seal, if necessary, with their blood. But beyond the duties of a true and devoted subject, the King is even less to Alice Lee than poor Louis Kerneguy. The Page could have tendered an honourable union—the Monarch can but offer a contaminated coronet."

"You mistake, Alice,—you mistake," said the King, eagerly. "Sit down and let me speak to you—sit down—What is't you fear?"

"I fear nothing, my liege," answered Alice. "What *can* I fear from the King of Britain—I, the daughter of his loyal subject, and under my father's roof? But I remember the distance betwixt us, and though I might trifle and jest with mine equal, to my King I must only appear in the dutiful posture of a subject, unless where his safety may seem to require that I do not acknowledge his dignity."

Charles, though young, being no novice in such scenes, was surprised to encounter resistance of a kind which had not been opposed to him in similar pursuits, even in cases where he had been unsuccessful. There was neither anger, nor injured pride, nor disorder, nor disdain, real or affected, in the manners and conduct of Alice. She stood, as it seemed, clearly prepared to argue on the subject, which is generally decided by passion—showed no inclination to escape from the apartment, but appeared determined to hear with patience the suit of the lover—while her countenance and manner intimated that she had this complaisance, only in deference to the commands of the King.

"She is ambitious," thought Charles; "it is by dazzling her love of glory, not by mere passionate entreaties, that I must hope to be successful.—I pray you be seated, my fair Alice," he said, "the lover entreats—the King commands you."

"The King," said Alice, "may permit the relaxation of the ceremonies due to royalty, but he cannot abrogate the subject's duty, even by express command. I stand here while it is your Majesty's pleasure to address me—a patient listener, as in duty bound."

"Know then, simple girl," said the King, "that in accepting my proffered affection and protection, you break through no law, either of virtue or morality. Those who are born to royalty are deprived of many of the comforts of private life—chiefly that which is, perhaps, the dearest and most precious, the power of choosing their own mates for life. Their formal weddings are guided upon principles of political expedience only, and those to whom they are wedded are frequently, in temper, person, and disposition, the most unlikely to make them happy. Society has commiseration, therefore, towards us, and binds our unwilling and often unhappy wedlocks with chains

of a lighter and more easy character than those which fetter other men, whose marriage ties, as more voluntarily assumed, ought, in proportion, to be more strictly binding. And therefore, ever since the time that old Henry built these walls, priests and prelates, as well as nobles and statesmen, have been accustomed to see a fair Rosamond rule the heart of an affectionate monarch, and console him for the few hours of constraint and state which he must bestow upon some angry and jealous Eleanor. To such a connexion the world attaches no blame; they rush to the festival to admire the beauty of the lovely Esther, while the imperious Vashti is left to queen it in solitude; they throng the palace to ask her protection, whose influence is more in the state a hundred times than that of the proud consort; her offspring rank with the nobles of the land, and vindicate by their courage, like the celebrated Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, their descent from royalty and from love. From such connexions our richest ranks of nobles are recruited; and the mother lives in the greatness of her posterity, honoured and blessed, as she died lamented and wept in the arms of love and friendship."

"Did Rosamond so die, my lord?" said Alice. "Our records say she was poisoned by the injured Queen—poisoned, without time allowed to call to God for the pardon of her many faults. Did her memory so live? I have heard that, when the Bishop purified the church at Godstowe, her monument was broken open by his orders, and her bones thrown out into unconsecrated ground."

"Those were rude old days, sweet Alice," answered Charles; "queens are not now so jealous, nor bishops so rigorous. And know, besides, that, in the lands to which I would lead the loveliest of her sex, other laws obtain, which remove from such ties even the the slightest show of scandal. There is a mode of matrimony, which, fulfilling all the rites of the church, leaves no stain on the conscience; yet investing the bride with none of the privileges peculiar to her husband's condition, infringes not upon the duties which the King owes to his subjects. So that Alice Lee may, in all respects, become the real and lawful wife of Charles Stewart, except that their private union gives her no title to be Queen of England."

"My ambition," said Alice, "will be sufficiently gratified to see Charles king, without aiming to share either his dignity in public, or his wealth and regal luxury in private."

"I understand thee, Alice," said the King, hurt but not displeased. You ridicule me, being a fugitive, for speaking like a king. It is a habit, I admit, which I have learned, and of which even misfortune cannot cure me. But my case is not so desperate as you may suppose. My friends are still many in these kingdoms; my allies abroad are bound, by regard to their own interest, to espouse my cause. I have hopes given me from Spain, from France, and from other nations; and I have confidence that my father's blood has not been poured forth in vain, nor is doomed to dry up without due vengeance. My trust is in Him from whom princes derive their title, and, think what thou wilt of my present condition, I have perfect confidence that I shall one day sit on the throne of England."

"May God grant it!" said Alice; "and that he *may* grant it, noble Prince, deign to consider whether you now pursue a conduct likely to conciliate his favour. Think of the course you recommend to a motherless maiden, who has no better defence against your sophistry, than what a sense of morality, together with the natural feeling of female dignity, inspires. Whether the death of her father, which would be the consequence of her imprudence;—whether the despair of her brother, whose life has been so often in peril to save that of your Majesty;—whether the dishonour of the roof which has sheltered you, will read well in your annals, or are events likely to propitiate God, whose controversy with your House has *been but too visible, or recover the affections of the people of England, in whose eyes such actions are an abomination, I leave to* your own royal mind to consider."

Charles paused, struck with a turn to the conversation which placed his own interests more in collision with the gratification of his present passion than he had supposed.

"If your Majesty," said Alice, curtseying deeply, "has no farther commands for my attendance, may I be permitted to withdraw?"

"Stay yet a little, strange and impracticable girl," said the King, "and answer me but one question:—Is it the lowness of my present fortunes that makes my suit contemptible?"

"I have nothing to conceal, my liege," she said, "and my answer shall be as plain and direct as the question you have asked. If I could have been moved to an act of ignominious, insane, and ungrateful folly, it could only arise from my being blinded by that passion, which I believe is pleaded as an excuse for folly and for crime much more often than it has a real existence. I must, in short, have been in love, as it is called—and that might have been with my equal—but surely never with my sovereign, whether such only in title, or in possession of his kingdom."

"Yet loyalty was ever the pride, almost the ruling passion, of your family, Alice," said the King.

"And could I reconcile that loyalty," said Alice, "with indulging my sovereign, by permitting him to prosecute a suit dishonourable to himself as to me? Ought I, as a faithful subject, to join him in a folly, which might throw yet another stumbling-block in the path to his restoration, and could only serve to diminish his security, even if he were seated upon his throne."

"At this rate," said Charles, discontentedly, "I had better have retained my character of the page, than assumed that of a sovereign, which it seems is still more irreconcilable with my wishes."

"My candour shall go still farther," said Alice. "I could have felt as little for Louis Kerneguy as for the heir of Britain; for such love as I have to bestow, (and it is not such as I read of in romance, or hear poured forth in song,) has been already conferred on another object. This gives your Majesty pain—I am sorry for it—but the wholesomest medicines are often bitter."

"Yes," answered the King, with some asperity, "and physicians are reasonable enough to expect their patients to swallow them, as if they were honeycomb.—It is true, then, that whispered tale of the cousin Colonel; and the daughter of the loyal Lee has set her heart upon a rebellious fanatic?"

"My love was given ere I knew what these words fanatic and rebel meant. I recalled it not, for I am satisfied, that amidst the great distractions which divide the kingdom, the person to whom you allude has chosen his part, erroneously perhaps, but conscientiously—he, therefore, has still the highest place in my affection and esteem. More he cannot have, and will not ask, until some happy turn shall reconcile these public differences, and my father be once more reconciled to him. Devoutly do I pray that such an event may occur, by your Majesty's speedy and unanimous restoration!"

"You have found out a reason," said the King, pettishly, "to make me detest the thought of such a change—nor have you, Alice, any sincere interest to pray for it. On the contrary, do you not see that your lover, walking side by side with Cromwell, may, or rather must, share his power? nay, if Lambert does not anticipate him, he may trip up Oliver's heels, and reign in his stead. And think you not he will find means to overcome the pride of the loyal Lees, and achieve a union, for which things are better prepared than that which Cromwell is said to meditate betwixt one of his brats and the no less loyal heir of Fauconberg?"

"Your Majesty," said Alice, "has found a way at length to avenge yourself—if what I have said deserves vengeance."

"I could point out a yet shorter road to your union," said Charles, without minding her distress, or perhaps enjoying the pleasure of retaliation. "Suppose that you sent your Colonel word that there was one Charles Stewart here, who had come to disturb the Saints in their peaceful government, which they had

acquired by prayer and preaching, pike and gun—and suppose he had the art to bring down a half-score of troopers, quite enough, as times go, to decide the fate of this heir of royalty—think you not the possession of such a prize as this might obtain from the Rumpers, or from Cromwell, such a reward as might overcome your father's objections to a roundhead's alliance, and place the fair Alice and her cousin Colonel in full possession of their wishes?"

"My liege," said Alice, her cheeks glowing, and her eyes sparkling—for she too had her share of the hereditary temperament of her family,—"this passes my patience. I have heard, without expressing anger, the most ignominious persuasions addressed to myself, and I have vindicated myself for refusing to be the paramour of a fugitive Prince, as if I had been excusing myself from accepting a share of an actual crown—But do you think I can hear all who are dear to me slandered without emotion or reply? I will not, sir; and were you seated with all the terrors of your father's Star-chamber around you, you should hear me defend the absent and the innocent. Of my father I will say nothing, but that if he is now without wealth—without state, almost without a sheltering home and needful food—it is because he spent all in the service of the King. He needed not to commit any act of treachery or villany to obtain wealth—he had an ample competence in his own possessions. For Markham Everard he knows no such thing as selfishness—he would not, for broad England, had she the treasures of Peru in her bosom, and a paradise on her surface, do a deed that would disgrace his own name, or injure the feelings of another—Kings, my liege, may take a lesson from him. My liege, for the present I take my leave."

"Alice, Alice—stay," exclaimed the King. "She is gone.—This must be virtue—real, disinterested, overawing virtue—or there is no such thing on earth. Yet Wilmot and Villiers will not believe a word of it, but add the tale to the other wonders of Woodstock. —'Tis a rare wench! and I profess, to use the Colonel's obtestation, that I know not whether to forgive and be friends with her, or study a dire revenge. If it were not for that accursed cousin—that puritan Colonel—I could forgive every thing else to so noble a wench. But a roundheaded rebel preferred to me —the preference avowed to my face, and justified with the assertion, that a King might take a lesson from him—it is gall and wormwood. If the old man had not come up this morning as he did, the King should have taken or given a lesson, and a severe one. It was a mad rencontre to venture upon with my rank and responsibility—and yet this wench has made me so angry with her, and so envious of him, that if an opportunity offered, I should scarce be able to forbear him.—Ha! whom have we here?"

The interjection at the conclusion of this royal soliloquy, was occasioned by the unexpected entrance of another personage of the drama.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Benedick. Shall I speak a word in your ear?
Claudio. God bless me from a challenge!
Much Ado About Nothing.

As Charles was about to leave the apartment, he was prevented by the appearance of Wildrake, who entered with an unusual degree of swagger in his gait, and of fantastic importance on his brow. "I crave your pardon, fair sir," he said; "but, as they say in my country, when doors are open dogs enter. I have knocked and called in the hall to no purpose; so, knowing the way to this parlour, sir, —for I am a light partisan, and the road I once travel I never forget,—I ventured to present myself unannounced."

"Sir Henry Lee is abroad, sir, I believe, in the Chase," said Charles, coldly, for the appearance of this somewhat vulgar debauchee was not agreeable to him at that moment, "and Master Albert Lee has left the Lodge for two or three days."

"I am aware of it, sir," said Wildrake; "but I have *no business at present with either.*"

"And with whom is your business?" said Charles; "that is, if I may be permitted to ask—since I think it cannot in possibility be with me."

"Pardon me in turn, sir," answered the cavalier; "in no possibility can it be imparted to any other but yourself, if you be, as I think you are, though in something better habit, Master Louis Girnigo, the Scottish gentleman who waits upon Master Albert Lee."

"I am all you are like to find of him," answered Charles.

"In truth," said the cavalier, "I do perceive a difference, but rest and better clothing will do much; and I am glad of it, since I would be sorry to have brought a message, such as I am charged with, to a tatterdemalion."

"Let us get to the business, sir, if you please," said the King—"you have a message for me, you say?"

"True, sir," replied Wildrake; "I am the friend of Colonel Markham Everard, sir, a tall man, and a worthy person in the field, although I could wish him a better cause—A message I have to you, it is certain, in a slight note, which I take the liberty of presenting with the usual formalities." So saying, he drew his sword, put the billet he mentioned upon the point, and, making a profound bow, presented it to Charles.

The disguised Monarch accepted of it, with a grave return of the salute, and said, as he was about to open the letter, "I am not, I presume, to expect friendly contents in an epistle presented in so hostile a manner?"

'A-hem, sir," replied the ambassador, clearing his voice, while he arranged a suitable answer, in which the mild strain of diplomacy might be properly maintained; "not utterly hostile, I suppose, sir, is the invitation, though it be such as must be construed in the commencement rather bellicose and pugnacious. I trust, sir, we shall find that a few thrusts will make a handsome conclusion of the business; and so, as my old master used to say, *Pax nascitur ex bello.* For my own poor share, I am truly glad to have been graced by my friend Markham Everard in this matter—the rather as I feared the puritan principles with which he is imbued, (I will confess the truth to you, worthy sir,) might have rendered him unwilling, from certain scruples, to have taken the gentlemanlike and honourable mode of righting himself in such a case as the present. And as I render a friend's duty to my friend, so I humbly hope, Master Louis Girnigo, that I do no injustice to you, in preparing the way for the proposed meeting, where, give me leave to say, I trust, that if no fatal accident occur, we shall be all better friends when the skirmish is over than we were before it began."

"I should suppose so, sir, in any case," said Charles, looking at the letter; "worse than mortal enemies we can scarce be, and it is that footing upon which this billet places us."

"You say true, sir," said Wildrake; "it is, sir, a cartel, introducing to a single combat, for the pacific object of restoring a perfect good understanding betwixt the survivors—in case that fortunately that word can be used in the plural after the event of the meeting."

"In short, we only fight, I suppose," replied the King, "that we may come to a perfectly good and amicable understanding?"

"You are right again, sir; and I thank you for the clearness of your apprehension," said Wildrake.—"Ah, sir, it is easy to do with a person of honour and of intellect in such a case as this. And I beseech you, sir, as a personal kindness to myself, that, as the morning is like to be frosty, and myself am in some sort rheumatic—as war will leave its scars behind sir, I say, I will entreat of you to bring with you some gentleman of honour, who will not disdain to take part of what is going forward—a sort of pot-luck, sir —with a poor old soldier like myself—that we may take no harm by standing unoccupied during such cold weather."

"I understand, sir," replied Charles; "if this matter goes forward, be assured I will endeavour to provide you with a suitable opponent."

"I shall remain greatly indebted to you, sir," said Wildrake; "and I am by no means curious about the quality of my antagonist.—It is true I write myself esquire and gentleman, and should count myself especially honoured by crossing my sword with that of Sir Henry or Master Albert Lee; but, should that not be convenient, I will not refuse to present my poor person in opposition to any gentleman who has served the King, which I always hold as a sort of letters of nobility in itself, and, therefore, would on no account decline the duello with such a person."

"The King is much obliged to you, sir," said the disguised Prince, "for the honour you do his faithful subjects."

"O, sir, I am scrupulous on that point—very scrupulous.—When there is a roundhead in question, I consult the Herald's books, to see that he is entitled to bear arms, as is Master Markham Everard, without which, I promise you, I had borne none of his cartel. But a cavalier is with me a gentleman, of course—Be his birth ever so low, his loyalty has ennobled his condition."

"It is well, sir," said the King. "This paper requests me to meet Master Everard at six to-morrow morning, at the tree called the King's Oak.—I object neither to place nor time. He proffers the sword, at which, he says, we possess some equality—I do not decline the weapon; for company, two gentlemen—I shall endeavour to procure myself an associate, and a suitable partner for you, sir, if you incline to join in the dance."

"I kiss your hand, sir, and rest yours, under a sense of obligation," answered the envoy.

"I thank you, sir," continued the King; "I will therefore be ready at place and time, and suitably furnished; and I will either give your friend such satisfaction with my sword as he requires, or will render him such cause for not doing so as he will be contented with."

"You will excuse me, sir," said Wildrake, "if my mind is too dull, under the circumstances, to conceive any alternative that can remain betwixt two men of honour in such a case, excepting—sa—sa—!" He threw himself into a fencing position, and made a pass with his sheathed rapier, but not directed towards the person of the King, whom he addressed.

"Excuse me, sir," said Charles, "if I do not trouble your intellects with the consideration of a case which may not occur.—But, for example, I may plead urgent employment on the part of the public."—This he spoke in a low and mysterious tone of voice, which Wildrake appeared perfectly to comprehend; for he laid his fore-finger on his nose with what he meant for a very intelligent and apprehensive nod.

"Sir," said he, "if you be engaged in any affair for the King, my friend shall have every reasonable degree of patience—Nay, I will fight him myself in your stead, merely to stay his stomach, rather than you should be interrupted.—And, sir, if you can find room in your enterprise for a poor gentleman that has followed Lunsford and Goring, you have but to name day, time and place of rendezvous; for truly, sir, I am tired of the scald hat, cropped hair, and undertaker's cloak, with which my friend has bedizened me, and would willingly ruffle it out once more in the King's cause, when whether I be hanged or hanged, I care not."

"I shall remember what you say, sir, should an opportunity occur," said the King; "and I wish his Majesty had many such subjects.—I presume our business is now settled?"

"When you shall have been pleased, sir, to give me a trifling scrap of writing, to serve for my credentials—for such, you know, is the custom—your written cartel hath its written answer."

"That, sir, will I presently do," said Charles, "and in good time—here are the materials."

"And, sir" continued the envoy—"Ahi!—ahem!—if you have interest in the household for a cup of sack—I am a man of few words, and am somewhat hoarse *with much speaking—moreover, a serious business of this kind always makes one* thirsty.—Besides, sir, to *part with dry lips argues* malice, which God forbid *should exist in such an honourable conjuncture.*"

"I do not boast much influence in the house, sir, said the King; "but if you would have the condescension to accept of this broad piece towards quenching your thirst at the George"——

"Sir," said the cavalier, (for the times admitted of this strange species of courtesy, nor was Wildrake a man of such peculiar delicacy as keenly to dispute the matter,)—"I am once again beholden to you. But I see not how it consists with my honour to accept of such accommodation, unless you were to accompany and partake?"

"Pardon me, sir," replied Charles, "my safety recommends that I remain rather private at present."

"Enough said," Wildrake observed; "poor cavaliers must not stand on ceremony. I see, sir, you understand cutter's law—when one tall fellow has coin, another must not be thirsty. I wish you, sir, a continuance of health and happiness until to-morrow, at the King's Oak, at six o'clock."

"Farewell, sir," said the King, and added, as Wildrake went down the stair whistling, "Hey for cavaliers," to which air his long rapier, jarring against the steps and banisters, bore no unsuitable burden—"Farewell, thou too just emblem of the state, to which war, and defeat, and despair, have reduced many a gallant gentleman."

During the rest of the day, there occurred nothing peculiarly deserving of notice. Alice sedulously avoided showing towards the disguised Prince any degree of estrangement or shyness, which could be discovered by her father, or by any one else. To all appearance, the two young persons continued on the same footing in every respect. Yet she made the gallant himself sensible, that this apparent intimacy was assumed merely to save appearances, and in no way designed as retracting from the severity with which she had rejected his suit. The sense that this was the case, joined to his injured self-love, and his enmity against a successful rival, induced Charles early to withdraw himself to a solitary walk in the wilderness, where, like Hercules in the Emblem of Cebes, divided betwixt the personifications of Virtue and of Pleasure, he listened alternately to the voice of Wisdom and of passionate Folly.

Prudence urged to him the importance of his own life to the future prosecution of the great object in which he had for the present miscarried—the restoration of monarchy in England, the rebuilding of the throne, the regaining the crown of his father, the avenging his death, and restoring to their fortunes and their country the numerous exiles, who were suffering poverty and banishment on account of their attachment to his cause. Pride too, or rather a just and natural sense of dignity, displayed the unworthiness of a Prince descending to actual personal conflict with a subject of any degree, and the ridicule which would be thrown on his memory, should he lose his life for an obscure intrigue by the hand of a private gentleman. What would his sage counsellors, Nicholas and Hyde—what would his kind and wise governor, the Marquis of Hertford, say to such an act of rashness and folly? Would it not be likely to shake the allegiance of the staid and prudent persons of the royalist party, since wherefore should they expose their lives and estates to raise to the government of a kingdom a young man who could not command his own temper? To this was to be added, the consideration that even his success would add double difficulties to his escape, which already seemed sufficiently precarious. If, stopping short of death, he merely had the better of his antagonist, how did he know that he might not seek revenge by delivering up to government the Malignant Louis Kerneguy, whose real character could not in that case fail to be discovered?

These considerations strongly recommended to Charles that he should clear himself of the challenge without fighting; and the reservation under which he had accepted it, afforded him some opportunity of doing so.

But Passion also had her arguments, which she addressed to a temper rendered irritable by recent distress and mortification. In the first place, if he was a prince, he was also a gentleman, entitled to resent

h, and obliged to give or claim the satisfaction
ed on occasion of differences among gentlemen.
Englishmen, she urged, he could never lose in-
by showing himself ready, instead of sheltering
lf under his royal birth and pretensions, to come
y forward, and maintain what he had done or
n his own responsibility. In a free nation, it
d as if he would rather gain than lose in the
estimation by a conduct which could not but
gallant and generous. Then a character for
te was far more necessary to support his pre-
ns, than any other kind of reputation; and the
nder a challenge, without replying to it, might
his spirit into question. What would Villiers
Vilmot say of an intrigue, in which he had
d himself to be shamefully baffled by a country
nd had failed to revenge himself on his rival?
asquinades which they would compose, the
sarcasms which they would circulate on the
on, would be harder to endure than the grave
s of Hertford, Hyde, and Nicholas. This re-
n, added to the stings of youthful and awakened
e, at length fixed his resolution, and he returned
odstock determined to keep his appointment,
of it what might.
aps there mingled with his resolution a secret
that such a rencontre would not prove fatal.
as in the flower of his youth, active in all his
ses, and no way inferior to Colonel Everard, as
the morning's experiment had gone, in that of
fence. At least such recollection might pass
gh his royal mind, as he hummed to himself a
nown ditty, which he had picked up during his
ace in Scotland—

"A man may drink and not be drunk;
A man may fight and not be slain;
A man may kiss a bonnie lass,
Ard yet be welcome back again."

n while the busy and all-directing Doctor Ro-
fe had contrived to intimate to Alice that she
give him a private audience, and she found him
ointment in what was called the study, once
with ancient books, which, long since converted
artridges, had made more noise in the world at
inal exit, than during the space which had in-
ed betwixt that and their first publication. The
r seated himself in a high-backed leathern easy-
and signed to Alice to fetch a stool and sit down
him.
ice," said the old man, taking her hand affec-
ly, "thou art a good girl, a wise girl, a virtuous
ie of those whose price is above rubies—not that
is the proper translation—but remind me to
u of that another time—Alice, thou knowest
his Lewis Kerneguy is—nay, hesitate not to
know every thing—I am well aware of the
matter.—Thou knowest this honoured house
the Fortunes of England." Alice was about to
r.—"Nay, speak not, but listen to me,—How
e bear himself towards you?"
e coloured with the deepest crimson.—"I am a
y-bred girl," she said, "and his manners are
urtlike for me."
ough said—I know it all.—Alice, he is exposed
reat danger to-morrow, and you must be the
means to prevent him."
prevent him!—how, and in what manner?"
lice, in surprise.—"It is my duty, as a subject,
any thing—any thing that may become my
s daughter"——
e she stopped, considerably embarrassed.
s," continued the Doctor, "to-morrow he hath
an appointment—an appointment with Mark-
Everard; the hour and place are set—six in the
ng, by the King's Oak. If they meet, one will
ly fall."
ow, may God forefend they should meet," said
turning as suddenly pale as she had previously
ed. "But harm cannot come of it—Everard
ver lift his sword against the King."
r that," said Doctor Rochcliffe, "I would not
rt. But if that unhappy young gentleman
ave still *some reserve of the loyalty* which his
I conduct entirely disavows, it would not serve
us here; for he knows not the King, but considers
him merely as a cavalier, from whom he has received
injury."
"Let him know the truth, Doctor Rochecliffe, let
him know it instantly," said Alice; "*he* lift hand
against the King, a fugitive and defenceless! He is
incapable of it. My life on the issue, he becomes most
active in his preservation."
"That is the thought of a maiden, Alice," an-
swered the Doctor; "and, as I fear, of a maiden
whose wisdom is misled by her affections. It were
worse than treason to admit a rebel officer, the friend
of the arch-traitor Cromwell, into so great a secret.
I dare not answer for such rashness. Hamnond
was trusted by his father, and you know what came
of it."
"Then let my father know. He will meet Mark-
ham, or send to him, representing the indignity done
to him by attacking his guest."
"We dare not let your father into the secret who
Louis Kerneguy really is. I did but hint the possi-
bility of Charles taking refuge at Woodstock, and the
rapture into which Sir Henry broke out, the prepara-
tions for accommodation and defence which he began
to talk of, plainly showed that the mere enthusiasm
of his loyalty would have led to a risk of discovery.
It is you, Alice, who must save the hopes of every
true royalist."
"I!" answered Alice; "it is impossible. Why can-
not my father be induced to interfere, as in behalf of
his friend and guest, though he know him as no other
than Louis Kerneguy?"
"You have forgot your father's character, my
young friend," said the Doctor—"an excellent man,
and the best of Christians, till there is a clashing of
swords, and then he starts up the complete martialist,
as deaf to every pacific reasoning, as if he were a
game-cock."
"You forget, Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, "that
this very morning, if I understand the thing aright,
my father prevented them from fighting."
"Ay," answered the Doctor, "because he deemed
himself bound to keep the peace in the Royal Park;
but it was done with such regret, Alice, that, should
he find them at it again, I am clear to foretell he will
only so far postpone the combat as to conduct them
to some unprivileged ground, and there bid them tilt
and welcome, while he regaled his eyes with a scene
so pleasing—No, Alice, it is you, and you only, who
can help us in this extremity."
"I see no possibility," said she, again colouring,
"how I can be of the least use."
"You must send a note," answered Doctor Roche-
cliffe, "to the King—a note such as all women know
how to write better than any man can teach them—
to meet you at the precise hour of the rendezvous. He
will not fail you, for I know his unhappy foible."
"Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, gravely—"you
have known me from infancy—What have you seen
in me to induce you to believe that I should ever fol-
low such unbecoming counsel?"
"And if you have known *me* from infancy," re-
torted the Doctor, "what have you seen of *me* that
you should suspect me of giving counsel to my friend's
daughter which it would be misbecoming in her to
follow? You cannot be fool enough, I think, to sup-
pose, that I mean you should carry your complaisance
farther than to keep him in discourse for an hour or
two, till I have all in readiness for his leaving this
place, from which I can frighten him by the terrors of
an alleged search?—So, C. S. mounts his horse and
rides off, and Mistress Alice Lee has the honour of
saving him."
"Yes at the expense of her own reputation," said
Alice, "and the risk of an eternal stain on my family.
—You say you know all—What can the king think
of my appointing an assignation with him after what
has passed, and how will it be possible to disabuse
him respecting the purpose of my doing so?"
"I will disabuse him, Alice; I will explain the
whole."
"Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, "you propose
what is impossible. You can do much by your ready
wit and great wisdom; but if new-fallen snow were

once sullied, not all your art could wash it white again; and it is altogether the same with a maiden's reputation."

"Alice, my dearest child," said the Doctor, "bethink you that if I recommend this means of saving the life of the King, at least rescuing him from instant peril, it is because I see no other of which to avail myself. If I bid you assume, even for a moment, the semblance of what is wrong, it is but in the last extremity, and under circumstances which cannot return—I will take the surest means to prevent all evil report which can arise from what I recommend."

"Say not so, Doctor," said Alice; "better undertake to turn back the Isis than to stop the course of calumny. The King will make boast to his whole licentious court, of the case with which, but for a sudden alarm, he could have brought off Alice Lee as a paramour—the mouth which confers honour on others, will then be the means to deprive me of mine. Take a fitter course, one more becoming your own character and profession. Do not lead him to fail in an engagement of honour, by holding out the prospect of another engagement equally dishonourable, whether false or true. Go to the King himself, speak to him, as the servants of God have a right to speak, even to earthly sovereigns. Point out to him the folly and the wickedness of the course he is about to pursue—urge upon him, that he fear the sword, since wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword. Tell him, that the friends who died for him in the field at Worcester, on the scaffolds, and on the gibbets, since that bloody day—that the remnant who are in prison, scattered, fled, and ruined on his account, deserve better of him and his father's race, than that he should throw away his life in an idle brawl—Tell him, that it is dishonest to venture that which is not his own, dishonourable to betray the trust which brave men have reposed in his virtue and in his courage."

Doctor Rochecliffe looked on her with a melancholy smile, his eyes glistening as he said, "Alas, Alice, even I could not plead that just cause to him so eloquently or so impressively as thou dost. But, alack! Charles would listen to neither. It is not from priests, or women, he would say, that men should receive counsel in affairs of honour."

"Then, hear me, Doctor Rochecliffe—I will appear at the place of rendezvous, and I will prevent the combat—do not fear that I can do what I say—at a sacrifice, indeed, but not that of my reputation. My heart may be broken"—she endeavoured to stifle her sobs with difficulty—"for the consequence—but not in the imagination of a man, and far less that man her sovereign, shall a thought of Alice Lee be associated with dishonour." She hid her face in her handkerchief, and burst out into unrestrained tears.

"What means this hysterical passion?" said Doctor Rochecliffe, surprised and somewhat alarmed by the vehemence of her grief—"Maiden, I must have no concealments—I must know."

"Exert your ingenuity, then, and discover it," said Alice—for a moment put out of temper at the Doctor's pertinacious self-importance—"Guess my purpose as you can guess at every thing else. It is enough to have to go through my task, I will not endure the distress of telling it over, and that to one who—forgive me, dear Doctor—might not think my agitation on this occasion fully warranted."

"Nay, then, my young mistress, you must be ruled," said Rochecliffe; "and if I cannot make you explain yourself, I must see whether your father can gain so far on you." So saying, he arose somewhat displeased, and walked towards the door.

"You forget what you yourself told me, Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, "of the risk of communicating this great secret to my father."

"It is too true"—he said, stopping short and turning round; "and I think, wench, thou art too smart for me, and I have not met many such. But thou art a good girl, and wilt tell me thy device of free-will—it *concerns my character* and influence with the King, *that I should be fully* acquainted with whatever is *actum atque tractatum*, done and treated of in this matter."

"Trust your character to me, good Doctor," said Alice, attempting to smile; "it is of firmer stuff than those of women, and will be safer in my custody than mine could have been in yours. And thus much I condescend—you shall see the whole scene—you shall go with me yourself, and much will I feel emboldened and heartened by your company."

"That is something," said the Doctor, though not altogether satisfied with this limited confidence—"Thou wert ever a clever wench, and I will trust thee—indeed, trust thee, I find I must, whether voluntarily or no."

"Meet me, then," said Alice, in the wilderness tomorrow. But first tell me, are you well assured of time and place?—a mistake were fatal."

"Assure yourself my information is entirely accurate," said the Doctor, resuming his air of consequence, which had been a little diminished during the latter part of their conference.

"May I ask," said Alice, "through what channel you acquired such important information?"

"You may ask, unquestionably," he answered, now completely restored to his supremacy; "but whether I will answer or not, is a very different question. I conceive neither your reputation nor my own is interested in your remaining in ignorance on that subject. So I have my secrets as well as you, mistress; and some of them, I fancy, are a good deal more worth knowing."

Be it so," said Alice, quietly; if you will meet me in the wilderness by the broken dial at half-past five exactly, we will go together to-morrow, and watch them as they come to the rendezvous. I will on the way get the better of my present timidity, and explain to you the means I design to employ to prevent mischief. You can perhaps think of making some effort which may render my interference, unbecoming and painful as it must be, altogether unnecessary."

"Nay, my child," said the Doctor, "if you place yourself in my hands, you will be the first that ever had reason to complain of my want of conduct, and you may well judge you are the very last (one excepted) whom I would see suffer for want of counsel.—At half-past five, then, at the dial in the wilderness—and God bless our undertaking!"

Here their interview was interrupted by the sonorous voice of Sir Henry Lee, which shouted their names "Daughter Alice—Doctor Rochecliffe," through passage and gallery.

"What do you here," said he, entering, "sitting like two crows in a mist, when we have such rare sport below? Here is this wild crackbrained boy Louis Kerneguy, now making me laugh till my sides are fit to split, and now playing on his guitar sweetly enough to win a lark from the heavens.—Come away with you, come away. It is hard work to laugh alone."

CHAPTER XXVIII

> This is the place, the centre of the grove
> Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
> JOHN HOME.

THE sun had risen on the broad boughs of the forest, but without the power of penetrating into its recesses, which hung rich with heavy dewdrops, and were beginning on some of the trees to exhibit the varied tints of autumn; it being the season when Nature, like a prodigal whose race is well nigh run, seems desirous to make up in profuse gayety and variety of colours, for the short space which her splendour has then to endure. The birds were silent—and even Robin-red-breast, whose chirruping song was heard among the bushes near the Lodge, emboldened by the largeness with which the good old knight always encouraged his familiarity, did not venture into the recesses of the wood, where he encountered the sparrowhawk, and other enemies of a similar description, preferring the vicinity of the dwellings of man, from whom he, almost solely among the feathered tribes, seems to experience disinterested protection.

The scene was therefore at once lovely and silent, when the good Doctor Rochecliffe, wrapped in a scarlet roquelaure, which had seen service in its day, muffling his face more from habit than necessity, and supporting Alice on his arm, (she also defended by a cloak against the cold and damp of the autumn morning,) glided through the tangled and long grass of the darkest alleys, almost ankle-deep in dew, towards the place appointed for the intended duel. Both so eagerly maintained the consultation in which they were engaged, that they were alike insensible of the roughness and discomforts of the road, though often obliged to force their way through brushwood and coppice, which poured down on them all the liquid pearls with which they were loaded, till the mantles they were wrapped in hung lank by their sides, and clung to their shoulders heavily charged with moisture. They stopped when they had attained a station under the coppice, and shrouded by it, from which they could see all that passed on the little esplanade before the King's Oak, whose broad and scathed form, contorted and shattered limbs, and frowning brows, made it appear like some ancient warworn champion, well selected to be the umpire of a field of single combat.

The first person who appeared at the rendezvous was the gay cavalier Roger Wildrake. He also was wrapped in his cloak, but had discarded his puritanic beaver, and wore in its stead a Spanish hat, with a feather and gilt hatband, all of which had encountered bad weather and hard service; but to make amends for the appearance of poverty by the show of pretension, the castor was accurately adjusted after what was rather profanely called the d—me cut, used among the more desperate cavaliers. He advanced hastily, and exclaimed aloud—"First in the field after all, by Jove, though I bilked Everard in order to have my morning draught.—It has done me much good," he added, smacking his lips.—"Well, I suppose I should search the ground ere my principal comes up, whose Presbyterian watch trudges as slow as his Presbyterian step."

He took his rapier from under his cloak, and seemed about to search the thickets around.

"I will prevent him," whispered the Doctor to Alice. "I will keep faith with you—you shall not come on the scene—*nisi dignus vindice nodus*—I'll explain that another time. *Vindex* is feminine as well as masculine, so the quotation is defensible.—Keep you close."

So saying, he stepped forward on the esplanade, and bowed to Wildrake.

"Master Louis Kerneguy," said Wildrake, pulling off his hat; but instantly discovering his error, he added, "But no—I beg your pardon, sir—Father, shorter, older.—Mr. Kerneguy's friend, I suppose, with whom I hope to have a turn by and by.—And why not now, sir, before our principals come up? just a snack to stay the orifice of the stomach, till the dinner is served, sir? What say you?"

"To open the orifice of the stomach more likely, or to give it a new one," said the Doctor.

"True, sir," said Roger, who seemed now in his element; "you say well—that is as thereafter may be.—But come, sir, you wear your face muffled. I grant you, it is honest men's fashion at this unhappy time; the more is the pity. But we do all above board—we have no traitors here. I'll get into my gears first, to encourage you, and show you that you have to deal with a gentleman, who honours the King, and is a match fit to fight with any who follow him, as doubtless you do, sir, since you are the friend of Master Louis Kerneguy."

All this while, Wildrake was busied undoing the clasps of his square-caped cloak.

"Off—off, ye lendings," he said, "borrowings I should more properly call you—

"'Via the curtain which shadow'd Borgia!'"

So saying, he threw the cloak from him and appeared in cuerpo, in a most cavalier-like doublet, of greasy crimson satin, pinked and slashed with what had been once white taffany; breeches of the same, and nether-stocks, or, as we now call them, [illegible]

ings, darned in many places, and which, like those of Poins, had been once peach-coloured. A pair of pumps, ill calculated for a walk through the dew, and a broad shoulderbelt of tarnished embroidery, completed his equipment.

"Come, sir!" he exclaimed; "make haste, off with your slough—Here I stand tight and true—as loyal a lad as ever stuck rapier through a round-head.—Come, sir, to your tools!" he continued; "we may have half-a-dozen thrusts before they come yet, and shame them for their tardiness.—Pshaw!" he exclaimed, in a most disappointed tone, when the Doctor, unfolding his cloak, showed his clerical dress; "Tush! it's but the parson after all!"

Wildrake's respect for the Church, however, and his desire to remove one who might possibly interrupt a scene to which he looked forward with peculiar satisfaction, induced him presently to assume another tone.

"I beg pardon," he said, "my dear Doctor—I kiss the hem of your cassock—I do, by the thundering Jove—I beg your pardon again.—But I am happy I have met with you—They are raving for your presence at the Lodge—to marry, or christen, or bury, or confess, or something very urgent.—For Heaven's sake, make haste!"

"At the Lodge?" said the Doctor; "why, I left the Lodge this instant—I was there later, I am sure, than you could be, who came the Woodstock road."

"Well," replied Wildrake, "it is at Woodstock they want you.—Rat it, did I say the Lodge?—No, no—Woodstock—Mine host cannot be hanged—his daughter married—his bastard christened, or his wife buried—without the assistance of a *real* clergyman—your Holdenoughs won't do for them.—He's a true man, mine host; so, as you value your function, make haste."

"You will pardon me, Master Wildrake," said the Doctor—"I wait for Master Louis Kerneguy."

"The devil you do!" exclaimed Wildrake. "Why I always knew the Scots could do nothing without their minister; but d—n it, I never thought they put them to this use neither. But I have known jolly customers in orders, who understood to handle the sword as well as their prayerbook. You know the purpose of our meeting, Doctor. Do you come only as a ghostly comforter—or as a surgeon, perhaps—or do you ever take bilboa in hand?—Sa, sa!"

Here he made a fencing demonstration with his sheathed rapier.

"I have done so, sir, on necessary occasion," said Doctor Rochecliffe.

"Good sir, let this stand for a necessary one," said Wildrake. "You know my devotion for the Church. If a divine of your skill would do me the honour to exchange but three passes with me, I should think myself happy for ever."

"Sir," said Rochecliffe, smiling, "were there no other objection to what you propose, I have not the means—I have no weapon."

"What? you want the *de quoi*? that is unlucky indeed. But you have a stout cane in your hand—what hinders our trying a pass (my rapier being sheathed of course) until our principals come up? My pumps are full of this frost-dew; and I shall be a toe or two out of pocket, if I am to stand still all the time they are stretching themselves; for, I fancy, Doctor, you are of my opinion, that the matter will not be a fight of cock-sparrows."

"My business here is to make it, if possible, be no fight at all," said the divine.

"Now, rat me, Doctor, but that is too spiteful," said Wildrake; "and were it not for my respect for the Church, I could turn Presbyterian to be revenged."

"Stand back a little, if you please, sir," said the Doctor; "do not press forward in that direction," —For Wildrake, in the agitation of his movements, induced by his disappointment, approached the spot where Alice remained still concealed.

"And wherefore not, I pray you, Doctor?" said the cavalier.

But on advancing a step, he suddenly stopped short, and [illegible]

ishment, "A petticoat in the coppice, by all that is reverend, and at this hour in the morning—*Whew—ew—ew!*"—He gave vent to his surprise in a long low interjectional whistle; then turning to the Doctor, with his finger on the side of his nose. "You're sly, Doctor, d—d sly! But why not give me a hint of your —your commodity there—your contraband goods? Gad, sir, I am not a man to expose the eccentricities of the church."

"Sir," said Doctor Rochecliffe, "you are impertinent; and if time served, and it were worth my while, I would chastise you."

And the Doctor, who had served long enough in the wars to have added some of the qualities of a captain of horse to those of a divine, actually raised his cane, to the infinite delight of the rake, whose respect for the Church was by no means able to subdue his love of mischief.

"Nay, Doctor," said he, "if you wield your weapon backsword fashion, in that way, and raise it as high as your head, I shall be through you in a twinkling." So saying he made a pass with his sheathed rapier, not precisely at the Doctor's person, but in that direction; when Rochecliffe, changing the direction of his cane from the broadsword guard to that of the rapier, made the cavalier's sword spring ten yards out of his hand, with all the dexterity of my friend Francalanza. At this moment both the principal parties appeared on the field.

Everard exclaimed angrily to Wildrake, "Is this your friendship? In Heaven's name, what make you in that fool's jacket, and playing the pranks of a jack-pudding?" while his worthy second, somewhat crestfallen, held down his head, like a boy caught in roguery, and went to pick up his weapon, stretching his head, as he passed, into the coppice, to obtain another glimpse, if possible, of the concealed object of his curiosity.

Charles, in the mean time, still more surprised at what he beheld, called out on his part—"What! Doctor Rochecliffe become literally one of the church militant, and tilting with my friend Cavalier Wildrake? May I use the freedom to ask him to withdraw, as Colonel Everard and I have some private business to settle?"

It was Doctor Rochecliffe's cue on this important occasion, to have armed himself with the authority of his sacred office, and used a tone of interference which might have overawed even a monarch, and made him feel that his monitor spoke by a warrant higher than his own. But the indiscreet latitude he had just given to his own passion, and the levity in which he had been detected, were very unfavourable to his assuming that superiority, to which so uncontrollable a spirit as that of Charles, wilful as a prince, and capricious as a wit, was at all likely to submit. The Doctor did, however, endeavour to rally his dignity, and replied, with the gravest, and at the same time the most respectful, tone he could assume, that he also had business of the most urgent nature, which prevented him from complying with Master Kerneguy's wishes, and leaving that spot.

"Excuse this untimely interruption," said Charles, taking off his hat, and bowing to Colonel Everard, "which I will immediately put an end to."

Everard gravely returned his salute, and was silent.

"Are you mad, Doctor Rochecliffe?" said Charles —"or are you deaf?—or have you forgotten your mother-tongue? I desired you to leave this place."

"I am not mad," said the divine, rousing up his resolution, and regaining the natural firmness of his voice—"I would prevent others from being so; I am not deaf—I would pray others to hear the voice of reason and religion; I have not forgotten my mother-tongue—but I have come hither to speak the language of the Master of kings and princes."

"To fence with broomsticks, I should rather suppose," said the King—"Come, Doctor Rochecliffe, this sudden fit of assumed importance befits you as *little as your late frolic.* You are not, I apprehend, *either a Catholic priest or a Scotch Mass-John to claim devoted obedience* from your hearers, but a *Church of Englandman*, subject to the rules of that *Communion—and to its* HEAD." In speaking the last words, the King sunk his voice to a low and impressive whisper. Everard observing this drew back, the natural generosity of his temper directing him to avoid overhearing private discourse, in which the safety of the speakers might be deeply concerned. They continued, however, to observe great caution in their forms of expression.

"Master Kerneguy," said the clergyman, "it is not I who assume authority or control over your wishes—God forbid; I do but tell you what reason, Scripture, religion, and morality, alike prescribe for your rule of conduct."

"And I, Doctor," said the King, smiling, and pointing to the unlucky cane, "will take your example rather than your precept. If a reverend clergyman will himself fight a bout at single-stick, what right can he have to interfere in gentlemen's quarrels?—Come, sir, remove yourself, and do not let your present obstinacy cancel former obligations."

"Bethink yourself," said the divine,—"I can say one word which will prevent all this."

"Do it," replied the King, "and in doing so belie the whole tenor and actions of an honourable life—abandon the principles of your Church, and become a perjured traitor and an apostate, to prevent another person from discharging his duty as a gentleman! This were indeed killing your friend, to prevent the risk of his running himself into danger. Let the Passive Obedience, which is so often in your mouth, and no doubt in your head, put your feet for once into motion, and step aside for ten minutes. Within that space your assistance may be needed, either as body-curer or soul-curer."

"Nay then," said Doctor Rochecliffe, "I have but one argument left."

While this conversation was carried on apart, Everard had almost forcibly detained by his own side his follower, Wildrake, whose greater curiosity, and lesser delicacy, would otherwise have thrust him forward, to get, if possible, into the secret. But when he saw the Doctor turn into the coppice, he whispered eagerly to Everard—"A gold Carolus to a commonwealth farthing, the Doctor has not only come to preach a peace, but has brought the principal conditions along with him!"

Everard made no answer; he had already unsheathed his sword; and Charles hardly saw Rochecliffe's back fairly turned, than he lost no time in following his example. But, ere they had done more than salute each other, with the usual courteous flourish of their weapons, Doctor Rochecliffe again stood between them, leading in his hand Alice Lee, her garments dank with dew, and her long hair heavy with moisture, and totally uncurled. Her face was extremely pale, but it was the paleness of desperate resolution, not of fear. There was a dead pause of astonishment—the combatants rested on their swords —and even the forwardness of Wildrake only vented itself in half-suppressed ejaculations, as, "Well done, Doctor—this beats the 'parson among the pease'—no less than your patron's daughter—And Mistress Alice, whom I thought a very snowdrop, turned out a dog-violet after all—a Lindabrides, by heavens, and altogether one of ourselves!"

Excepting these unheeded mutterings, Alice was the first to speak.

"Master Everard," she said—"Master Kerneguy, you are surprised to see me here—Yet, why should I not tell the reason at once? Convinced that I am however guiltlessly, the unhappy cause of your misunderstanding, I am too much interested to prevent fatal consequences to pause upon any step which may end it.—Master Kerneguy, have my wishes, my entreaties, my prayers—have your noble thoughts—the recollections of your own high duties, no weight with you in this matter? Let me entreat you to consult reason, religion, and common sense, and return your weapon."

"I am obedient as an Eastern slave, madam," answered Charles, sheathing his sword; "but I assure you, the matter about which you distress yourself is a mere trifle, which will be much better settled betwixt Colonel Everard and myself in five minutes, than with the assistance of the whole Convocation

of the Church, with a female parliament to assist their reverend deliberations.—Mr. Everard, will you oblige me by walking a little farther?—We must change ground, it seems."

"I am ready to attend you, sir," said Everard, who had sheathed his sword so soon as his antagonist did so.

"I have then no interest with you, sir," said Alice, continuing to address the King—"Do you not fear I should use the secret in my power to prevent this affair going to extremity? Think you this gentleman, who raises his hand against you, if he knew"——

"If he knew that I were Lord Wilmot, madam, you would say?—Accident has given him proof to that effect, with which he is already satisfied, and I think you would find it difficult to induce him to embrace a different opinion."

Alice paused, and looked on the King with great indignation, the following words dropping from her mouth by intervals, as if they burst forth one by one in spite of feelings that would have restrained them—"Cold—selfish—ungrateful—unkind!—Wo to the land which"——Here she paused with marked emphasis, then added—"which shall number thee, or such as thee, among her nobles and rulers!"

"Nay, fair Alice," said Charles, whose good-nature could not but feel the severity of this reproach, though too slightly to make all the desired impression, "You are too unjust to me—too partial to a happier man. Do not call me unkind; I am but here to answer Mr. Everard's summons. I could neither decline attending, nor withdraw now I am here, without loss of honour; and my loss of honour would be a disgrace which must extend to many—I cannot fly from Mr. Everard—it would be too shameful. If he abides by his message, it must be decided as such affairs usually are. If he retreats or yields it up, I will, for your sake, wave punctilio. I will not even ask an apology for the trouble it has afforded me, but let all pass as if it were the consequence of some unhappy mistake, the grounds of which shall remain on my part uninquired into.—This I will do for your sake, and it is much for a man of honour to condescend so far—You *know* that the condescension from me in particular is great indeed. Then do not call me ungenerous, or ungrateful, or unkind, since I am ready to do all, which, as a man, I can do, and more perhaps, than as a man of honour I ought to do."

"Do you hear this, Markham Everard," exclaimed Alice—"do you hear this?—The dreadful option is left entirely at your disposal. You were wont to be temperate in passion, religious, forgiving—will you, for a mere punctilio, drive on this private and unchristian broil to a murderous extremity? Believe me, if you *now*, contrary to all the better principles of your life, give the reins to your passions, the consequences may be such as you will rue for your lifetime, and even, if Heaven have not mercy, rue after your life is finished."

Markham Everard remained for a moment gloomily silent, with his eyes fixed on the ground. At length he looked up, and answered her—"Alice, you are a soldier's daughter—a soldier's sister. All your relations, even including one whom you then entertained some regard for, have been made soldiers by these unhappy discords. Yet you have seen them take the field—in some instances on contrary sides, to do their duty where their principles called them, without manifesting this extreme degree of interest. Answer me—and your answer shall decide my conduct—Is this youth, so short while known, already of more value to you than those dear connexions, father, brother, and kinsman, whose departure to battle you saw with comparative indifference?—Say *this*, and it shall be enough I leave the ground, never to see you or this country again."

"Stay, Markham, stay; and believe me when I say, that if I answer your question in the affirmative, it is because Master Kerneguy's safety comprehends more, much more, than that of *any of* those you have mentioned."

"*Indeed! I did not know* a coronet had been so superior in value to the crest of a private gentleman," said Everard; "yet I have heard that many women think so."

"You apprehend me amiss," said Alice, perplexed between the difficulty of so expressing herself as to prevent immediate mischief, and at the same time anxious to combat the jealousy and disarm the resentment which she saw arising in the bosom of her lover. But she found no words fine enough to draw the distinction, without leading to a discovery of the King's actual character, and perhaps, in consequence, to his destruction. "Markham," she said, "have compassion on me. Press me not at this moment—believe me, the honour and happiness of my father, of my brother, and of my whole family, are interested in Master Kerneguy's safety—are inextricably concerned in this matter resting where it now does."

"Oh, ay—I doubt not," said Everard; "the House of Lee ever looked up to nobility, and valued in their connexions the fantastic loyalty of a courtier beyond the sterling and honest patriotism of a plain country gentleman. For them, the thing is in course. But on your part, you, Alice—O! on your part, whom I have loved so dearly—who has suffered me to think that my affection was not unrepaid—Can the attractions of an empty title, the idle court compliments of a mere man of quality, during only a few hours, lead you to prefer a libertine lord to such a heart as mine?"

"No, no—believe me, no," said Alice, in the extremity of distress.

"Put your answer, which seems so painful, in one word, and say for *whose* safety it is you are thus deeply interested?"

"For both—for both," said Alice.

"That answer will not serve, Alice," answered Everard—"here is no room for equality. I must and will know to what I have to trust. I understand not the paltering, which makes a maiden unwilling to decide betwixt two suitors; nor would I willingly impute to *you* the vanity that cannot remain contented with one lover at once."

The vehemence of Everard's displeasure, when he supposed his own long and sincere devotion lightly forgotten, amid the addresses of a profligate courtier, awakened the spirit of Alice Lee, who, as we elsewhere said, had a portion in her temper of the lion-humour that was characteristic of her family.

"If I am thus misinterpreted," she said—"if I am not judged worthy of the least confidence or candid construction, hear my declaration, and my assurance, that, strange as my words may seem, they are, when truly interpreted, such as do you no wrong.—I tell you—I tell all present—and I tell this gentleman himself, who well knows the sense in which I speak, that his life and safety are, or ought to be, of more value to me than those of any other man in the kingdom—nay, in the world, be that other who he will."

These words she spoke in a tone so firm and decided, as admitted no farther discussion. Charles bowed low and with gravity, but remained silent. Everard, his features agitated by the emotions which his pride barely enabled him to suppress, advanced to his antagonist, and said, in a tone which he vainly endeavoured to make a firm one, "Sir, you heard the lady's declaration, with such feelings, doubtless, of gratitude, as the case eminently demands. As her poor kinsman, and an unworthy suitor, sir, I presume to yield my interest in her to you; and, as I will never be the means of giving her pain, I trust you will not think I act unworthily in retracting the letter which gave you the trouble of attending this place at this hour.—Alice," he said, turning his head towards her, "Farewell Alice, at once, and for ever!"

The poor young lady, whose adventurous spirit had almost deserted her, attempted to repeat the word farewell, but, failing in the attempt, only accomplished a broken and imperfect sound, and would have sunk to the earth, but for Doctor Rochecliffe, who caught her as she fell. Roger Wildrake, also, who had twice or thrice put to his eyes what remained of a kerchief, interested by the lady's evident distress, though unable to comprehend the mysterious cause, hastened to assist the divine in supporting so fair a burden.

Mean while, the disguised Prince had beheld the whole in silence, but with an agitation to which he was unwonted, and which his swarthy features, and still more his motions, began to betray. His posture was at first absolutely stationary, with his arms folded on his bosom, as one who waits to be guided by the current of events; presently after, he shifted his position, advanced and retired his foot, clenched and opened his hand, and otherwise showed symptoms that he was strongly agitated by contending feelings, —was on the point, too, of forming some sudden resolution, and yet still in uncertainty what course he should pursue.

But when he saw Markham Everard, after one look of unspeakable anguish towards Alice, turning his back to depart, he broke out into his familiar ejaculation, "Oddsfish! this must not be." In three strides he overtook the slowly retiring Everard, tapped him smartly on the shoulder, and, as he turned round, said, with an air of command, which he well knew how to adopt at pleasure, "One word with you, sir."

"At your pleasure, sir," replied Everard, and naturally conjecturing the purpose of his antagonist to be hostile, took hold of his rapier with the left hand, and laid the right on the hilt, not displeased at the supposed call; for anger is at least as much akin to disappointment as pity is said to be to love.

"Pshaw!" answered the King, "that cannot be *now*—Colonel Everard, I am CHARLES STEWART!"

Everard recoiled in the greatest surprise, and next exclaimed, "Impossible—It cannot be!—The King of Scots has escaped from Bristol.—My Lord Wilmot, your talents for intrigue are well known—but this will not pass upon me."

"The King of Scots, Master Everard," replied Charles—"since you are so pleased to limit his sovereignty—at any rate, the Eldest Son, of the late Sovereign of Britain,—is now before you; therefore it is impossible he could have escaped from Bristol. Doctor Rochecliffe shall be my voucher, and will tell you, moreover, that Wilmot is of a fair complexion, and light hair—mine, you may see, is swart as a raven."

Rochecliffe, seeing what was passing, abandoned Alice to the care of Wildrake, whose extreme delicacy in the attempts he made to bring her back to life, formed an amiable contrast to his usual wildness, and occupied him so much, that he remained for the moment ignorant of the disclosure in which he would have been so much interested. As for Doctor Rochecliffe, he came forward, wringing his hands in all the demonstration of extreme anxiety, and with the usual exclamations attending such a state.

"Peace, Doctor Rochecliffe!" said the King, with such complete self-possession as indeed became a prince—"We are in the hands, I am satisfied, of a man of honour. Master Everard must be pleased in finding only a fugitive prince in the person in whom he thought he had discovered a successful rival. He cannot but be aware of the feelings which prevented me from taking advantage of the cover which this young lady's devoted loyalty afforded me, at the risk of her own happiness. He is the party who is to profit by my candour; and certainly I have a right to expect that my condition, already indifferent enough, shall not be rendered worse by his becoming privy to it, under such circumstances. At any rate, the avowal is made; and it is for Colonel Everard to consider how he is to conduct himself."

"Oh, your Majesty!—my Liege!—my King!—my royal Prince!" exclaimed Wildrake, who, at length discovering what was passing, had crawled on his knees, and seizing the King's hand, was kissing it, more like a child mumbling gingerbread, or like a lover devouring the yielded hand of his mistress, than in the manner in which such salutations pass at court—"If my dear friend Mark Everard should prove a dog on this occasion, rely on me I will cut his throat on the spot, were I to do the same for myself the moment afterwards!"

"*Hush, hush, my good friend and loyal subject,*" *said the King, "and compose yourself; for though I am obliged to put on the* Prince for a moment, we *have not privacy or safety* to receive our subjects in *King Cambyses' vein.*"

Everard, who had stood for a time utterly confounded, awoke at length like a man from a dream.

"Sire," he said, bowing low, and with profound deference, "if I do not offer you the homage of a subject with knee and sword, it is because God, by whom kings reign, has denied you for the present the power of ascending your throne without rekindling civil war. For your safety being endangered by me, let not such an imagination for an instant cross your mind. Had I not respected your person—were I not bound to you for the candour with which your noble avowal has prevented the misery of my future life, your misfortunes would have rendered your person as sacred, so far as I can protect it, as it could be esteemed by the most devoted royalist in the kingdom. If your plans are soundly considered, and securely laid, think that all which is now passed is but a dream. If they are in such a state that I can aid them, saving my duty to the Commonwealth, which will permit me to be privy to no schemes of actual violence, your Majesty may command my services."

"It may be I may be troublesome to you, sir," said the King; "for my fortunes are not such as to permit me to reject even the most limited offers of assistance; but if I can, I will dispense with applying to you—I would not willingly put any man's compassion at war with his sense of duty on my account.—Doctor, I think there will be no farther tilting to-day, either with sword or cane; so we may as well return to the Lodge, and leave these"—looking at Alice and Everard—"who may have more to say in explanation."

"No—no!" exclaimed Alice, who was now perfectly come to herself, and partly by her own observation, and partly from the report of Dr. Rochecliffe, comprehended all that had taken place—"My cousin Everard and I have nothing to explain; he will forgive me for having riddled with him when I dared not speak plainly; and I forgive him for having read my riddle wrong. But my father has my promise—we must not correspond or converse for the present—I return instantly to the Lodge and he to Woodstock, unless you, sire," bowing to the King, "command his duty otherwise. Instant to the town, cousin Markham; and if danger should approach, give us warning."

Everard would have delayed her departure, would have excused himself for his unjust suspicion, would have said a thousand things; but she would not listen to him, saying, for all other answer,—"Farewell, Markham, till God send better days!"

"She is an angel of truth and beauty," said Roger Wildrake; "and I, like a blasphemous heretic, called her a Lindabrides!*—But has your Majesty—craving your pardon—no commands for poor Hodge Wildrake, who will blow out his own or any other man's brains in England, to do your Grace a pleasure?"

"We entreat our good friend Wildrake to do nothing hastily," said Charles, smiling; "such brains as his are rare, and should not be rashly dispersed, as the like may not be easily collected. We recommend him to be silent and prudent—to tilt no more with loyal clergymen of the Church of England, and to get himself a new jacket with all convenient speed, to which we beg to contribute our royal aid. When fit time comes, we hope to find other service for him."

As he spoke, he slid ten pieces into the hand of poor Wildrake, who, confounded with the excess of his loyal gratitude, blubbered like a child, and would have followed the King, had not Dr. Rochecliffe, in few words, but peremptory, insisted that he should return with his patron, promising him he should certainly be employed in assisting the King's escape, could an opportunity be found of using his services.

"Be so generous, reverend sir, and you bind me to you for ever," said the cavalier "and I conjure you not to keep malice against me on account of the foolery you wot of."

"I have no occasion, Captain Wildrake," said the Doctor, "for I think I had the best of it."

"Well, then, Doctor, I forgive you on my part; and I pray you, for Christian charity, let me have a finger in this good service; for as I live in hope of it, rely that I shall die of disappointment."

* A sort of court name for a female of no reputation.

While the doctor and soldier thus spoke together, Charles took leave of Everard, (who remained uncovered while he spoke to him,) with his usual grace—"I need not bid you no longer be jealous of me," said the King; "for I presume you will scarce think of a match betwixt Alice and me, which would be too losing a one on her side. For other thoughts, the wildest libertine could not entertain them towards so high-minded a creature; and believe me, that my sense of her merit did not need this last distinguished proof of her truth and loyalty. I saw enough of her from her answers to some idle sallies of gallantry, to know with what a lofty character she is endowed.—Mr. Everard, her happiness I see depends on you, and I trust you will be the careful guardian of it. If we can take any obstacle out of the way of your joint happiness, be assured we will use our influence.—Farewell, sir; if we cannot be better friends, do not at least let us entertain harder or worse thoughts of each other than we have now."

There was something in the manner of Charles that was extremely affecting; something, too, in his condition as a fugitive in the kingdom which was his own by inheritance, that made a direct appeal to Everard's bosom—though in contradiction to the dictates of that policy which he judged it his duty to pursue in the distracted circumstances of the country. He remained, as we have said, uncovered; and in his manner testified the highest expression of reverence, up to the point when such might seem a symbol of allegiance. He bowed so low as almost to approach his lips to the hand of Charles—but he did not kiss it.—"I would rescue your person, sir," he said, "with the purchase of my own life. More,"———He stopped short, and the King took up his sentence where it broke off—"More you cannot do," said Charles, "to maintain on honourable consistency—but what you have said is enough. You cannot render homage to my proffered hand, as that of a sovereign, but you will not prevent my taking yours as a friend, if you allow me to call myself so—I am sure, as a well-wisher at least."

The generous soul of Everard was touched—He took the King's hand, and pressed it to his lips.

"Oh!" he said, "were better times to come"——

"Bind yourself to nothing, dear Everard," said the good-natured Prince, partaking his emotion—"We reason ill while our feelings are moved. I will recruit no man to his loss, nor will I have my fallen fortunes involve those of others, because they have humanity enough to pity my present condition. If better times come, why we will meet again, and I hope to our mutual satisfaction. If not, as your future father-in-law would say," (a benevolent smile came over his face, and accorded not unmeetly with his glistening eyes,)—"If not, this parting was well made."

Everard turned away with a deep bow, almost choking under contending feelings; the uppermost of which was a sense of the generosity with which Charles, at his own imminent risk, had cleared away the darkness that seemed about to overwhelm his prospects of happiness for life—mixed with a deep sense of the perils by which he was environed. He returned to the little town, followed by his attendant Wildrake, who turned back so often, with weeping eyes, and hands clasped and uplifted as supplicating Heaven, that Everard was obliged to remind him that his gestures might be observed by some one, and occasion suspicion.

The generous conduct of the King during the closing part of this remarkable scene, had not escaped Alice's notice; and, erasing at once from her mind all resentment of Charles's former conduct, and all the suspicions they had deservedly excited, awakened in her bosom a sense of the natural goodness of his disposition, which permitted her to unite regard for his person, with that reverence for his high office in which she had been educated as a portion of her creed. She felt convinced, and delighted with the conviction, that his virtues were his own, his libertinism the fault of education, or rather want of education, *and the corrupting advice of sycophants and flatterers. She could not know*, or perhaps did not in that moment consider, that in a soil where no care is taken to eradicate tares, they will outgrow and smother the wholesome seed, even if the last is more natural to the soil. For, as Doctor Rochecliffe informed her afterwards for her edification—promising, as was his custom, to explain the precise words on some future occasion if she would put him in mind—*Virtus rectorem ducemque desiderat; Vitia sine magistro discuntur.**

There was no room for such reflections at present. Conscious of mutual sincerity, by a sort of intellectual communication, through which individuals are led to understand each other better, perhaps, in delicate circumstances, than by words, reserve and simulation appeared to be now banished from the intercourse between the King and Alice. With manly frankness, and, at the same time, with princely condescension, he requested her, exhausted as she was, to accept of his arm on the way homeward, instead of that of Doctor Rochecliffe; and Alice accepted of his support with modest humility, but without a shadow of mistrust or fear. It seemed as if the last half hour had satisfied them perfectly with the character of each other, and that each had full conviction of the purity and sincerity of the other's intentions.

Doctor Rochecliffe, in the mean time, had fallen some four or five paces behind; for, less light and active than Alice, (who had, besides, the assistance of the King's support,) he was unable, without effort and difficulty, to keep up with the pace of Charles, who then was, as we have elsewhere noticed, one of the best walkers in England, and was sometimes apt to forget (as great men will) that others were inferior to him in activity.

"Dear Alice," said the King, but as if the epithet were entirely fraternal, "I like your Everard much—I would to God he were of our determination—But since that cannot be, I am sure he will prove a generous enemy."

"May it please you, sire," said Alice, modestly, but with some firmness, "my cousin will never be your Majesty's personal enemy—and he is one of the few on whose slightest word you may rely more than on the oath of those who profess more strongly and formally. He is utterly incapable of abusing your Majesty's most generous and voluntary confidence."

"On my honour, I believe so, Alice," replied the King: "But, oddsfish! my girl, let Majesty sleep for the present—it concerns my safety, as I told your brother lately—Call me sir, then, which belongs alike to king, peer, knight, and gentleman—or rather let me be wild Louis Kerneguy again.

Alice looked down, and shook her head. "That cannot be, please your Majesty."

"What?" Louis was a saucy companion—a naughty presuming boy—and you cannot abide him?—Well, perhaps you are right—But we will wait for Doctor Rochecliffe"—he said, desirous, with good-natured delicacy, to make Alice aware that he had no purpose of engaging her in any discussion which could recall painful ideas. They paused accordingly, and again she felt relieved and grateful.

"I cannot persuade our fair friend, Mistress Alice Doctor," said the King, "that she must, in prudence forbear using titles of respect to me, while there are such very slender means of sustaining them."

"It is a reproach to earth and to fortune," answered the divine, as fast as his recovered breath would permit him, "that your most sacred Majesty's present condition should not accord with the rendering of those honours which are your own by birth, and which, with God's blessing on the efforts of your loyal subjects, I hope to see rendered to you as your hereditary right, by the universal voice of the three kingdoms."

"True, Doctor," replied the King; "but, in the mean while, can you expound to Mistress Alice Lee

* The quotations of the learned doctor and antiquary were often left uninterpreted, though seldom uncommunicated, owing to his contempt for those who did not understand the learned languages, and his dislike to the labour of translation for the benefit of ladies and of country gentlemen. That such readers and rural thanes may not on this occasion burn in ignorance, we add the meaning of the passage in the text.—"Virtue requires the aid of a governor and director: vices are learned without a teacher."

two lines of Horace, which I have carried in my thick head several years, till now, they have come pat to my purpose. As my canny subjects of Scotland say, If you keep a thing seven years you are sure to find a use for it at last—*Telephus*—ay, so it begins—

'Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,
Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.'

'I will explain the passage to Mistress Alice," said the Doctor, "when she reminds me of it—or rather," (he added, recollecting that his ordinary dilatory answer on such occasions ought not to be returned when the order for exposition emanated from his sovereign,) "I will repeat a poor couplet from my own translation of the poem—

'Heroes and kings, in exile forced to roam,
Leave swelling phrase and seven-leagued words at home.'"

"A most admirable version, Doctor," said Charles: "I feel all its force, and particularly the beautiful rendering of *sesquipedalia verba* into seven-leagued boots—words I mean—it reminds me, like half the things I meet with in this world, of the *Contes de Commère L'Oye.*"*

Thus conversing they reached the Lodge; and as the King went to his chamber to prepare for the breakfast summons, now impending, the idea crossed his mind, "Wilmot, and Villiers, and Killigrew, would laugh at me, did they hear of a campaign in which neither man nor woman had been conquered—But, oddsfish! let them laugh as they will, there is something at my heart which tells me, that for once in my life, I have acted well."

That day and the next were spent in tranquillity, the King waiting impatiently for the intelligence, which was to announce to him that a vessel was prepared somewhere on the coast. None such was yet in readiness; but he learned that the indefatigable Albert Lee was, at great personal risk, traversing the seacoast from town to village, and endeavouring to find means of embarkation among the friends of the royal cause, and the correspondents of Doctor Rochecliffe.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Ruffian, let go that rude uncivil touch!
Two Gentlemen of Verona.

IT is time we should give some account of the other actors in our drama, the interest due to the principal personages having for some time engrossed our attention exclusively.

We are, therefore, to inform the reader, that the lingering longings of the Commissioners, who had been driven forth of their proposed paradise of Woodstock, not by a cherub indeed, but, as they thought, by spirits of another sort, still detained them in the vicinity. They had, indeed, left the little borough under pretence of indifferent accommodation. The more palpable reasons were, that they entertained some resentment against Everard, as the means of their disappointment, and had no mind to reside where their proceedings could be overlooked by him, although they took leave in terms of the utmost respect. They went, however, no farther than Oxford, and remained there, as ravens, who are accustomed to witness the chase, sit upon a tree or crag, at a little distance, and watch the disembowelling of the deer, expecting the relics which fall to their share. Mean time, the University and City, but especially the former, supplied them with some means of employing their various faculties to advantage, until the expected moment, when, as they hoped, they should either be summoned to Windsor, or Woodstock should once more be abandoned to their discretion.

Bletson, to pass the time, vexed the souls of such learned and pious divines and scholars, as he could intrude his hateful presence upon, by sophistry, atheistical discourse, and challenges to them to impugn the most scandalous thesis. Desborough, one of the most brutally ignorant men of the period, got himself nominated the head of a college, and lost no time in cutting down trees, and plundering plate. As for Harrison, he preached in full uniform in Saint Mary's Church, wearing his buff-coat, boots, and spurs, as if he were about to take the field for the fight at Armageddon. And it was hard to say, whether that seat of Learning, Religion and Loyalty, as it is called by Clarendon, was more vexed by the rapine of Desborough, the cold scepticism of Bletson, or the frantic enthusiasm of the Fifth-Monarchy champion.

Ever and anon, soldiers, under pretence of relieving guard, or otherwise, went and came betwixt Woodstock and Oxford, and maintained, it may be supposed, a correspondence with Trusty Tomkins, who, though he chiefly resided in the town of Woodstock, visited the Lodge occasionally, and to whom, therefore, they doubtless trusted for information concerning the proceedings there.

Indeed, this man Tomkins seemed by some secret means to have gained the confidence in part, if not in whole, of almost every one connected with these intrigues. All closeted him, all conversed with him in private; those who had the means propitiated him with gifts, those who had not were liberal of promises. When he chanced to appear at Woodstock, which always seemed as it were by accident—if he passed through the hall, the knight was sure to ask him to take the foils, and was equally certain to be, after less or more resistance, victorious in the encounter; so, in consideration of so many triumphs, the good Sir Henry almost forgave him the sins of rebellion and puritanism. Then, if his slow and formal step was heard in the passages approaching the gallery, Doctor Rochecliffe, though he never introduced him to his peculiar boudoir, was sure to meet Master Tomkins in some neutral apartment, and to engage him in long conversations, which apparently had great interest for both.

Neither was the Independent's reception below stairs less gracious than above. Joceline failed not to welcome him with the most cordial frankness; the party and the flagon were put in immediate requisition, and good cheer was the general word. The means for this, it may be observed, had grown more plenty at Woodstock since the arrival of Doctor Rochecliffe, who, in quality of agent for several royalists, had various sums of money at his disposal. By these funds it is likely that Trusty Tomkins also derived his own full advantage.

In his occasional indulgence in what he called a fleshly frailty, (and for which he said he had a privilege,) which was in truth an attachment to strong liquors, and that in no moderate degree, his language, at other times remarkably decorous and reserved, became wild and animated. He sometimes talked with all the unction of an old debauchee, of former exploits, such as deer-stealing, orchard robbing, drunken gambols, and desperate affrays in which he had been engaged in the earlier part of his life, sung bacchanalian and amorous ditties, dwelt sometimes upon adventures which drove Phœbe Mayflower from the company, and penetrated even the deaf ears of Dame Jellicot, so as to make the buttery in which he held his carousals no proper place for the poor old woman.

In the middle of these wild rants, Tomkins twice or thrice suddenly ran into religious topics, and spoke mysteriously, but with great animation, and a rich eloquence, on the happy and pre-eminent saints, who were saints, as he termed them, indeed—Men who had stormed the inner treasure-house of Heaven, and possessed themselves of its choicest jewels. All other sects he treated with the utmost contempt, as merely quarreling, as he expressed it, like hogs over a trough, about husks and acorns; under which derogatory terms, he included alike the usual rites and ceremonies of public devotion, the ordinances of the established churches of Christianity, and the observances, nay, the forbearances, enjoined by every class of Christians. Scarcely hearing, and not at all understanding him, Joceline, who seemed his most frequent confidant on such occasions, generally led him back into some strain of rude mirth, or old recollection of follies before the Civil Wars, without caring about or endeavouring to analyze the opinion of this saint of an evil fashion, but fully sensible of the protection which his presence afforded at Woodstock, and confident in

* Tales of Mother Goose.

the honest meaning of so freespoken a fellow, to whom ale and brandy, when better liquor was not to be come by, seemed to be principal objects of life, and who drank a health to the King, or any one else, whenever required, provided the cup in which he was to perform the libation were but a brimmer.

These peculiar doctrines, which were entertained by a sect sometimes termed the Family of Love, but more commonly Ranters,* had made some progress in times when such variety of religious opinions were prevalent, that men pushed the jarring heresies to the verge of absolute and most impious insanity. Secrecy had been enjoined on these frantic believers in a most blasphemous doctrine, by the fear of consequences, should they come to be generally announced; and it was the care of Mr. Tomkins to conceal the spiritual freedom which he pretended to have acquired, from all whose resentment would have been stirred by his public avowal of it. This was not difficult; for their profession of faith permitted, nay, required, their occasional conformity with the sectaries or professors of any creed which chanced to be uppermost.

Tomkins had accordingly the art to pass himself on Dr. Rochecliffe as still a zealous member of the Church of England, though serving under the enemy's colours, as a spy in their camp; and as he had on several occasions given him true and valuable intelligence, this active intriguer was the more easily induced to believe his professions.

Nevertheless, lest this person's occasional presence at the Lodge, which there were perhaps no means to prevent without exciting suspicion, should infer danger to the King's person, Rochecliffe, whatever confidence he otherwise reposed in him, recommended that, if possible, the King should keep always out of his sight, and when accidentally discovered, that he should only appear in the character of Louis Kerneguy. Joseph Tomkins, he said, was, he really believed, Honest Joe; but Honesty was a horse which might be overburdened, and there was no use in leading our neighbour into temptation.

It seemed as if Tomkins himself had acquiesced in this limitation of confidence exercised towards him, or that he wished to seem blinder than he really was to the presence of this stranger in the family. It occurred to Joceline, who was a very shrewd fellow, that once or twice, when by inevitable accident Tomkins had met Kerneguy, he seemed less interested in the circumstance than he would have expected from the man's disposition, which was naturally prying and inquisitive. "He asked no questions about the young stranger," said Joceline. "God avert that he knows or suspects too much!" But his suspicions were removed, when, in the course of their subsequent conversation, Joseph Tomkins mentioned the King's escape from Bristol as a thing positively certain, and named both the vessel in which he said he had gone off, and the master who commanded her, seeming so convinced of the truth of the report, that Joceline judged it impossible he could have the slightest suspicion of the reality.

Yet notwithstanding this persuasion, and the comradeship, which had been established between them, the faithful under-keeper resolved to maintain a strict watch over his gossip Tomkins, and be in readiness to give the alarm should occasion arise. True, he thought, he had reason to believe that his said friend, notwithstanding his drunken and enthusiastic rants, was as trustworthy as he was esteemed by Doctor Rochecliffe; yet still he was an adventurer, the outside and lining of whose cloak were of different colours, and a high reward, and pardon for past acts of malignancy, might tempt him once more to turn his tippet—For these reasons Joceline kept a strict, though unostentatious watch over Trusty Tomkins.

We have said, that the discreet seneschal was universally well received at Woodstock, whether in the borough or at the Lodge, and that even Joceline Joliffe was anxious to conceal any suspicions which he could not altogether repress, under a great show of cordial hospitality. There were, however, two individuals, who, for very different reasons, nourished personal dislike against the individual so generally acceptable.

One was Nehemiah Holdenough, who remembered with great bitterness of spirit, the Independent's violent intrusion into his pulpit, and who ever spoke of him in private as a lying missionary, into whom Satan had put a spirit of delusion; and preached, besides, a solemn sermon on the subject of the false prophet, out of whose mouth came frogs. The discourse was highly prized by the mayor and most of the better class, who conceived that their minister had struck a heavy blow at the very root of Independency. On the other hand, those of the private spirit contended, that Joseph Tomkins had made a successful and triumphant rally, in an exhortation on the evening of the same day, in which he proved, to the conviction of many handicraftsmen, that the passage in Jeremiah, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means," was directly applicable to the Presbyterian system of church government. The clergyman despatched an account of his adversary's conduct to the Reverend Master Edwards, to be inserted in the next edition of Gangræna, as a pestilent heretic; and Tomkins recommended the parson to his master, Desborough, as a good subject on whom to impose a round fine, for vexing the private spirit; assuring him, at the same time, that though the minister might seem poor, yet if a few troopers were quartered on him till the fine was paid, every rich shopkeeper's wife in the borough would rob the till, rather than go without the mammon of unrighteousness with which to redeem their priest from sufferance; holding, according to his expression, with Laban, "You have taken from me my gods, and what have I more?" There was, of course, little cordiality between the polemical disputants, when religious debate took so worldly a turn.

But Joe Tomkins was much more concerned at the evil opinion which seemed to be entertained against him, by one whose good graces he was greatly more desirous to obtain than those of Nehemiah Holdenough. This was no other than pretty Mistress Phœbe Mayflower, for whose conversion he had felt a strong vocation, ever since his lecture upon Shakspeare on their first meeting at the Lodge. He seemed desirous, however, to carry on this more serious work in private, and especially to conceal his labours from his friend Joceline Joliffe, lest, perchance, he had been addicted to jealousy. But it was in vain that he plied the faithful damsel, sometimes with verses from the Canticles, sometimes with quotations from Green's Arcadia, or pithy passages from Venus and Adonis, and doctrines of a nature yet more abstruse, from the popular work entitled Aristotle's Masterpiece. Unto no wooing of his, sacred or profane, metaphysical or physical, would Phœbe Mayflower seriously incline.

The maiden loved Joceline Joliffe, on the one hand; and, on the other, if she disliked Joseph Tomkins when she first saw him, as a rebellious puritan, she had not been at all reconciled by finding reason to regard him as a hypocritical libertine. She hated him in both capacities—never endured his conversation when she could escape from it—and when obliged to remain, listened to him only because she knew he had been so deeply trusted, that to offend him might endanger the security of the family, in the service of which she had been born and bred up, and to whose interest she was devoted. For reasons somewhat similar, she did not suffer her dislike of the steward to become manifest before Joceline Joliffe, whose spirit, as a forester and a soldier, might have been likely to bring matters to an arbitrement, in which the

* The Familists were originally founded by David George of Delft, an enthusiast, who believed himself the Messiah. They branched off into various sects of Grindletonians, Familists of the Mountains, of the Valleys; Familists of Cape Order, &c. &c., of the Scattered Flock, &c. &c. Among doctrines, too wild and fond to be quoted, they held the lawfulness of occasional conformity with any predominant sect when it suited their convenience, of complying with the order of any magistrate, or superior power, however sinful. They disowned the principal doctrines of Christianity, as a law which had been superseded by the advent of David George—nay, obeyed the wildest and lowest dictates of evil passions, and are said to have practised among themselves the grossest libertinism. See Edward's *Gangræna*, Pagitt's *Heresiographia*, and a very curious work written by *Ludovic Clanton, one of the leaders of the sect called the Lwt Sheep Fraud*,—*small quarto, London*, 1690.

soutenu de chasse and quarterstaff of her favourite, would have been too unequally matched with the long rapier and pistols which his dangerous rival always carried about his person. But it is difficult to blind jealousy when there is any cause of doubt; and perhaps the sharp watch maintained by Joceline on his comrade, was prompted not only by his zeal for the King's safety, but by some vague suspicion that Tomkins was not ill disposed to poach upon his own fair manor.

Phœbe, in the mean while, like a prudent girl sheltered herself as much as possible by the presence of Goody Jellicot. Then, indeed, it is true the Independent, or whatever he was, used to follow her with his addresses to very little purpose; for Phœbe seemed as deaf, through wilfulness, as the old matron by natural infirmity. This indifference highly incensed her new lover, and induced him anxiously to watch for a time and place, in which he might plead his suit with an energy that should command attention. Fortune, that malicious goddess, who so often ruins us by granting the very object of our vows, did at length procure him such an opportunity as he had long coveted.

It was about sunset, or shortly after, when Phœbe, upon whose activity much of the domestic arrangements depended, went as far as Fair Rosamond's spring to obtain water for the evening meal, or rather to gratify the prejudice of the old knight, who believed that celebrated fountain afforded the choicest supplies of the necessary element. Such was the respect in which he was held by his whole family, that to neglect any of his wishes that could be gratified, though with inconvenience to themselves, would, in their estimation, have been almost equal to a breach of religious duty.

To fill the pitcher had, we know, been of late a troublesome task; but Joceline's ingenuity had so far rendered it easy, by repairing rudely a part of the ruined front of the ancient fountain, that the water was collected, and trickling along a wooden spout, dropped from a height of above two feet. A damsel was thereby enabled to place her pitcher under the slowly dropping supply, and without toil to herself, might wait till her vessel was filled.

Phœbe Mayflower, on the evening we allude to, saw, for the first time, this little improvement; and, justly considering it as a piece of gallantry of her silvan admirer, designed to save her the trouble of performing her task in a more inconvenient manner, she gratefully employed the minutes of ease which the contrivance procured her, in reflecting on the good-nature and ingenuity of the obliging engineer, and perhaps in thinking he might have done as wisely to have waited till she came to the fountain, that he might have secured personal thanks for the trouble he had taken. But then she knew he was detained in the buttery with that odious Tomkins, and rather than have seen the Independent along with him, she would have renounced the thought of meeting Joceline.

As she was thus reflecting, Fortune was malicious enough to send Tomkins to the fountain, and without Joceline. When she saw his figure darken the path up which he came, an anxious reflection came over the poor maiden's breast, that she was alone, and within the verge of the forest, where in general persons were prohibited to come during the twilight, for disturbing the deer settling to their repose. She encouraged herself, however, and resolved to show no sense of fear, although, as the steward approached, there was something in the man's look and eye no way calculated to allay her apprehensions.

"The blessings of the evening upon you, my pretty maiden," he said. "I meet you even as the chief servant of Abraham, who was a steward like myself, met Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, at the well of the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia. Shall I not, therefore, say to you, set down *thy pitcher that I may drink?*"

"*The pitcher is at your service, Master Tomkins,*" *she replied, "and you may drink as much as you will; but you have, I warrant, drank better liquor, and that not long since.*"

It was, indeed, obvious that the steward had risen from a revel, for his features were somewhat flushed, though he had stopped far short of intoxication. But Phœbe's alarm at his first appearance was rather increased when she observed how he had been lately employed.

"I do but use my privilege, my pretty Rebecca; the earth is given to the saints, and the fulness thereof. They shall occupy and enjoy it, both the riches of the mine, and the treasures of the vine; and they shall rejoice, and their hearts be merry within them. Thou hast yet to learn the privileges of the saints, my Rebecca."

"My name is Phœbe," said the maiden, in order to sober the enthusiastic rapture which he either felt or affected.

"Phœbe after the flesh," he said, "but Rebecca being spiritualized; for art thou not a wandering and stray sheep?—and am I not sent to fetch thee within the fold?—Wherefore else was it said, Thou shalt find her seated by the well, in the wood which is called after the ancient harlot, Rosamond?"

"You have found me sitting here sure enough," said Phœbe; "but if you wish to keep me company, you must walk to the Lodge with me; and you shall carry my pitcher for me, if you will be so kind. I will hear all the good things you have to say to me as we go along. But Sir Henry calls for his glass of water regularly before prayers."

"What!" exclaimed Tomkins, "hath the old man of bloody hand and perverse heart sent thee hither to do the work of a bondswoman? Verily thou shalt return enfranchised; and for the water thou hast drawn for him, it shall be poured forth, even as David caused to be poured forth the water of the well of Bethlehem."

So saying, he emptied the water pitcher, in spite of Phœbe's exclamations and entreaties. He then replaced the vessel beneath the little conduit, and continued:—"Know that this shall be a token to thee. The filling of that pitcher shall be like the running of a sand-glass; and if within the time which shall pass ere it rises to the brim, thou shalt listen to the words which I shall say to thee, then it shall be well with thee, and thy place shall be high among those who, forsaking the instruction which is as milk for babes and sucklings, eat the strong food which nourishes manhood. But if the pitcher shall overbrim with water ere my ear shall hear and understand, thou shalt then be given as a prey, and as a bondsmaiden, unto those who shall possess the fat and the fair of the earth."

"You frighten me, Master Tomkins," said Phœbe, "though I am sure you do not mean to do so. I wonder how you dare speak words so like the good words in the Bible when you know how you laughed at your own master, and all the rest of them—when you helped to play the hobgoblins at the Lodge."

"Think'st thou then, thou simple fool, that in putting that deceit upon Harrison and the rest, I exceeded my privileges?—Nay, verily.—Listen to me, foolish girl. When in former days I lived the most wild, malignant rakehell in Oxfordshire, frequenting wakes and fairs, dancing around Maypoles, and showing my lusthood at football and cudgel-playing—Yea, when I was called, in the language of the uncircumcised, Philip Hazeldine, and was one of the singers in the choir, and one of the ringers in the steeple, and served the priest yonder, by name Rochecliffe, I was not farther from the straight road than when, after long reading, I at length found one blind guide after another, all burners of bricks in Egypt. I left them one by one, the poor fool Harrison being the last; and by my own unassisted strength, I have struggled forward to the broad and blessed light, whereof thou too, Phœbe, shalt be partaker."

"I thank you, Master Tomkins," said Phœbe, suppressing some fear under an appearance of indifference; "but I shall have light enough to carry home my pitcher, would you but let me take it; and that is all the want of light I shall have this evening."

So saying, she stooped to take the pitcher from the fountain; but he snatched hold of her by the arm and prevented her from accomplishing her purpose

Phœbe, however, was the daughter of a bold forester, prompt at thoughts of self-defence; and though she missed getting hold of the pitcher, she caught up instead a large pebble, which she kept concealed in her right hand.

"Stand up, foolish maiden, and listen," said the Independent, sternly; "and know, in one word, that sin, for which the spirit of man is punished with the vengeance of Heaven, lieth not in the corporeal act, but in the thought of the sinner. Believe, lovely Phœbe, that to the pure all acts are pure, and that sin is in our thought, not in our actions—even as the radiance of the day is dark to a blind man, but seen and enjoyed by him whose eyes receive it. To him who is but a novice in the things of the spirit, much is enjoined, much is prohibited; and he is fed with milk fit for babes,—for him are ordinances, prohibitions, and commands. But the saint is above these ordinances and restraints. To him, as to the chosen child of the house, is given the pass-key to open all locks which withhold him from the enjoyment of his heart's desire. Into such pleasant paths will I guide thee, lovely Phœbe, as shall unite in joy, in innocent freedom, pleasures, which, to the unprivileged, are sinful and prohibited."

"I really wish, Master Tomkins, you would let me go home," said Phœbe, not comprehending the nature of his doctrine, but disliking at once his words and his manner. He went on, however, with the accursed and blasphemous doctrines, which, in common with others of the pretended saints, he had adopted, after having long shifted from one sect to another, until he settled in the vile belief, that sin, being of a character exclusively spiritual, only existed in the thoughts, and that the worst actions were permitted to those who had attained to the pitch of believing themselves above ordinance. "Thus, my Phœbe," he continued, endeavouring to draw her towards him, "I can offer thee more than ever was held out to woman since Adam first took his bride by the hand. It shall be for others to stand dry-lipped, doing penance like papists, by abstinence, when the vessel of pleasure pours forth its delights. Dost thou love money?—I have it, and can procure more—am at liberty to procure it on every hand, and by every means—the earth is mine and its fulness. Do you desire power?—which of these poor cheated commissioner-fellows' estates dost thou covet, I will work it out for thee; for I deal with a mightier spirit than any of them. And it is not without warrant that I have aided the malignant Rochecliffe, and the clown Joliffe, to frighten and baffle them in the guise they did. Ask what thou wilt, Phœbe, I can give, or I can procure it for thee—Then enter with me into a life of delight in this world, which shall prove but an anticipation of the joys of Paradise hereafter!"

Again the fanatical voluptuary endeavoured to pull the poor girl towards him, while she, alarmed, but not scared out of her presence of mind, endeavoured, by fair entreaty, to prevail on him to release her. But his features, in themselves not marked, had acquired a frightful expression, and he exclaimed, "No, Phœbe—do not think to escape—thou art given to me as a captive—thou hast neglected the hour of grace, and it has glided past—See, the water trickles over thy pitcher, which was to be a sign between us—Therefore I will urge thee no more with words, of which thou art not worthy, but treat thee as a recusant of offered grace."

"Master Tomkins," said Phœbe, in an imploring tone, "consider, for God's sake, I am a fatherless child—do me no injury, it would be a shame to your strength and your manhood—I cannot understand your fine words—I will think on them till to-morrow." Then, in rising resentment, she added more vehemently—"I will not be used rudely—stand off, or I will do you a mischief." But, as he pressed upon her with a violence, of which the object could not be mistaken, and endeavoured to secure her right hand, she exclaimed, "Take it then, with a wanion to you!"—and struck him an almost stunning blow on the face, with *the pebble which she held ready for such an extremity.*

The fanatic let her go, and staggered backward, half stupified; while Phœbe instantly betook herself to flight, screaming for help as she ran, but still grasping the victorious pebble. Irritated to frenzy by the severe blow which he had received, Tomkins pursued, with every black passion in his soul and in his face, mingled with fear lest his villany should be discovered. He called on Phœbe loudly to stop, and had the brutality to menace her with one of his pistols if she continued to fly. Yet she slacked not her pace for his threats, and he must either have executed them, or seen her escape to carry the tale to the Lodge, had she not unhappily stumbled over the projecting root of a fir tree. But as he rushed upon his prey, rescue interposed in the person of Joceline Joliffe, with his quarterstaff on his shoulder. "How now? what means this?" he said, stepping between Phœbe and her pursuer. Tomkins, already roused to fury, made no other answer than by discharging at Joceline the pistol which he held in his hand. The ball grazed the under-keeper's face, who, in requital of the assault, and saying "Aha! Let ash answer iron," applied his quarterstaff with so much force to the Independent's head, that lighting on the left temple, the blow proved almost instantly mortal.

A few convulsive struggles were accompanied with these broken words.—"Joceline—I am gone—but I forgive thee—Doctor Rochecliffe—I wish I had minded more—Oh!—the clergyman—the funeral service"—As he uttered these words, indicative it may be, of his return to a creed, which perhaps he had never abjured so thoroughly as he had persuaded himself, his voice was lost in a groan, which, rattling in the throat, seemed unable to find its way to the air. These were the last symptoms of life: the clenched hands presently relaxed—the closed eyes opened, and stared on the heavens a lifeless jelly—the limbs extended themselves and stiffened. The body, which was lately animated with life, was now a lump of senseless clay—the soul, dismissed from its earthly tenement in a moment so unhallowed, was gone before the judgment-seat.

"Oh, what have you done? what have you done, Joceline!" exclaimed Phœbe; "you have killed the man!"

"Better than he should have killed me," answered Joceline; "for he was none of the blinkers that miss their mark twice running.—And yet I am sorry for him—Many a merry bout have we had together when he was wild Philip Hazeldine, and then he was bad enough; but since he daubed over his vices with hypocrisy, he seems to have proved worse devil than ever."

"Oh, Joceline, come away," said poor Phœbe, "and do not stand gazing on him thus;" for the woodman, resting on his fatal weapon, stood looking down on the corpse with the appearance of a man half stunned at the event.

"This comes of the ale-pitcher," she continued, in the true style of female consolation, "as I have often told you—For Heaven's sake, come to the Lodge, and let us consult what is to be done."

"Stay first, girl, and let me drag him out of the path; we must not have him lie here in all men's sight—Will you not help me, wench?"

"I cannot, Joceline—I would not touch a lock on him for all Woodstock."

"I must to this gear myself, then," said Joceline, who, a soldier as well as a woodsman, still had great reluctance to the necessary task. Something in the face and broken words of the dying man had made a deep and terrific impression on nerves not easily shaken. He accomplished it, however, so far as to drag the late steward out of the open path, and bestow his body amongst the undergrowth of brambles and briers, so as not to be visible unless particularly looked after. He then returned to Phœbe, who had sat speechless all the while beneath the tree over whose roots she had stumbled.

"Come away, wench," he said, "come away to the Lodge, and let us study how this is to be answered for—the mishap of his being killed will strangely increase our danger. What had he sought of thee, wench, when you ran from him like a mad woman?—But I can guess—Phil was always a devil among the

girls, and I think, as Doctor Rochecliffe says, that, since he turned saint, he took to himself seven devils worse than himself.—Here is the very place where I saw him, with his sword in his hand raised against the old knight, and he a child of the parish—it was high treason at least—but by my faith, he hath paid for it at last."

"But, oh, Joceline," said Phœbe, "how could you take so wicked a man into your counsels, and join him in all his plots about scaring the roundhead gentlemen?"

"Why look thee, wench, I thought I knew him at the first meeting, especially when Bevis, who was bred here when he was a dog-leader, would not fly at him; and when we made up our old acquaintance at the Lodge, I found he kept up a close correspondence with Dr. Rochecliffe, who was persuaded that he was a good King's man, and held consequently good intelligence with him.—The Doctor boasts to have learned much through his means; I wish to Heaven he may not have been as communicative in turn."

"Oh, Joceline," said the waiting woman, "you should never have let him within the gate of the Lodge!"

"No more I would, if I had known how to keep him out; but when he went so frankly into our scheme, and told me how I was to dress myself like Robison the player, whose ghost haunted Harrison—I wish no ghost may haunt me!—when he taught me how to bear myself to terrify his lawful master, what could I think, wench? I only trust the Doctor has kept the great secret of all from his knowledge.—But here we are at the Lodge. Go to thy chamber, wench, and compose thyself. I must seek out Doctor Rochecliffe; he is ever talking of his quick and ready invention. Here come times, I think, that will demand it all."

Phœbe went to her chamber accordingly; but the strength arising from the pressure of danger giving way when the danger was removed, she quickly fell into a succession of hysterical fits, which required the constant attention of Dame Jellicot, and the less alarmed, but more judicious care of Mrs. Alice, before they even abated in their rapid recurrence.

The under-keeper carried his news to the politic Doctor, who was extremely disconcerted, alarmed, nay angry with Joceline, for having slain a person on whose communications he had accustomed himself to rely. Yet his looks declared his suspicion, whether his confidence had not been too rashly conferred—a suspicion which pressed him the more anxiously, that he was unwilling to avow it, as a derogation from his character for shrewdness on which he valued himself.

Doctor Rochecliffe's reliance, however, on the fidelity of Tomkins, had apparently good grounds. Before the Civil Wars, as may be partly collected from what has been already hinted at, Tomkins, under his true name of Hazeldine, had been under the protection of the Rector of Woodstock, occasionally acted as his clerk, was a distinguished member of his choir, and, being a handy and ingenious fellow, was employed in assisting the antiquarian researches of Dr. Rochecliffe through the interior of Woodstock. When he engaged in the opposite side in the Civil Wars, he still kept up his intelligence with the divine, to whom he had afforded what seemed valuable information from time to time. His assistance had latterly been eminently useful in aiding the Doctor, with the assistance of Joceline and Phœbe, in contriving and executing the various devices by which the Parliamentary Commissioners had been expelled from Woodstock. Indeed, his services in this respect had been thought worthy of no less a reward than a present of what plate remained at the Lodge, which had been promised to the Independent accordingly. The Doctor, therefore, while admitting he might be a bad man, regretted him as a useful one, *whose death*, if inquired after, was likely to bring *additional danger on a house* which danger already *surrounded and which* contained a pledge so precious

CHAPTER XXX.

Cassio. That thrust had been my enemy indeed,
But that my coat is better than thou know'st.
Othello.

On the dark October night succeeding the evening on which Tomkins was slain, Colonel Everard, besides his constant attendant Roger Wildrake, had Master Nehemiah Holdenough with him as a guest at supper. The devotions of the evening having been performed according to the Presbyterian fashion, a light entertainment, and a double quart of burnt claret, were placed before his friends at nine o'clock, an hour unusually late. Master Holdenough soon engaged himself in a polemical discourse against Sectaries and Independents, without being aware that his eloquence was not very interesting to his principal hearer, whose ideas in the mean while wandered to Woodstock and all which it contained—the Prince, who lay concealed there—his uncle—above all, Alice Lee. As for Wildrake, after bestowing a mental curse both on Sectaries and Presbyterians, as being, in his opinion, never a barrel the better herring, he stretched out his limbs, and would probably have composed himself to rest, but that he as well as his patron had thoughts which murdered sleep.

The party were waited upon by a little gipsy-looking boy, in an orange-tawny doublet, much decayed, and garnished with blue worsted lace. The rogue looked somewhat stinted in size, but active both in intelligence and in limb, as his black eyes seemed to promise by their vivacity. He was an attendant of Wildrake's choice, who had conferred on him the *nom de guerre* of Spitfire, and had promised him promotion so soon as his young protege, Breakfast, was fit to succeed him in his present office. It need scarce be said, that the menage was maintained entirely at the expense of Colonel Everard, who allowed Wildrake to arrange the household very much according to his pleasure. The page did not omit, in offering the company wine from time to time, to accommodate Wildrake with about twice the number of opportunities of refreshing himself which he considered it necessary to afford to the Colonel or his reverend guest.

While they were thus engaged, the good divine lost in his own argument, and the hearers in their private thoughts, their attention was about half past ten arrested by a knocking at the door of the house. To those who have anxious hearts, trifles give cause of alarm.

Even a thing so simple as a knock at the door, may have a character which excites apprehension. This was no quiet gentle tap, intimating a modest intruder; no redoubled rattle, as the pompous annunciation of some vain person; neither did it resemble the formal summons to formal business, nor the cheerful visit of some welcome friend. It was a single blow, solemn and stern, if not actually menacing in the sound. The door was opened by some of the persons of the house; a heavy foot ascended the stair—a stout man entered the room, and drawing the cloak from his face, said, "Markham Everard, I greet thee in God's name."

It was General Cromwell.

Everard, surprised and taken at unawares, endeavoured in vain to find words to express his astonishment. A bustle occurred in receiving the General, assisting him to uncloak himself, and offering in dumb show the civilities of reception. The General cast his keen eye around the apartment, and fixing it first on the divine, addressed Everard as follows:

"A reverend man I see is with thee. Thou art not one of those, good Markham, who let the time unnoted and unimproved pass away.—Casting aside the things of this world—pressing forward to those of the next—it is by thus using our time in this poor seat of terrestrial sin and care, that we may, as it were——But how is this?"—he continued suddenly changing his tone, and speaking briefly, sharply, and anxiously—"One hath left the room since I entered?"

Wildrake had, indeed, been absent for a minute or

two, but had now returned, and stepped forward from a bay window, as if he had been out of sight only, not out of the apartment. "Not so, sir, I stood but in the background out of respect. Noble General, I hope all is well with the Estate, that your Excellency makes us so late a visit?—Would not your Excellency choose some"——

"Ah!" said Oliver, looking sternly and fixedly at him—"Our trusty Gobetween—our faithful confidant; No, sir; at present, I desire nothing more than a kind reception, which, methinks, my friend Markham Everard is in no hurry to give me."

"You bring your own welcome, my lord," said Everard, compelling himself to speak. "I can only trust it was no bad news that made your Excellency a late traveller, and ask, like my follower, what refreshment I shall command for your accommodation."

"The state is sound and healthy, Colonel Everard," said the General; "and yet the less so, that many of its members, who have been hitherto workers together, and propounders of good counsel, and advancers of the public weal, have now waxed cold in their love and in their affection for the Good Cause, for which we should be ready, in our various degrees, to act and do, so soon as we are called to act that whereunto we are appointed, neither rashly, nor over-slothfully, neither lukewarmly nor over-violently, but with such a frame and disposition, in which zeal and charity may, as it were, meet and kiss each other in our streets. Howbeit, because we look back after we have put our hand to the plough, therefore is our force waxed dim."

"Pardon me, sir," said Nehemiah Holdenough, who, listening with some impatience, began to guess in whose company he stood—"Pardon me, for unto this I have a warrant to speak."

"Ah! ah!" said Cromwell. "Surely, most worthy sir, we grieve the Spirit when we restrain those pourings forth, which like water from a rock"——

"Nay, therein I differ from you, sir," said Holdenough; "for as there is the mouth to transmit the food, and the profit to digest what Heaven hath sent; so is the preacher ordained to teach, and the people to hear,—the shepherd to gather the flock into the sheepfold, the sheep to profit by the care of the shepherd."

"Ah! my worthy sir," said Cromwell, with much unction—"methinks you verge upon the great mistake, which supposes that churches are tall large houses built by masons, and hearers are men—wealthy men, who pay tithes, the larger, as well as the less; and that the priests, men in black gowns or gray cloaks, who receive the same, are in guerdon the only distributors of Christian blessings—Whereas, in my apprehension, there is more of Christian liberty in leaving it to the discretion of the hungry soul to seek his edification where it can be found, whether from the mouth of a lay teacher, who claimeth his warrant from Heaven alone, or at the dispensation of those who take ordination and degrees from synods and universities, at best but associations of poor sinful creatures like themselves."

"You speak you know not what, sir," replied Holdenough, impatiently. "Can light come out of darkness, sense out of ignorance, or knowledge of the mysteries of religion from such ignorant mediciners as give poisons instead of wholesome medicaments, and cram with filth the stomachs of such as seek to them for food?"

This, which the Presbyterian divine uttered rather warmly, the General answered with the utmost mildness.

"Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! a learned man, but intemperate; over-zeal hath eaten him up.—A well-a-day, sir, you may talk of your regular gospel-meals, but a word spoken in season by one whose heart is with your heart, just perhaps when you are riding on to encounter an enemy or are about to mount a breach, is to the poor spirit like a rasher on the coals, which the hungry shall find preferable to a great banquet, at such times when the full soul loatheth the honeycomb. Nevertheless, although I speak thus in my poor judgment, I would not put force on the conscience of any man, leaving to the learned to follow the learned, and the wise to be instructed by the wise, while poor simple wretched souls are not to be denied a drink from the stream which runneth by the way.—Ay, verily, it will be a comely sight in England when men shall go on as in a better world, bearing with each other's infirmities, joining in each other's comforts.—Ay, truly, the rich drink out of silver flagons, and goblets of silver, the poor out of paltry bowls of wood—and even so let it be, since they both drink the same element."

Here an officer opened the door and looked in, to whom Cromwell, exchanging the canting drawl, in which it seemed he might have gone on interminably for the short brief tone of action, called out, "Pearson, is he come?"

"No, sir," replied Pearson; "we have inquired for him at the place you noted, and also at other haunts of his about the town."

"The knave!" said Cromwell, with bitter emphasis; "can he have proved false?—No, no, his interest is too deeply engaged. We shall find him by and by.—Hark thee hither."

While this conversation was going forward, the reader must imagine the alarm of Everard. He was certain that the personal attendance of Cromwell must be on some most important account, and he could not but strongly suspect that the General had some information respecting Charles's lurking place. If taken, a renewal of the tragedy of the 30th of January was instantly to be apprehended, and the ruin of the whole family of Lee, with himself probably included, must be the necessary consequence.

He looked eagerly for consolation at Wildrake, whose countenance expressed much alarm, which he endeavoured to bear out with his usual look of confidence. But the weight within was too great; he shuffled with his feet, rolled his eyes, and twisted his hands, like an unassured witness before an acute and not to be deceived judge.

Oliver, mean while, left his company not a minute's leisure to take counsel together. Even while his perplexed eloquence flowed on in a stream so mazy that no one could discover which way its course was tending his sharp watchful eye rendered all attempts of Everard to hold communication with Wildrake, even by signs, altogether vain. Everard, indeed, looked for an instant at the window, then glanced at Wildrake, as if to hint there might be a possibility to escape that way. But the cavalier had replied with a disconsolate shake of the head, so slight as to be almost imperceptible. Everard, therefore, lost all hope, and the melancholy feeling of approaching and inevitable evil, was only varied by anxiety concerning the shape and manner in which it was about to make its approach.

But Wildrake had a spark of hope left. The very instant Cromwell entered he had got out of the room, and down to the door of the house. "Back—back!" repeated by two armed sentinels, convinced him that, as his fears had anticipated, the General had come neither unattended nor unprepared. He turned on his heel, ran up stairs, and meeting on the landing-place the boy whom he called Spitfire, hurried him into the small apartment which he occupied as his own. Wildrake had been shooting that morning, and game lay on the table. He pulled a feather from a woodcock's wing, and saying hastily, "For thy life, Spitfire, mind my orders—I will put thee safe out at the window into the court—the yard wall is not high—and there will be no sentry there—Fly to the Lodge, as thou wouldst win Heaven, and give this feather to Mistress Alice Lee, if possible—if not, to Joceline Joliffe—say I have won the wager of the young lady. Dost mark me, boy?"

The sharp-witted youth clapped his hand in his master's, and only replied, "Done, and done."

Wildrake opened the window, and, though the height was considerable, he contrived to let the boy down safely by holding his cloak. A heap of straw on which Spitfire lighted rendered the descent perfectly safe, and Wildrake saw him scramble over the wall of the court-yard, at the angle which bore on a back lane; and so rapidly was this accomplished, that the cavalier had just re-entered the room, when the bustle attending Cromwell's arrival subsiding, his own absence began to be noticed.

He remained during Cromwell's lecture on the vanity of creeds, anxious in mind whether he might not have done better to send an explicit verbal message, since there was no time to write. But the chance of the boy being stopped, or becoming confused with feeling himself the messenger of a hurried and important communication, made him, on the whole, glad that he had preferred a more enigmatical way of conveying the intelligence. He had, therefore, the advantage of his patron, for he was conscious still of a spark of hope.

Pearson had scarce shut the door, when Holdenough, as ready in arms against the future Dictator as he had been prompt to encounter the supposed phantoms and fiends of Woodstock, resumed his attack upon the schismatics, whom he undertook to prove to be at once soul-slayers, false brethren, and false messengers; and was proceeding to allege texts in behalf of his proposition, when Cromwell, apparently tired of the discussion, and desirous to introduce a discourse more accordant with his real feelings, interrupted him, though very civilly, and took the discourse into his own hands.

"Lack-a-day," he said, "the good man speaks truth, according to his knowledge and to his lights—ay, bitter truths, and hard to be digested, while we see as men see, and not with the eyes of angels.—False messengers, said the reverend man?—ay, truly, the world is full of such—You shall see them who will carry your secret message to the house of your mortal foe, and will say to him, 'Lo! my master is going forth with a small train, by such and such desolate places; be you speedy, therefore, that you may arise and slay him.' And another, who knoweth where the foe of your house, and enemy of your person, lies hidden, shall, instead of telling his master thereof, carry tidings to the enemy even where he lurketh, saying, 'Lo! my master knoweth of your secret abode—up now, and fly, lest he come on thee like a lion on his prey.'—But shall this go without punishment?" looking at Wildrake with a withering glance. "Now, as my soul liveth, and as He liveth who hath made me a ruler in Israel, such false messengers shall be knitted to gibbets on the way-side, and their right hands shall be nailed above their heads, in an extended position, as if pointing out to others the road from which they themselves have strayed!"

"Surely," said Master Holdenough, "it is right to cut off such offenders."

"Thank ye, Mass-John," muttered Wildrake; "when did the Presbyterian fail to lend the devil a shove?"

"But, I say," continued Holdenough, "that the matter is estranged from our present purpose, for the false brethren of whom I spoke are"——

"Right, excellent sir, they be those of our own house," answered Cromwell; "the good man is right once more.—Ay, of whom can we now say that he is a true brother, although he has lain in the same womb with us?—Although we have struggled in the same cause, eat at the same table, fought in the same battle, worshipped at the same throne, there shall be no truth in him.—Ah, Markham Everard, Markham Everard!"

He paused at this ejaculation; and Everard, desirous at once of knowing how far he stood committed, replied, "Your Excellency seems to have something in your mind in which I am concerned. May I request you will speak it out, that I may know what I am accused of?"

"Ah, Mark, Mark!" replied the General, "there needeth no accuser speak when the still small voice speaks within us. Is there not moisture on thy brow, Mark Everard?—Is there not trouble in thine eye?—Is there not a failure in thy frame?—And who ever saw such things in noble and stout Markham Everard, whose brow was only moist after having worn the helmet for a summer's day—whose hand only shook when it had wielded for hours the weighty falchion?—But go to, man! thou doubtest over much. Hast *thou not been to me as* a brother, and shall I not forgive thee even the seventy-seventh time? The knave *hath tarried somewhere*, who should have done by *this time an office of much* import. Take advantage of his absence, Mark; it is a grace that God gives thee beyond expectance. I do not say, fall at my feet; but speak to me as a friend to his friend."

"I have never said any thing to your Excellency that was in the least undeserving the title you have assigned to me," said Colonel Everard, proudly.

"Nay, nay, Markham," answered Cromwell; "I say not you have—But—but you ought to have remembered the message I sent you by that person" (pointing to Wildrake); "and you must reconcile it with your conscience, how, having such a message, guarded with such reasons, you could think yourself at liberty to expel my friends from Woodstock, being determined to disappoint my object, whilst you availed yourself of the boon, on condition of which my warrant was issued."

Everard was about to reply, when, to his astonishment, Wildrake stepped forward; and with a voice and look very different from his ordinary manner, and approaching a good deal to real dignity of mind, said, boldly and calmly, "You are mistaken, Master Cromwell; and address yourself to the wrong party here."

The speech was so sudden and intrepid, that Cromwell stepped a pace back, and motioned with his right hand towards his weapon, as if he had expected that an address of a nature so unusually bold was to be followed by some act of violence. He instantly resumed his indifferent posture; and, irritated at a smile which he observed on Wildrake's countenance, he said, with the dignity of one long accustomed to see all tremble before him, "This to me, fellow! Know you to whom you speak?"

"Fellow!" echoed Wildrake, whose reckless humour was now completely set afloat—"No fellow of yours, Master Oliver. I have known the day when Roger Wildrake of Squattlesea-mere, Lincoln, a handsome young gallant, with a good estate, would have been thought no fellow of the bankrupt brewer of Huntingdon."

"Be silent!" said Everard; "be silent, Wildrake, if you love your life!"

"I care not a maravedi for my life," said Wildrake.—"Zounds, if he dislikes what I say, let him take to his tools! I know, after all, he hath good blood in his veins; and I will indulge him with a turn in the court yonder, had he been ten times a brewer."

"Such ribaldry, friend," said Oliver, "I treat with the contempt it deserves. But if thou hast any thing to say touching the matter in question, speak out like a man, though thou look'st more like a beast."

"All I have to say is," replied Wildrake, "that whereas you blame Everard for acting on your warrant, as you call it, I can tell you, he knew not a word of the rascally conditions you talk of. I took care of that; and you may take the vengeance on me, if you list."

"Slave! dare you tell this to *me?*" said Cromwell, still heedfully restraining his passion, which he felt was about to discharge itself upon an unworthy object.

"Ay, you will make every Englishman a slave, if you have your own way," said Wildrake, not a whit abashed;—for the awe which had formerly overcome him when alone with this remarkable man, had vanished, now that they were engaged in an altercation before witnesses.—"But do your worst, Master Oliver; I tell you beforehand, the bird has escaped you."

"You dare not say so!—Escaped?—So, ho! Pearson! tell the soldiers to mount instantly.—Thou art a lying fool!—Escaped? Where, or from whence."

"Ay, that is the question," said Wildrake; "for look you, sir—that men do go from hence is certain—but how they go—or to what quarter"——

Cromwell stood attentive, expecting some useful hint from the careless impetuosity of the cavalier, upon the route which the King might have taken.

—"Or to what quarter, as I said before, why your Excellency, Master Oliver, may e'en find that out yourself."

As he uttered the last words he unsheathed his rapier, and made a full pass at the General's body. Had his sword met no other impediment than the

buff jerken, Cromwell's course had ended on the spot. But, fearful of such attempts, the General wore under his military dress a shirt of the finest mail, made of the rings of the best steel, and so light and flexible that it was little or no encumbrance to the motions of the wearer. It proved his safety on this occasion, for the rapier sprung in shivers; while the owner, now held back by Everard and Holdenough, flung the hilt with passion on the ground, exclaiming, "Be damned the hand that forged thee!—To serve me so long, and fail me when thy true service would have honoured us both for ever! But no good could come of thee, since thou were pointed, even in jest, at a learned divine of the Church of England."

In the first instant of alarm, and perhaps suspecting Wildrake might be supported by others, Cromwell half drew from his bosom a concealed pistol, which he hastily returned, observing that both Everard and the clergyman were withholding the cavalier from another attempt.

Pearson and a soldier or two rushed in—"Secure that fellow," said the General, in the indifferent tone of one to whom imminent danger was too familiar to cause irritation—"Bind him—but not so hard, Pearson;"—for the men, to show their zeal, were drawing their belts, which they used for want of cords, brutally tight round Wildrake's limbs. "He would have assassinated me, but I would reserve him for his fit doom."

"Assassinated!—I scorn your words, Master Oliver," said Wildrake; "I proffered you a fair duello."

"Shall we shoot him in the street, for an example?" said Pearson to Cromwell; while Everard endeavoured to stop Wildrake from giving further offence.

"On your life, harm him not; but let him be kept in safe ward, and well looked after," said Cromwell; while the prisoner exclaimed to Everard, "I prithee let me alone—I am now neither thy follower, nor any man's, and I am as willing to die as ever I was to take a cup of liquor.—And hark ye, speaking of that, Master Oliver, you were once a jolly fellow, prithee let one of thy lobsters here advance yonder tankard to my lips, and your Excellency shall hear a toast, a song, and a—secret."

"Unloose his head, and hand the debauched beast the tankard," said Oliver; "while yet he exists, it were shame to refuse him the element he lives in."

"Blessings on your head for once!" said Wildrake, whose object in continuing this wild discourse was, if possible, to gain a little delay, when every moment was precious. "Thou hast brewed good ale, and that's warrant for a blessing. For my toast and my song, here they go together—

> 'Son of a witch,
> Mayst thou die in a ditch,
> With the butchers who back thy quarrels;
> And rot above ground,
> While the world shall resound
> A welcome to Royal King Charles!'

And now for my secret, that you may not say I had your liquor for nothing—I fancy my song will scarce pass current for much—My secret is, Master Cromwell—that the bird is flown—and your red nose will be as white as your winding-sheet before you can smell out which way."

"Pshaw, rascal," answered Cromwell, contemptuously, "keep your scurril jests for the gibbet foot."

"I shall look on the gibbet more boldly," replied Wildrake, "than I have seen you look on the Royal Martyr's picture."

This reproach touched Cromwell to the very quick.—"Villain!" he exclaimed; "drag him hence, draw out a party, and———But hold, not now—to prison with him—let him be close watched, and gagged, if he attempts to speak to the sentinels—Nay, hold—I mean, put a bottle of brandy into his cell, and he will gag himself in his own way, I warrant you—When day comes, that men can see the example, he shall be gagged after my fashion."

During the various breaks in his orders, the General was evidently getting command of his temper; and though he began in fury, he ended with the contemptuous sneer of one who overlooks the abusive language of an inferior. Something remained on his mind, notwithstanding, for he continued stationary, as if fixed to the same spot in the apartment, his eyes bent on the ground, and with closed hand pressed against his lips, like a man who is musing deeply. Pearson, who was about to speak to him, drew back, and made a sign to those in the room to be silent.

Master Holdenough did not mark, or, at least, did not obey it. Approaching the General, he said in a respectful but firm tone, "Did I understand it to be your Excellency's purpose that this poor man shall die next morning?"

"Hah!" exclaimed Cromwell, starting from his reverie, "what say'st thou?"

"I took leave to ask, if it was your will that this unhappy man should die to-morrow?"

"Whom saidst thou?" demanded Cromwell: "Markham Everard—shall he die, saidst thou?"

"God forbid!" replied Holdenough, stepping back—"I asked whether this blinded creature, Wildrake, was to be so suddenly cut off?"

"Ay, marry is he," said Cromwell, "were the whole General Assembly of Divines at Westminster—the whole Sanhedrim of Presbytery—to offer bail for him."

"If you will not think better of it, sir," said Holdenough, "at least give not the poor man the means of destroying his senses—Let me go to him as a divine, to watch with him, in case he may yet be admitted into the vineyard at the latest hour—yet brought into the sheepfold, though he has neglected the call of the pastor till time is well nigh closed upon him."

"For God's sake," said Everard, who had hitherto kept silence, because he knew Cromwell's temper on such occasions, "think better of what you do!"

"Is it for thee to teach me?" replied Cromwell; "think thou of thine own matters, and believe me it will require all thy wit. And for you, reverend sir, I will have no father-confessors attend my prisoners—no tales out of school. If the fellow thirsts after ghostly comfort, as he is much more like to thirst after a quartern of brandy, there is Corporal Humgudgeon, who commands the *corps de garde*, will preach and pray as well as the best of ye.—But this delay is intolerable—Comes not this fellow yet?"

"No, sir," replied Pearson. "Had we not better go down to the Lodge? The news of our coming hither may else get there before us."

"True," said Cromwell, speaking aside to his officer, "but you know Tomkins warned us against doing so, alleging there were so many postern-doors, and sallyports, and concealed entrances, in the old house, that it was like a rabbit-warren, and that an escape might be easily made under our very noses, unless he were with us, to point out all the ports which should be guarded. He hinted, too, that he might be delayed a few minutes after his time of appointment—but we have now waited half-an-hour."

"Does your Excellency think Tomkins is certainly to be depended upon?" said Pearson.

"As far as his interest goes, unquestionably," replied the General. "He has ever been the pump by which I have sucked the marrow out of many a plot, in special those of the conceited fool Rochecliffe, who is goose enough to believe that such a fellow as Tomkins would value any thing beyond the offer of the best bidder. And yet it groweth late—I fear we must to the Lodge without him—Yet all things well considered, I will tarry here till midnight.—Ah! Everard, thou mightest put this gear to rights if thou wilt! Shall some foolish principle of fantastic punctilio have more weight with thee, man, than have the pacification and welfare of England; the keeping of faith to thy friend and benefactor, and who will be yet more so, and the fortune and security of thy relations? Are these, I say, lighter in the balance than the cause of a worthless boy, who with his father and his father's house have troubled Israel for fifty years?"

"I do not understand your Excellency, nor at what service you point, which I can honestly render," replied Everard. "That which is dishonest I should be loath that you proposed."

"Then this at least might suit your honesty, or scrupulous humour, call it which thou wilt," said Cromwell. "Thou knowest, surely, all the passages about Jezebel's palace down yonder?—Let me know how they may be guarded against the escape of any from within."

"I cannot pretend to aid you in this matter," said Everard; "I know not all the entrances and posterns about Woodstock, and if I did, I am not free in conscience to communicate with you on this occasion."

"We shall do without you, sir," replied Cromwell, haughtily; "and if aught is found which may criminate you, remember you have lost right to my protection."

"I shall be sorry," said Everard, "to have lost your friendship, General; but I trust my quality as an Englishman may dispense with the necessity of protection from any man. I know no law which obliges me to be spy or informer, even if I were in the way of having opportunity to do service in either honourable capacity."

"Well, sir," said Cromwell, "for all your privileges and qualities, I will make bold to take you down to the Lodge at Woodstock to-night, to inquire into affairs in which the State is concerned.—Come hither, Pearson." He took a paper from his pocket containing a rough sketch or ground-plan of Woodstock Lodge, with the avenues leading to it.—"Look here," he said, "we must move in two bodies on foot, and with all possible silence—thou must march to the rear of the old house of iniquity with twenty file of men, and dispose them around it the wisest thou canst. Take the reverend man there along with you. He must be secured at any rate, and may serve as a guide. I myself will occupy the front of the Lodge, and thus having stopt all the earths, thou wilt come to me for farther orders—silence and despatch is all. —But for the dog Tomkins, who broke appointment with me, he had need render a good excuse, or wo to his father's son!—Reverend sir, be pleased to accompany that officer.—Colonel Everard, you are to follow me; but first give your sword to Captain Pearson, and consider yourself as under arrest."

Everard gave his sword to Pearson without any comment, and with the most anxious presage of evil followed the Republican General, in obedience to commands which it would have been useless to dispute.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Were my son William here but now,
He wadna fail the pledge."
Wi' that in at the door there ran
A ghastly-looking page—
"I saw them, master, O I saw,
Beneath the thornie brae,
Of black-mail'd warriors many a rank."
"Revenge!" he cried, "and gae!"—
HENRY MACKENZIE.

THE little party at the Lodge were assembled at supper, at the early hour of eight o'clock. Sir Henry Lee, neglecting the food that was placed on the table, stood by a lamp on the chimney-piece, and read a letter with mournful attention.

"Does my son write to you more particularly than to me, Doctor Rochecliffe?" said the knight. "He only says here, that he will return probably this night; and that Master Kerneguy must be ready to set off with him instantly. What can this haste mean? Have you heard of any new search after our suffering party? I wish they would permit me to enjoy my son's company in quiet but for a day."

"The quiet which depends on the wicked ceasing from troubling," said Dr. Rochecliffe, "is connected, not by days and hours, but by minutes. Their glut of blood at Worcester had satiated them for a moment, but their appetite, I fancy, has revived."

"You have news, then, to that purpose?" said Sir Henry.

"Your son," replied the Doctor, "wrote to me by *the same* messenger; he seldom fails to do so, being *aware of what importance* it is that I should know *every thing that passes*. Means of escape are *provided on the coast*, and Master Kerneguy must be *ready to start with your son the instant* he appears."

"It is strange," said the knight; "for forty years I have dwelt in this house, man and boy, and the point only was how to make the day pass over our heads; for if I did not scheme out some hunting match or hawking, or the like, I might have sat here on my arm-chair, as undisturbed as a sleeping dormouse, from one end of the year to the other; and now I am more like a hare on her form, that dare not sleep unless with her eyes open, and scuds off when the wind rustles among the fern."

"It is strange," said Alice, looking at Doctor Rochecliffe, "that the roundhead steward has told you nothing of this. He is usually communicative enough of the motions of his party; and I saw you close together this morning."

"I must be closer with him this evening," said the Doctor gloomily; "but he will not blab."

"I wish you may not trust him too much," said Alice in reply.—"To me, that man's face, with all its shrewdness, evinces such a dark expression, that methinks I read treason in his very eye."

"Be assured, that matter is looked to," answered the Doctor, in the same ominous tone as before. No one replied, and there was a chilling and anxious feeling of apprehension which seemed to sink down on the company at once, like those sensations which make such constitutions as are particularly subject to the electrical influence, conscious of an approaching thunder-storm.

The disguised Monarch, apprized that day to be prepared on short notice to quit his temporary asylum, felt his own share of the gloom which involved the little society. But he was the first also to shake it off, as what neither suited his character nor his situation. Gayety was the leading distinction of the former, and presence of mind, not depression of spirits, was required by the latter.

"We make the hour heavier," he said, "by being melancholy about it. Had you not better join me, Mistress Alice, in Patrick Carey's jovial farewell?—Ah, you do not know Pat Carey—a younger brother of Lord Falkland's?"*

"A brother of the immortal Lord Falkland's, and write songs!" said the Doctor.

"Oh, Doctor, the Muses take tithe as well as the Church," said Charles, "and have their share in every family of distinction. You do not know the words, Mistress Alice, but you can aid me notwithstanding, in the burden at least—

'Come, now that we're parting, and 'tis one to ten
If the towers of sweet Woodstock I e'er see agen,
Let us e'en have a frolic, and drink like tall men,
While the goblet goes merrily round.'"†

The song arose, but not with spirit. It was one of those efforts at forced mirth, by which, above all other modes of expressing it, the absence of real cheerfulness is most distinctly intimated. Charles stopt the song, and upbraided the choristers.

"You sing, my dear Mistress Alice, as if you were chanting one of the seven penitential psalms; and you, good Doctor, as if you recited the funeral service."

The Doctor rose hastily from the table, and turned to the window; for the expression connected singularly with the task which he was that evening to discharge. Charles looked at him with some surprise;

* "You do not know Patrick Carey," says King Charles in the novel, and, what is more singular, Patrick Carey has had two editors, each unknown alike to the other, except by name only. In 1771, Mr. John Murray published Carey's poems, from a collection said to be in the hands of the Rev. Mr. Pierspoint Crimp. A very probable conjecture is stated, that the author was only known to private friendship. As late as 1819, the Author of Waverley, ignorant of the edition of 1771, published a second quarto from an elaborate manuscript, though in bad order, apparently the autograph of the first. Of Carey, the second editor, like the first, only knew the name and the spirit of the verses. He has since been enabled to ascertain, that the poetic cavalier was a younger brother of the celebrated Henry Lord Carey, who fell at the battle of Newbery, and escaped the researches of Horace Walpole, to whose list of noble authors he would have been an important addition. So completely has the fame of the great Lord Falkland eclipsed that of his brother's, that this brother Patrick has been overlooked even by genealogists.

† The original song of Carey bears Wykeham, instead of Woodstock, for the locality. The verses are full of the true chanalian spirit of the time.

for the peril in which he lived, made him watchful of the slightest motions of those around him—then turned to Sir Henry, and said, "My honoured host, can you tell any reason for this moody fit, which has so strangely crept upon us all?"

"Not I, my dear Louis," replied the knight; "I have no skill in these nice quillets of philosophy. I could as soon undertake to tell you the reason why Bevis turns round three times before he lies down. I can only say for myself, that if age and sorrow and uncertainty be enough to break a jovial spirit, or at least to bend it now and then, I have my share of them all; so that I, for one, cannot say that I am sad merely because I am not merry, I have but too good cause for sadness.—I would I saw my son, were it but for a minute!"

Fortune seemed for once disposed to gratify the old man; for Albert Lee entered at that moment. He was dressed in a riding suit, and appeared to have travelled hard. He cast his eye hastily around as he entered. It rested for a second on that of the disguised Prince, and, satisfied with the glance which he received in lieu, he hastened, after the fashion of the olden day, to kneel down to his father, and request his blessing.

"It is thine, my boy," said the old man; a tear springing to his eyes as he laid his hand on the long locks which distinguished the young cavalier's rank and principles, and which, usually combed and curled with some care, now hung wild and dishevelled about his shoulders. They remained an instant in this posture, when the old man suddenly started from it, as if ashamed of the emotion which he had expressed before so many witnesses, and passing the back of his hand hastily across his eyes, bid Albert get up, and mind his supper, "since I dare say you have ridden fast and far since you last baited—and we'll send round a cup to his health, if Doctor Rochecliffe and the good company pleases—Joceline, thou knave, skink about—thou look'st as if thou hadst seen a ghost."

"Joceline," said Alice, "is sick for sympathy—one of the stags ran at Phœbe Mayflower to-day, and she was fain to have Joceline's assistance to drive the creature off—the girl has been in fits since she came home."

"Silly slut," said the old knight—"She a woodman's daughter!—But, Joceline, if the deer gets dangerous, you must send a broad arrow through him."

"It will not need, Sir Henry," said Joceline, speaking with great difficulty of utterance—"he is quiet enough now—he will not offend in that sort again."

"See it be so," replied the knight; "remember Mistress Alice often walks in the Chase.—And now fill round, and fill, too, a cup to thyself, to over-red thy fear, as mad Will has it.—Tush, man, Phœbe will do well enough—she only screamed and ran, that thou mightst have the pleasure to help her.—Mind what thou dost, and do not go spilling the wine after that fashion.—Come, here is a health to our wanderer, who has come to us again."

"None will pledge it more willingly than I," said the disguised Prince, unconsciously assuming an importance which the character he personated scarce warranted; but Sir Henry, who had become fond of the supposed page, with all his peculiarities, imposed only a moderate rebuke upon his petulance. "Thou art a merry, good-humoured youth, Louis," he said; "but it is a world to see how the forwardness of the present generation hath gone beyond the gravity and reverence which in my youth was so regularly observed towards those of higher rank and station—I dared no more have given my own tongue the rein, when there was a doctor of divinity in company, than I would have dared to have spoken in church in service-time."

"True, sir," said Albert, hastily interfering; "but Master Kerneguy had the better right to speak at present, that I have been absent on his business as well as my own, have seen several of his friends, and bring him important intelligence."

Charles was about to rise, and beckon Albert aside, naturally impatient to know what news he had procured, or what scheme of safe escape was now decreed for him. But Doctor Rochecliffe twitched his cloak, as a hint to him to sit still, and not show any extraordinary motive for anxiety, since, in case of a sudden discovery of his real quality, the violence of Sir Henry Lee's feelings might have been likely to attract too much attention.

Charles, therefore, only replied, as to the knight's stricture, that he had a particular title to be sudden and unceremonious in expressing his thanks to Colonel Lee—that gratitude was apt to be unmannerly—finally, that he was much obliged to Sir Henry for his admonition; and that quit Woodstock when he would, "he was sure to leave it a better man than he came there."

His speech was of course ostensibly directed towards the father; but a glance at Alice assured her that she had a full share in the compliment.

"I fear," he concluded, addressing Albert, "that you come to tell us our stay here must be very short."

"A few hours only," said Albert—"just enough for needful rest for ourselves and our horses. I have procured two which are good and tried. But Doctor Rochecliffe broke faith with me. I expected to have met some one down at Joceline's hut, where I left the horses; and finding no person, I was delayed an hour in littering them down myself, that they might be ready for to-morrow's work—for we must be off before day."

"I—I—intended to have sent Tomkins—but—but"—— hesitated the Doctor, "I"——

"The roundheaded rascal was drunk, or out of the way, I presume," said Albert. "I am glad of it—you may easily trust him too far."

"Hitherto he has been faithful," said the Doctor, "and I scarce think he will fail me now. But Joceline will go down and have the horses in readiness in the morning."

Joceline's countenance was usually that of alacrity itself in a case extraordinary. Now, however, he seemed to hesitate.

"You will go with me a little way, Doctor?" he said, as he edged himself closely to Rochecliffe.

"How? puppy, fool, and blockhead," said the knight, "wouldst thou ask Doctor Rochecliffe to bear thee company at this hour?—Out, hound! get down to the kennel yonder instantly, or I will break the knave's pate of thee."

Joceline looked with an eye of agony at the divine, as if entreating him to interfere in his behalf; but just as he was about to speak, a most melancholy howling arose at the hall-door, and a dog was heard scratching for admittance.

"What ails Bevis next?" said the old knight. "I think this must be All-Fools-day, and that every thing around me is going mad!"

The same sound startled Albert and Charles from a private conference in which they had engaged, and Albert ran to the hall-door to examine personally into the cause of the noise.

"It is no alarm," said the old knight to Kerneguy, "for in such cases the dog's bark is short, sharp and furious. These long howls are said to be ominous. It was even so that Bevis's grandsire bayed the whole livelong night on which my poor father died. If it comes now as a presage, God send it regard the old and useless, not the young, and those who may yet serve king and country!"

The dog had pushed past Colonel Lee, who stood a little while at the hall-door to listen if there were any thing stirring without, while Bevis advanced into the room where the company were assembled, bearing something in his mouth, and exhibiting, in an unusual degree, that sense of duty and interest which a dog seems to show when he thinks he has the charge of something important. He entered, therefore, drooping his long tail, slouching his head and ears, and walking with the stately yet melancholy dignity of a war-horse at his master's funeral. In this manner he paced through the room, went straight up to Joceline, who had been regarding him with astonishment, and uttering a short and melancholy howl, laid at his feet the object which he bore in his mouth: Joceline stooped, and took from the floor a man's glove, of the fashion worn by the troopers, having something like the old-fashioned gauntlet projections of thick leather

arising from the wrist, which go half way up to the elbow, and secure the arm against a cut with a sword. But Joceline had no sooner looked at what in itself was so common an object, than he dropped it from his hand, staggered backward, uttered a groan, and nearly fell to the ground.

"Now, the coward's curse be upon thee for an idiot!" said the knight, who had picked up the glove, and was looking at it—"thou shouldst be sent back to school, and flogged till the craven's blood was switched out of thee—What dost thou look at but a glove, thou base poltron, and a very dirty glove too? —Stay, here is writing—Joseph Tomkins?—why, that is the roundheaded fellow—I wish he hath not come to some mischief—for this is not dirt on the cheveron, but blood—Bevis may have bit the fellow, and yet the dog seemed to love him well too—or the stag may have hurt him—Out, Joceline, instantly, and see where he is—wind your bugle."

"I cannot go," said Joliffe, "unless"—and again he looked piteously at Doctor Rochecliffe, who saw no time was to be lost in appeasing the ranger's terrors, as his ministry was most needful in the present circumstances.—"Get spade and mattock," he whispered to him, "and a dark lantern, and meet me in the wilderness."

Joceline left the room; and the Doctor, before following him, had a few words of explanation with Colonel Lee. His own spirit, far from being dismayed on the occasion, rather rose higher, like one whose natural element was intrigue and danger. "Here hath been wild work," he said, "since you parted. Tomkins was rude to the wench Phœbe—Joceline and he had a brawl together, and Tomkins is lying dead in the thicket, not far from Rosamond's Well. It will be necessary that Joceline and I go directly to bury the body; for besides that some one might stumble upon it, and raise an alarm, this fellow Joceline will never be fit for any active purpose till it is under ground. Though as stout as a lion, the under-keeper has his own weak side, and is more afraid of a dead body than a living one. When do you propose to start to-morrow?"

"By daybreak, or earlier," said Colonel Lee; "but we will meet again—A vessel is provided, and I have relays in more places than one—we go off from the coast of Sussex; and I am to get a letter at ——, acquainting me precisely with the spot."

"Wherefore not go off instantly?" inquired the Doctor.

"The horses would fail us," replied Albert—"they have been hard ridden to-day."

"Adieu," said Rochecliffe, "I must to my task—Do you take rest and repose for yours.—To conceal a slaughtered body, and convey on the same night a king from danger and captivity, are two feats which have fallen to few folks save myself; but let me not, while putting on my harness, boast myself as if I were taking it off after a victory." So saying, he left the apartment, and muffling himself in his cloak, went out into what was called the Wilderness.

The weather was a raw frost. The mist lay in partial wreaths upon the lower grounds; but the night, considering that the heavenly bodies were in a great measure hidden by the haze, was not extremely dark. Doctor Rochecliffe could not, however, distinguish the under-keeper, until he had hemmed once or twice, when Joceline answered the signal by showing a glimpse of light from the dark lantern which he carried. Guided by this intimation of his presence, the divine found him leaning against a buttress which had once supported a terrace, now ruinous. He had a pickaxe and shovel, together with a deer's hide hanging over his shoulder.

"What do you want with the hide, Joceline," said Dr Rochecliffe, "that you lumber it about with you on such an errand?"

"Why, look you, Doctor," he answered, "it is as well to tell you all about it. The man and I—he there —you know whom I mean—had many years since a *quarrel about this deer.* For though we were great *friends, and Philip* was sometimes allowed by my *master's permission* to help me in mine office, yet I *knew, for all that,* Philip Hazeldine was sometimes a trespasser. The deer-stealers were very bold at that time, it being just before the breaking out of the war, when men were becoming unsettled—And so it chanced, that one day, in the Chase, I found two fellows, with their faces blacked, and shirts over their clothes, carrying as prime a buck between them as any was in the park. I was upon them in the instant —one escaped, but I got hold of the other fellow, and who should it prove to be but trusty Phil Hazeldine! Well, I don't know whether it was right or wrong, but he was my old friend and pot-companion, and I took his word for amendment in future; and he helped me to hang up the deer on a tree, and I came back with a horse to carry him to the Lodge, and tell the knight the story, all but Phil's name. But the rogues had been too clever for me; for they had flayed and dressed the deer, and quartered him, and carried him off, and left the hide and horns, with a chime, saying

> 'The haunch to thee,
> The breast to me,
> The hide and the horns for the keeper's foe.'

And this I knew for one of Phil's mad pranks, that he would play in those days with any lad in the country. But I was so nettled, that I made the deer's hide be curried and dressed by a tanner, and swore that it should be his winding-sheet or mine, and though I had long repented my rash oath, yet now, Doctor, you see what it has come to—though I forgot it, the devil did not."

"It was a very wrong thing to make a vow so sinful," said Rochecliffe; "but it would have been greatly worse had you endeavoured to keep it. Therefore, I bid you cheer up," said the good divine; "for in this unhappy case, I could not have wished, after what I have heard from Phœbe and yourself, that you should have kept your hand still, though I may regret that the blow has proved fatal. Nevertheless, thou hast done even that which was done by the great and inspired legislator, when he beheld an Egyptian tyrannizing over a Hebrew, saving that, in the case present, it was a female, when, says the Septuagint, *Percussum Egyptium abscondit arbulo;* the meaning whereof I will explain to you another time. Wherefore, I exhort you, not to grieve beyond measure; for, although this circumstance is unhappy in time and place, yet, from what Phœbe hath informed me of yonder wretch's opinions, it is much to be regretted that his brains had not been beaten out in his cradle, rather than that he had grown up to be one of those Grindlestonians, or Muggletonians, in whom is the perfection of every foul and blasphemous heresy, united with such a universal practice of hypocritical assentation, as would deceive their master, even Satan himself."

"Nevertheless, sir," said the forester, "I hope you will bestow some of the service of the church on this poor man, as it was his last wish, naming you, sir, at the same time; and unless this were done, I should scarce dare to walk out in the dark again, for my whole life."

"Thou art a silly fellow—but if," continued the Doctor, "he named me as he departed, and desired the last rites of the church, there was, it may be, a turning from evil and a seeking to good even in his last moments; and if Heaven granted him grace to form a prayer so fitting, wherefore should man refuse it? All I fear is the briefness of time."

"Nay, your reverence may cut the service somewhat short," said Joceline; "assuredly he does not deserve the whole of it; only if something were not to be done, I believe I should flee the country. They were his last words; and methinks he sent Bevis with his glove to put me in mind of them."

"Out, fool!—Do you think," said the Doctor, "dead men send gauntlets to the living, like knights in a romance; or, if so, would they choose dogs to carry their challenges? I tell thee, fool, the cause was natural enough. Bevis, questing about, found the body, and brought the glove to you to intimate where it was lying, and to require assistance; for such is the high instinct of these animals towards one in peril."

"Nay, if you think so, Doctor," said Joceline—"and, doubtless, I must say, Bevis took an interest in the

man—if indeed it was not something worse in the shape of Bevis, for methought his eyes looked wild and fiery, as if he would have spoken."

As he talked thus, Joceline rather hung back, and, in doing so, displeased the Doctor, who exclaimed, "Come along, thou lazy laggard.—Art thou a soldier, and a brave one, and so much afraid of a dead man? —Thou hast killed men in battle, and in chase, I warrant thee."

"Ay, but their backs were to me," said Joceline—"I never saw one of them cast back his head, and glare at me as yonder fellow did, his eye retaining a glance of hatred, mixed with terror and reproach, till it became fixed like a jelly. And were you not with me, and my master's concerns, and something else, very deeply at stake, I promise you I would not again look at him for all Woodstock."

"You must, though," said the Doctor, suddenly pausing,—"for here is the place where he lies! Come hither deep into the copse—take care of stumbling. Here is a place just fitting, and we will draw the briers over the grave afterwards."

As the Doctor thus issued his directions, he assisted also in the execution of them; and while his attendant laboured to dig a shallow and misshapen grave, a task which the state of the soil, perplexed with roots, and hardened by the influence of the frost, rendered very difficult, the divine read a few passages out of the funeral service, partly in order to appease the superstitious terrors of Joceline, and partly because he held it matter of conscience not to deny the church's rites to one who had requested their aid in extremity.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Case ye, case ye, on with your vizards.—*Henry IV.*

THE company whom we had left in Victor Lee's parlour were about to separate for the night, and had risen to take a formal leave of each other, when a tap was heard at the hall-door. Albert, the vidette of the party, hastened to open it, enjoining, as he left the room, the rest to remain quiet, until he had ascertained the cause of the knocking. When he gained the portal, he called to know who was there, and what they wanted at so late an hour.

"It is only me," answered a treble voice.

"And what is your name, my little fellow?" said Albert.

"Spitfire, sir," replied the voice without.

"Spitfire?" said Albert.

"Yes, sir," replied the voice; "all the world calls me so, and Colonel Everard himself. But my name is Spittal for all that."

"Colonel Everard! arrive you from him?" demanded young Lee.

"No, sir; I come, sir, from Roger Wildrake, esquire, of Squattlesea-mere, if it like you," said the boy; "and I have brought a token to Mistress Lee, which I am to give into her own hands, if you would but open the door, sir, and let me in—but I can do nothing with a three inch board between us."

"It is some freak of that drunken rakehell," said Albert, in a low voice, to his sister, who had crept out after him on tiptoe.

"Yet, let us not be hasty in concluding so," said the young lady; "at this moment the least trifle may be of consequence.—What token has Master Wildrake sent me, my little boy?"

"Nay, nothing very valuable neither," replied the boy: "but he was so anxious you should get it, that he put me out of the window as one would chuck out a kitten, that I might not be stopped by the soldiers."

"Hear you?" said Alice to her brother; "undo the gate, for God's sake."

Her brother, to whom her feelings of suspicion were now sufficiently communicated, opened the gate in haste, and admitted the boy, whose appearance, not much dissimilar to that of a skinned rabbit in a livery, or a monkey at a fair, would at another time have furnished them with amusement. The urchin messenger entered the hall, making several odd bows and congés, and delivered the woodcock's feather* with much ceremony to the young lady, assuring her it was the prize she had won upon a wager about hawking.

"I prithee, my little man," said Albert, "was your master drunk or sober, when he sent thee all this way with a feather at this time of night?"

"With reverence, sir," said the boy, "he was what he calls sober, and what I would call concerned in liquor for any other person."

"Curse on the drunken coxcomb!" said Albert.—"There is a tester for thee, boy, and tell thy master to break his jests on suitable persons, and at fitting times."

"Stay yet a minute," exclaimed Alice; "we must not go too fast—this craves wary walking."

"A feather," said Albert; "all this work about a feather! Why, Dr. Rochecliffe, who can suck intelligence out of every trifle as a magpie would suck an egg, could make nothing of this."

"Let us try what we can do without him then," said Alice. Then addressing herself to the boy,—"So there are strangers at your master's?"

"At Colonel Everard's, madam, which is the same thing," said Spitfire.

"And what manner of strangers," said Alice; "guests, I suppose?"

"Ay, mistress," said the boy, "a sort of guests that make themselves welcome wherever they come, if they meet not a welcome from their landlord—soldiers, madam."

"The men that have been long lying at Woodstock?" said Albert.

"No, sir," said Spitfire, "new comers, with gallant buff-coats and steel breast-plates; and their commander—your honour and your ladyship never saw such a man!—at least I am sure Bill Spitfire never did."

"Was he tall or short?" said Albert, now much alarmed.

"Neither one nor other," said the boy; "stout made, with slouching shoulders; a nose large, and a face one would not like to say No to. He had several officers with him. I saw him but for a moment, but I shall never forget him while I live."

"You are right," said Albert Lee to his sister, pulling her to one side, "quite right—the Archfiend himself is upon us!"

"And the feather," said Alice, whom fear had rendered apprehensive of slight tokens, "means flight—and a woodcock is a bird of passage."

"You have hit it," said her brother; "but the time has taken us cruelly short. Give the boy a trifle more—nothing that can excite suspicion, and dismiss him. I must summon Rochecliffe and Joceline."

He went accordingly, but, unable to find those he sought, he returned with hasty steps to the parlour, where, in his character of Louis, the page was exerting himself to detain the old knight, who, while laughing at the tales he told him, was anxious to go to see what was passing in the hall.

"What is the matter, Albert?" said the old man; "who calls at the Lodge at so undue an hour, and wherefore is the hall-door opened to them? I will not have my rules, and the regulations laid down for keeping this house, broken through, because I am old and poor. Why answer you not? why keep a chattering with Louis Kerneguy, and neither of you all the while minding what I say?—Daughter Alice, have you sense and civility enough to tell me, what or who it is that is admitted here contrary to my general orders?"

"No one, sir," replied Alice; "a boy brought a message, which I fear is an alarming one."

* On a particular occasion, a lady, suspecting, by the passage of a body of guards through her estate, that the arrest of her neighbour, Patrick Home of Polwarth, afterwards first Earl of Marchmont, was designed, sent him a feather by a shepherd boy, whom she dared not trust with a more explicit message. Danger sharpens the intellect, and this hint was the commencement of those romantic adventures which gave Grizzel Lady Murray the materials from which she compiled her account of her grandfather's escape, published by Mr. Thomas Thomson, Deputy Register of Scotland. The anecdote of the feather does not occur there, but the author has often heard it from the late Lady Diana Scott, the lineal descendant and representative of Patrick Earl of Marchmont.

"There is only fear, sir," said Albert, stepping forward, "that whereas we thought to have stayed with you till to-morrow, we must now take farewell of you to-night."

"Not so, brother," said Alice, "you must stay and aid the defence here—if you and Master Kerneguy are both missed, the pursuit will be instant, and probably successful; but if you stay, the hiding-places about this house will take some time to search. You can change coats with Kerneguy too."

"Right, noble wench," said Albert; "most excellent—yes—Louis, I remain as Kerneguy, you fly as young Master Lee."

"I cannot see the justice of that," said Charles.

"Nor I neither," said the knight, interfering. "Men come and go, lay schemes, and alter them, in my house, without deigning to consult me! And who is Master Kerneguy, or what is he to me, that my son must stay and take the chance of mischief, and this your Scotch page is to escape in his dress? I will have no such contrivance carried into effect, though it were the finest cobweb that was ever woven in Dr. Rochecliffe's brains.—I wish you no ill, Louis; thou art a lively boy; but I have been somewhat too lightly treated in this, man."

"I am fully of your opinion, Sir Henry," replied the person whom he addressed. "You have been, indeed, repaid for your hospitality by want of that confidence, which could never have been so justly reposed. But the moment is come, when I must say in in a word, I am that unfortunate Charles Stewart, whose lot it has been to become the cause of ruin to his best friends, and whose present residence in your family threatens to bring destruction to you, and all around you."

"Master Louis Kerneguy," said the knight very angrily, "I will teach you to choose the subjects of your mirth better when you address them to me; and, moreover, very little provocation would make me desire to have an ounce or two of that malapert blood from you."

"Be still, sir, for Godsake!" said Albert to his father. "This is indeed THE KING; and such is the danger of his person, that every moment we waste may bring round a fatal catastrophe."

"Good God!" said the father, clasping his hands together, and about to drop on his knees, "has my earnest wish been accomplished! and is it in such a manner as to make me pray it had never taken place!"

He then attempted to bend his knee to the King—kissed his hand, while large tears trickled from his eyes—then said, "Pardon, my Lord—your Majesty, I mean—permit me to sit in your presence but one instant till my blood beats more freely, and then"——

Charles raised his ancient and faithful subject from the ground; and even in that moment of fear and anxiety and danger, insisted on leading him to his seat, upon which he sunk in apparent exhaustion, his head drooping upon his long white beard, and big unconscious tears mingling with its silver hairs. Alice and Albert remained with the King, arguing and urging his instant departure.

"The horses are at the under-keeper's hut," said Albert, "and the relays only eighteen or twenty miles off. If the horses can but carry you so far"——

"Will you not rather," interrupted Alice, "trust to the concealments of this place, so numerous and so well tried—Rochecliffe's apartments, and the yet farther places of secrecy?"

"Alas!" said Albert, "I know them only by name. My father was sworn to confide them to but one man, and he had chosen Rochecliffe."

"I prefer taking the field to any hiding-hole in England," said the King. "Could I but find my way to this hut where the horses are, I would try what arguments whip and spur could use to get them to the rendezvous, where I am to meet Sir Thomas Acland and fresh cattle. Come with me, Colonel Lee, and let us run for it. The roundheads have beat us in battle; but if it come to a walk or a race, I think *I can show which has the best mettle.*"

"But then," said Albert, "we lose all the time *which may otherwise* be gained by the defence of *this house—leaving none* here but my poor father, incapable from his state of doing any thing; and you will be instantly pursued by fresh horses, while ours are unfit for the road.—Oh, where is the villain Joceline?"

"What can have become of Doctor Rochecliffe?" said Alice; "he that is so ready with advice—where can they be gone? Oh, if my father could but rouse himself?"

"Your father *is* roused," said Sir Henry, rising and stepping up to them with all the energy of full manhood in his countenance and motions—"I did but gather my thoughts—for when did there fail a Lee when his King needed counsel or aid?" He then began to speak, with the ready and distinct utterance of a general at the head of an army, ordering every motion for attack and defence—unmoved himself, and his own energy compelling obedience, and that cheerful obedience, from all who heard him. "Daughter," he said, "beat up dame Jellicot—Let Phœbe rise, if she were dying, and secure doors and windows."

"That hath been done regularly since—we have been thus far honoured," said his daughter, looking at the King,—"yet, let them go through the chambers once more." And Alice retired to give the orders, and presently returned.

The old knight proceeded, in the same decided tone of promptitude and despatch—"Which is your first stage?"

"Gray's—Rothebury, by Henley, where Sir Thomas Acland and young Knolles are to have horses in readiness," said Albert; "but how to get there with our weary cattle!"

"Trust me for that," said the knight; and proceeding with the same tone of authority—"Your Majesty must instantly to Joceline's lodge," he said, "there are your horses and your means of flight. The secret places of this house, well managed, will keep the rebel dogs in play two or three hours good—Rochecliffe is, I fear, kidnapped, and his Independent hath betrayed him—Would I had judged the villain better! I would have struck him through at one of our trials of fence, with an unbated weapon, as Will says.—But for your guide when on horseback, half a bowshot from Joceline's hut is that of old Martin the verdurer; he is a score of years older than I, but as fresh as an old oak—beat up his quarters, and let him ride with you for death and life. He will guide you to your relay, for no fox that ever earthed in the Chase knows the country so well for seven leagues around."

"Excellent, my dearest father, excellent," said Albert; "I had forgot Martin the verdurer."

"Young men forget all," answered the knight—"Alas, that the limbs should fail, when the head which can best direct them—is come perhaps to its wisest!"

"But the tired horses," said the King—"could we not get fresh cattle?"

"Impossible at this time of night," answered Sir Henry; "but tired horses may do much with care and looking to." He went hastily to the cabinet which stood in one of the oriel windows, and searched for something in the drawers, pulling out one after another.

"We lose time, father," said Albert, afraid that the intelligence and energy which the old man displayed had been but a temporary flash of the lamp, which was about to relapse into evening twilight.

"Go to, sir Boy," said his father, sharply; "is it for thee to tax me in this presence!—Know, that were the whole roundheads that are out of hell in present assemblage round Woodstock, I could send away the Royal Hope of England by a way that the wisest of them could never guess.—Alice, my love, ask no questions, but speed to the kitchen, and fetch a slice or two of beef, or better of venison; cut them long, and thin, d'ye mark me"——

"This is wandering of the mind," said Albert apart to the King. "We do him wrong, and your Majesty harm, to listen to him."

"I think otherwise," said Alice, "and I know my father better than you." So saying, she left the room to fulfil her father's orders.

"I think so, too," said Charles—"in Scotland, the Presbyterian ministers, when thundering in their

pulpits on my own sins and those of my house, took the freedom to call me to my face Jeroboam, or Rehoboam, or some such name, for following the advice of young counsellors—Oddsfish, I will take that of the graybeard for once, for never saw I more sharpness and decision than in the countenance of that noble old man."

By this time Sir Henry had found what he was seeking. "In this tin box," he said, "are six balls prepared of the most cordial spices, mixed with medicaments of the choicest and most invigorating quality. Given from hour to hour, wrapt in a covering of good beef or venison, a horse of spirit will not flag for five hours, at the speed of fifteen miles an hour; and, please God, the fourth of the time places your Majesty in safety—what remains may be useful on some future occasion. Martin knows how to administer them; and Albert's weary cattle shall be ready, if walked gently for ten minutes, in running to devour the way, as old Will says—nay, waste no time in speech, your Majesty does me but too much honour in using what is your own.—Now, see if the coast is clear, Albert, and let his Majesty set off instantly—We will play our parts but ill, if any take the chase after him for these two hours that are between night and day——Change dresses, as you proposed, in yonder sleeping apartment—something may be made of that too."

"But, good Sir Henry," said the King, "your zeal overlooks a principal point. I have, indeed, come from the under-keeper's hut you mention to this place, but it was by daylight, and under guidance—I shall never find my way thither in utter darkness, and without a guide—I fear you must let the Colonel go with me; and I entreat and command, you will put yourself to no trouble or risk to defend the house—only make what delay you can in showing its secret recesses."

"Rely on me, my royal and liege Sovereign," said Sir Henry, "but Albert *must* reman here, and Alice shall guide your Majesty to Joceline's hut in his stead."

"Alice!" said Charles, stepping back in surprise—"why, it is dark night—and—and—and—" He glanced his eye towards Alice, who had by this time returned to the apartment, and saw doubt and apprehension in her look; an intimation, that the reserve under which he had placed his disposition for gallantry, since the morning of the proposed duel, had not altogether effaced the recollection of his previous conduct. He hastened to put a strong negative upon a proposal which appeared so much to embarrass her. "It is impossible for me, indeed, Sir Henry, to use Alice's services—I must walk as if bloodhounds were at my heels."

"Alice shall trip it," said the knight, "with any wench in Oxfordshire; and what would your Majesty's best speed avail, if you knew not the way to go?"

"Nay, nay, Sir Henry," continued the King, "the night is too dark—we stay too long—I will find it myself."

"Lose no time in exchanging your dress with Albert," said Sir Henry—"leave me to take care of the rest."

Charles, still inclined to expostulate, withdrew, however, into the apartment where young Lee and he were to exchange clothes; while Sir Henry said to his daughter, "Get thee a cloak, wench, and put on thy thickest shoes. Thou mightest have ridden Pixie, but he is something spirited, and thou art a timid horsewoman, and ever wert so—the only weakness I have known of thee."

"But, my father," said Alice, fixing her eyes very earnestly on Sir Henry's face, "must I really go alone with the King? might not Phœbe, or dame Jellicot, go with us?"

"No—no—no," answered Sir Henry; "Phœbe, the silly slut, has, as you well know, been in fits tonight, and I take it, such a walk as you must take is no charm for hysterics—Dame Jellicot hobbles as slow as a broken-winded mare—besides, her deafness, were there occasion to speak to her—No—no—you shall go alone—and entitle yourself to have it written *on your tomb, 'Here lies she who saved the King!'*—And, hark you, do not think of returning to-night, but stay at the verdurer's with his niece—the Park and Chase will shortly be filled with our enemies, and whatever chances here you will learn early enough in the morning."

"And what is it I may then learn?" said Alice—"Alas, who can tell?—O, dearest father, let me stay and share your fate! I will pull off the timorous woman, and fight for the King, if it be necessary. But—I cannot think of becoming his only attendant in the dark night, and through a road so lonely."

"How!" said the knight, raising his voice; "do you bring ceremonious and silly scruples forward, when the King's safety, nay, his life, is at stake? By this mark of loyalty," stroking his gray beard as he spoke, "could I think thou wert other than becomes a daughter of the house of Lee, I would"——

At this moment the King and Albert interrupted him by entering the apartment, having exchanged dresses, and, from their stature, bearing some resemblance to each other, though Charles was evidently a plain, and Lee a handsome young man. Their complexions were different; but the difference could not be immediately noticed, Albert having adopted a black peruke, and darkened his eyebrows.

Albert Lee walked out to the front of the mansion, to give one turn around the Lodge, in order to discover in what direction any enemies might be approaching, that they might judge of the road which it was safest for the royal fugitive to adopt. Mean while the King, who was first in entering the apartment, had heard a part of the angry answer which the old knight made to his daughter, and was at no loss to guess the subject of his resentment. He walked up to him with the dignity which he perfectly knew to assume when he chose it.

"Sir Henry," he said, "it is our pleasure, nay our command, that you forbear all exertion of paternal authority in this matter. Mistress Alice, I am sure, must have good and strong reasons for what she wishes; and I should never pardon myself were she placed in an unpleasant situation on my account. I am too well acquainted with woods and wildernesses to fear losing my way among my native oaks of Woodstock."

"Your Majesty shall not incur the danger," said Alice, her temporary hesitation entirely removed by the calm, clear, and candid manner in which Charles uttered these last words. "You shall run no risk that I can prevent; and the unhappy chances of the times in which I have lived have from experience made the forest as well known to me by night as by day. So, if you scorn not my company, let us away instantly."

"If your company is given with good-will, I accept it with gratitude," replied the monarch.

"Willingly," she said, "most willingly. Let me be one of the first to show that zeal and that confidence, which I trust all England will one day emulously display in behalf of your Majesty."

She uttered these words with an alacrity of spirit, and made the trifling change of habit with a speed and dexterity, which showed that all her fears were gone, and that her heart was entirely in the mission on which her father had despatched her.

"All is safe around," said Albert Lee, showing himself; "you may take which passage you will—the most private is the best."

Charles went gracefully up to Sir Henry Lee ere his departure, and took him by the hand.—"I am too proud to make professions," he said, "which I may be too poor ever to realize. But while Charles Stewart lives, he lives the obliged and indebted debtor of Sir Henry Lee."

"Say not so, please your Majesty, say not so," exclaimed the old man, struggling with the hysterical sobs which rose to his throat. "He who might claim all, cannot become indebted by accepting some small part."

"Farewell, good friend, farewell!" said the King; "think of me as a son, a brother to Albert and to Alice, who are, I see, already impatient. Give me a father's blessing, and let me be gone."

"The God, through whom kings reign, bless your

Majesty," said Sir Henry, kneeling and turning his reverend face and clasped hands up to Heaven—"The Lord of Hosts bless you, and save your Majesty from your present dangers, and bring you in his own good time to the safe possession of the crown that is your due!"

Charles received his blessing like that of a father, and Alice and he departed on their journey.

As they left the apartment, the old knight let his hands sink gently as he concluded this fervent ejaculation, his head sinking at the same time. His son dared not disturb his meditation, yet feared the strength of his feelings might overcome that of his constitution, and that he might fall into a swoon. At length, he ventured to approach and gradually touch him. The old knight started to his feet, and was at once the same alert, active-minded, forecasting director, which he had shown himself a little before.

"You are right, boy," he said, "we must be up and doing. They lie, the roundheaded traitors, that call him dissolute and worthless! He hath feelings worthy the son of the blessed Martyr. You saw, even in the extremity of danger, he would have perilled his safety, rather than take Alice's guidance, when the silly wench seemed in doubt about going. Profligacy is intensely selfish, and thinks not of the feelings of others. But hast thou drawn bolt and bar after them? I vow I scarce saw when they left the hall."

"I let them out at the little postern," said the Colonel; "and when I returned, I was afraid I had found you ill."

"Joy, joy, only joy, Albert—I cannot allow a thought of doubt to cross my breast. God will not desert the descendant of a hundred kings—the rightful Heir will not be given up to the ruffians. There was a tear in his eye as he took leave of me—I am sure of it. Wouldst not die for him, boy?"

"If I lay my life down for him to-night," said Albert, "I would only regret it, because I should not hear of his escape to-morrow."

"Well, let us to this gear," said the knight; "think'st thou that thou know'st enough of his manner, clad as thou art in his dress, to induce the women to believe thee to be the page Kerneguy?"

"Umph," replied Albert, "it is not easy to bear out a personification of the King, when women are in the case. But there is only a very little light below, and I can try."

"Do so instantly," said his father; "the knaves will be here presently."

Albert accordingly left the apartment, while the knight continued—"If the women be actually persuaded that Kerneguy is still here, it will add strength to my plot—the beagles will open on a false scent, and the royal stag be safe in cover ere they regain the slot of him. Then to draw them on from hiding-place to hiding-place! Why, the east will be gray before they have sought the half of them!—Yea, I will play at bob-cherry with them, hold the bait to their nose which they are never to gorge upon! I will drag a trail for them which will take them some time to puzzle out.—But at what cost do I do this?" continued the old knight, interrupting his own joyous soliloquy—"Oh, Absalom, Absalom, my son! my son!—But let him go; he can but die as his fathers have died, and in the cause for which they lived. But he comes—Hush!—Albert, hast thou succeeded? hast thou taken royalty upon thee so as to pass current?"

"I have, sir," replied Albert; "the women will swear that Louis Kerneguy was in the house this very last minute."

"Right, for they are good and faithful creatures," said the knight, "and would swear what was for his Majesty's safety at any rate; yet they will do it with more nature and effect, if they believe they are swearing truth.—How didst thou impress the deceit *upon them?*"

"*By a trifling adoption* of the royal manner, sir, *not worth mentioning.*"

"*Out, rogue!*" replied the knight. "I fear the *King's character will suffer* under your mummery."

"*Umph,*" said Albert, muttering what he dared not utter aloud—"were I to follow the example close up, I know whose character would be in the greatest danger."

"Well, now we must adjust the defence of the outworks, the signals, &c. betwixt us both, and the best way to baffle the enemy for the longest time possible." He then again had recourse to the secret drawers of his cabinet, and pulled out a piece of parchment, on which was a plan. "This," said he "is a scheme of the citadel, as I call it, which may hold out long enough after you have been forced to evacuate the places of retreat you are already acquainted with. The ranger was always sworn to keep this plan secret, save from one person only, in case of sudden death,—Let us sit down and study it together."

They accordingly adjusted their measures in a manner which will better show itself from what afterwards took place, than were we to state the various schemes which they proposed, and provisions made against events that did not arrive.

At length young Lee, armed and provided with some food and liquor, took leave of his father, and went and shut himself up in Victor Lee's apartment, from which was an opening to the labyrinth of private apartments, or hiding-places, that had served the associates so well in the fantastic tricks which they had played off at the expense of the Commissioners of the Commonwealth.

"I trust," said Sir Henry, sitting down by his desk, after having taken a tender farewell of his son, "that Rochecliffe has not blabbed out the secret of the plot to yonder fellow Tomkins, who was not unlikely to prate of it out of school.—But here am I seated—perhaps for the last time, with my Bible on the one hand, and old Will on the other, prepared, thank God, to die as I have lived.—I marvel they come not yet," he said, after waiting for some time—"I always thought the devil had a smarter spur to give his agents, when they were upon his own special service."

CHAPTER XXIII.

But, see, his face is black, and full of blood;
His eyeballs further out than when he lived,
Staring full ghastly like a strangled man;
His hair uprear'd, his nostrils stretch'd with struggling;
His hands abroad display'd, as one who grasp'd
And tugg'd for life, but was by strength subdued.
Henry VI. Part II.

HAD those whose unpleasant visit Sir Henry expected come straight to the Lodge, instead of staying for three hours at Woodstock, they would have secured their prey. But the Familist, partly to prevent the King's escape, partly to render himself of more importance in the affair, had represented the party at the Lodge as being constantly on the alert, and had therefore inculcated upon Cromwell the necessity of his remaining quiet until he (Tomkins) should appear to give him notice that the household were retired to rest. On this condition he undertook, not only to discover the apartment in which the unfortunate Charles slept, but, if possible, to find some mode of fastening the door on the outside, so as to render flight impossible. He had also promised to secure the key of a postern, by which the soldiers might be admitted into the house without exciting alarm. Nay, the matter might, by means of his local knowledge, be managed, as he represented it, with such security, that he would undertake to place his Excellency, or whomsoever he might appoint for the service, by the side of Charles Stewart's bed, ere he had slept off the last night's claret. Above all, he had stated, that, from the style of the old house, there were many passages and posterns which must be carefully guarded, before the least alarm was caught by those within, otherwise the success of the whole enterprise might be endangered. He had therefore besought Cromwell to wait for him at the village, if he found him not there on his arrival; and assured him that the marching and countermarching of soldiers was at present so common, that even if any news were carried to the Lodge that fresh troops had arrived in the borough, so ordinary a circumstance would not give them the least alarm. He recommended

rescue thy neck from the halter, but render also an acceptable service to the State, and one which I will see fittingly rewarded. For, truly, I am not of those who would have the rain fall only on the proud and stately plants, but rather would, so far as my poor wishes and prayers are concerned, that it should also fall upon the lowly and humble grass and corn, that the heart of the husbandman may be rejoiced, and that as the cedar of Lebanon waxes in its height, in its boughs, and in its roots, so may the humble and lowly hyssop that groweth upon the walls flourish, and—and, truly—Understand'st thou me, knave?"

"Not entirely, if it please your honour," said Joceline: "but it sounds as if you were preaching a sermon, and has a marvellous twang of doctrine with it."

"Then, in one word—thou knowest there is one Louis Kerneguy, or Carnego, or some such name, in hiding at the Lodge yonder?"

"Nay, sir," replied the under-keeper, "there have been many coming and going since Worcester-field; and how should I know who they are?—my service is out of doors, I trow."

"A thousand pounds," said Cromwell, "do I tell down to thee, if thou canst place that boy in my power."

"A thousand pounds is a marvellous matter, sir," said Joceline; "but I have more blood on my hand than I like already. I know not how the price of life may thrive—and, scape or hang, I have no mind to try."

"Away with him to the rear," said the General; "and let him not speak with his yokefellow yonder. —Fool that I am, to waste time in expecting to get milk from mules.—Move on towards the Lodge."

They moved with the same silence as formerly, notwithstanding the difficulties which they encountered from being unacquainted with the road and its various intricacies. At length they were challenged, in a low voice, by one of their own sentinels, two concentric circles of whom had been placed around the Lodge, so close to each other, as to preclude the possibility of an individual escaping from within. The outer guard was maintained partly by horse upon the roads and open lawn, and where the ground was broken and bushy, by infantry. The inner circle was guarded by foot soldiers only. The whole were in the highest degree alert, expecting some interesting and important consequences from the unusual expedition on which they were engaged.

"Any news, Pearson?" said the General to his aide-de-camp, who came instantly to report to his superior.

He received for answer, "None."

Cromwell led his officer forward just opposite to the door of the Lodge, and there paused betwixt the circles of guards, so that their conversation could not be overheard.

He then pursued his inquiry, demanding—"Were there any lights, any appearances of stirring—any attempt at sally—any preparation for defence?"

"All is silent as the valley of the shadow of death —Even as the vale of Jehosaphat."

"Pshaw! tell me not of Jehosaphat, Pearson," said Cromwell. "These words are good for others, but not for thee. Speak plainly, and like a blunt soldier as thou art. Each man hath his own mode of speech; and bluntness, not sanctity, is thine."

"Well then, nothing has been stirring," said Pearson.—"Yet peradventure"——

"Peradventure not me," said Cromwell, "or thou wilt tempt me to knock thy teeth out. I ever distrust a man when he speaks after another fashion from his own."

"Zounds! let me speak to an end," answered Pearson, "and I will speak in what language your Excellency will."

"Thy Zounds, friend," said Oliver, "showeth little of grace, but much of sincerity. Go to then—thou knowest I love and trust thee. Hast thou kept close watch? It behoves us to know that, before giving the alarm."

"On my soul," said Pearson, "I have watched as closely as a cat at a mouse-hole. It is beyond possibility that any thing could have eluded our vigilance, or even stirred within the house, without our being aware of it."

"'Tis well," said Cromwell; "thy services shall not be forgotten, Pearson. Thou canst not preach and pray, but thou canst obey thine orders, Gilbert Pearson, and that may make amends."

"I thank you Excellency," replied Pearson; "but I beg leave to chime in with the humours of the times. A poor fellow hath no right to hold himself singular."

He paused, expecting Cromwell's orders what next was to be done, and, indeed, not a little surprised that the General's active and prompt spirit had suffered him, during a moment so critical, to cast away a thought upon a circumstance so trivial as his officer's peculiar mode of expressing himself. He wondered still more, when, by a brighter gleam of moonshine than he had yet enjoyed, he observed that Cromwell was standing motionless, his hands supported upon his sword, which he had taken out of the belt, and his stern brows bent on the ground. He waited for some time impatiently, yet afraid to interfere, lest he should awaken this unwonted fit of ill-timed melancholy into anger and impatience. He listened to the muttering sounds which escaped from the half-opening lips of his principal, in which the words, "hard necessity," which occurred more than once, were all of which the sense could be distinguished. "My Lord General," at length he said, "time flies."

"Peace, busy fiend, and urge me not!"—said Cromwell. "Think'st thou, like other fools, that I have made a paction with the devil for success, and am bound to do my work within an appointed hour, lest the spell should lose its force?"

"I only think, my Lord General," said Pearson, "that Fortune has put into your offer what you have long desired to make prize of, and that you hesitate."

Cromwell sighed deeply as he answered, "Ah, Pearson, in this troubled world, a man, who is called like me, to work great things in Israel, had need to be, as the poets feign, a thing made of hardened metal, immovable to feelings of human charities, impassible, resistless. Pearson, the world will hereafter, perchance, think of me as being such a one as I have described, 'an iron man, and made of iron mould'—Yet they will wrong my memory—my heart is flesh, and my blood is mild as that of others. When I was a sportsman, I have wept for the gallant heron that was struck down by my hawk, and sorrowed for the hare which lay screaming under the jaws of my greyhound; and canst thou think it a light thing to me, that, the blood of this lad's father lying in some measure upon my head, I should now put in peril that of the son? They are of the kindly race of English sovereigns, and, doubtless, are adored like to demigods by those of their own party. I am called Parricide, Bloodthirsty Usurper, already, for shedding the blood of one man, that the plague might be stayed—or as Achan was slain that Israel might thereafter stand against the face of their enemies. Nevertheless, who has spoke unto me graciously since that high deed? Those who acted in the matter with me are willing that I should be the scapegoat of atonement—those who looked on and helped not, bear themselves now as if they had been borne down by violence; and while I looked that they should shout applause on me, because of the victory of Worcester, whereof the Lord had made me the poor instrument, they look aside to say, 'Ha! ha! the Kingkiller, the Parricide—soon shall his place be made desolate.'—Truly it is a great thing, Gilbert Pearson, to be lifted above the multitude; but when one feeleth that his exaltation is rather hailed with hate and scorn than with love and reverence—in sooth, it is still a hard matter for a mild, tender-conscienced, infirm spirit to bear—and God be my witness, that rather than do this new deed, I would shed my own best heart's-blood in a pitched field, twenty against one." Here he fell into a flood of tears, which he sometimes was wont to do. This extremity of emotion was of a singular character. It was not actually the result of penitence, and far less that of absolute hypocrisy, but arose merely from the

temperature of that remarkable man, whose deep policy, and ardent enthusiasm, were intermingled with a strain of hypochondriacal passion, which often led him to exhibit scenes of this sort, though seldom, as now, when he was called to the execution of great undertakings.

Pearson, well acquainted as he was with the peculiarities of his General, was baffled and confounded by this fit of hesitation and contrition, by which his enterprising spirit appeared to be so suddenly paralyzed. After a moment's silence, he said, with some dryness of manner, "If this be the case, it is a pity your Excellency came hither. Corporal Humgudgeon and I, the greatest saint and greatest sinner in your army, had done the deed, and divided the guilt and the honour betwixt us."

"Ha!" said Cromwell, as if touched to the quick, "wouldst thou take the prey from the lion!"

"If the lion behaves like a village cur," said Pearson, boldly, "who now barks and seems as if he would tear all to pieces, and now flies from a raised stick or a stone, I know not why I should fear him. If Lambert had been here, there had been less speaking and more action."

"Lambert? What of Lambert?" said Cromwell, very sharply.

"Only," said Pearson, "that I long since hesitated whether I should follow your Excellency or him—and I begin to be uncertain whether I have made the best choice, that's all."

"Lambert!" exclaimed Cromwell, impatiently, yet softening his voice lest he should be overheard descanting on the character of his rival,—"What is Lambert?—a tulip-fancying fellow, whom nature intended for a Dutch gardener at Delft or Rotterdam. Ungrateful as thou art, what could Lambert have done for thee?"

"He would not," answered Pearson, "have stood here hesitating before a locked door, when fortune presented the means of securing, by one blow, his own fortune, and that of all who followed him."

"Thou art right, Gilbert Pearson," said Cromwell, grasping his officer's hand, and strongly pressing it. "Be the half of this bold attempt thine, whether the reckoning be on earth or heaven."

"Be the whole of it mine hereafter," said Pearson, hardily, "so your Excellency have the advantage of it upon earth. Step back to the rear till I force the door—there may be danger, if despair induce them to make a desperate sally."

"And if they do sally, is there one of my Ironsides who fears fire or steel less than myself?" said the General. "Let ten of the most determined men follow us, two with halberds, two with petronels, the others with pistols.—Let all their arms be loaded, and fire without hesitation, if there is any attempt to resist or to sally forth—Let Corporal Humgudgeon be with them, and do thou remain here, and watch against escape, as thou wouldst watch for thy salvation."

The General then struck at the door with the hilt of his sword—at first with a single blow or two, then with a reverberation of strokes that made the ancient building ring again. This noisy summons was repeated once or twice without producing the least effect.

"What can this mean?" said Cromwell; "they cannot surely have fled, and left the house empty?"

"No," replied Pearson, "I will ensure you against that; but your Excellency strikes so fiercely, you allow no time for an answer. Hark! I hear the baying of a hound, and the voice of a man who is quieting him—Shall we break in at once, or hold parley?"

"I will speak to them first," said Cromwell—"Hollo! who is within there?"

"Who is it inquires?" answered Sir Henry Lee from the interior; "or what want you here at this dead hour?"

"*We come by* warrant of the Commonwealth of *England*," *said the* General.

"*I must see your warrant* ere I undo either bolt or *latch*," *replied the knight*; "we are enough of us to *make good the castle*; neither I nor my fellows will deliver it but upon good quarter and conditions; as we will not treat for these save in fair daylight."

"Since you will not yield to our right, you must to our might," replied Cromwell. "Look to yourselves within, the door will be in the midst of you in five minutes."

"Look to yourselves without," replied the stout-hearted Sir Henry; "we will pour our shot upon you, if you attempt the least violence."

But, alas! while he assumed this bold language, his whole garrison consisted of two poor terrified women; for his son, in conformity with the plan which they had fixed upon, had withdrawn from the hall into the secret recesses of the palace.

"What can they be doing now, sir?" said Phœbe, hearing a noise as it were of a carpenter turning screw-nails, mixed with a low buzz of men talking.

"They are fixing a petard," said the knight, with great composure. "I have noted thee for a clever wench, Phœbe, and I will explain it to thee: 'Tis a metal pot, shaped much like one of the roguish knaves' own sugar-loaf hats, supposing it had narrower brims—it is charged with some few pounds of fine gunpowder. Then"——

"Gracious! we shall be all blown up!" exclaimed Phœbe,—the word gunpowder being the only one which she understood in the knight's description.

"Not a bit, foolish girl. Pack old Dame Jellicot into the embrasure of yonder window," said the knight, "on that side of the door, and we will ensconce ourselves on this, and we shall have time to finish my explanation, for they have bungling engineers. We had a clever French fellow at Newark would have done the job in the firing of a pistol."

They had scarce got into the place of security when the knight proceeded with his description.—"The petard being formed, as I tell you, is secured with a thick and strong piece of plank, termed the madrier, and the whole being suspended, or rather secured against the gate to be forced—But thou mindest me not?"

"How can I, Sir Henry," she said, "within reach of such a thing as you speak of?—O Lord! I shall go mad with very terror—we shall be crushed—blown up—in a few minutes!"

"We are secure from the explosion," replied the knight, gravely, "which will operate chiefly in a forward direction into the middle of the chamber; and from any fragments that may fly laterally, we are sufficiently secured by this deep embrasure."

"But they will slay us when they enter," said Phœbe.

"They will give thee fair quarter, wench," said Sir Henry; "and if I do not bestow a brace of balls on that rogue engineer, it is because I would not incur the penalty inflicted by martial law, which condemns to the edge of the sword all persons who attempt to defend an untenable post. Not that I think the rigour of the law could reach Dame Jellicot or thyself, Phœbe, considering that you carry no arms. If Alice had been here she might indeed have done somewhat, for she can use a birding-piece."

Phœbe might have appealed to her own deeds of that day, as more allied to feats of *mêlée* and battle, than any which her young lady ever acted; but she was in an agony of inexpressible terror, expecting from the knight's account of the petard, some dreadful catastrophe, of what nature she did not justly understand, notwithstanding his liberal communication on the subject.

"They are strangely awkward at it," said Sir Henry; "little Bouturlin would have blown the house up before now.—Ah! he is a fellow would take the earth like a rabbit—if he had been here, never may I stir but he would have countermined them ere now, and

> ——' 'Tis sport to have the engineer
> Hoist with his own petard,'

as our immortal Shakspeare has it."

"Oh Lord, the poor mad old gentleman," thought Phœbe—"Oh, sir, had you not better leave alone playbooks, and think of your end?" uttered she aloud, in sheer terror and vexation of spirit.

"If I had not made up my mind to that many days

since," answered the knight, "I had not now met this hour with a free bosom.

'As gentle and as jocund as to rest,
Go I to death—truth hath a quiet breast.'"

As he spoke, a broad glare of light flashed from without through the windows of the hall, and betwixt the strong iron stanchions with which they were secured—a broad discoloured light it was, which shed a red and dusky illumination on the old armour and weapons, as if it had been the reflection of a conflagration. Phœbe screamed aloud, and, forgetful of reverence in the moment of passion, clung close to the knight's cloak and arm, while Dame Jellicot, from her solitary niche, having the use of her eyes, though bereft of her hearing, yelled like an owl when the moon breaks out suddenly.

"Take care, good Phœbe," said the knight; "you will prevent my using my weapon if you hang upon me thus.—The bungling fools cannot fix their petard without the use of torches! Now let me take the advantage of this interval.—Remember what I told thee, and how to put off time."

"Oh, Lord—ay, sir," said Phœbe, "I will say any thing. Oh, Lord, that it were but over!—Ah! ah!" —(two prolonged screams)—"I hear something hissing like a serpent."

"It is the fusee, as we martialists call it," replied the knight; "that is, Phœbe, the match which fires the petard, and which is longer or shorter according to the distance"——

Here the knight's discourse was cut short by a dreadful explosion, which, as he had foretold, shattered the door, strong as it was, to pieces, and brought down the glass clattering from the windows, with all the painted heroes and heroines who had been recorded on that fragile place of memory for centuries. The women shrieked incessantly, and were answered by the bellowing of Bevis, though shut up at a distance from the scene of action. The knight, shaking Phœbe from him with difficulty, advanced into the hall to meet those who rushed in, with torches lighted, and weapons prepared.

"Death to all who resist—life to those who surrender!" exclaimed Cromwell, stamping with his foot. "Who commands this garrison?"

"Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley," answered the old knight, stepping forward; "who, having no other garrison than two weak women, is compelled to submit to what he would willingly have resisted."

"Disarm the inveterate and malignant rebel," cried Oliver. "Art thou not ashamed, sir, to detain me before the door of a house which you had no force to defend? Wearest thou so white a beard, and knowest thou not, that to refuse surrendering an indefensible post, by the martial law, deserves hanging?"

"My beard and I," said Sir Henry, "have settled that matter between us, and agree right cordially. It is better to run the risk of being hanged, like honest men, than to give up our trust like cowards and traitors."

"Ha! say'st thou?" said Cromwell; "thou hast powerful motives, I doubt not, for running thy head into a noose. But I will speak with thee by and by.—Ho! Pearson, Gilbert Pearson, take this scroll—Take the elder woman with thee—Let her guide you to the various places therein mentioned—Search every room therein set down, and arrest, or slay upon the slightest resistance, whomsoever you find there. Then note those places marked as commanding points for cutting off intercourse through the mansion—the landing-places of the great staircase, the great gallery, and so forth. Use the women civilly. The plan annexed to the scroll will point out the posts, even if she prove stupid or refractory. Mean while, the corporal, with a party will bring the old man and the girl there to some apartment—the parlour, I think, called Victor Lee's, will do as well as another. We will then be out of this stifling smell of gunpowder."

So saying, and without requiring any farther assistance or guidance, he walked towards the apartment he had named. Sir Henry had his own feelings, when he saw the unhesitating decision with which the General led the way, and which seemed to intimate a more complete acquaintance with the various localities of Woodstock than was consistent with his own present design, to engage the Commonwealth party in a fruitless search through the intricacies of the Lodge.

"I will now ask thee a few questions, old man," said the General, when they had arrived in the room; "and I warn thee, that hope of pardon for thy many and persevering efforts against the Commonwealth, can be no otherwise merited than by the most direct answers to the questions I am about to ask."

Sir Henry bowed. He would have spoken, but he felt his temper rising high, and became afraid it might be exhausted before the part he had settled to play, in order to afford the King time for his escape, should be brought to an end.

"What household have you had here, Sir Henry Lee, within these few days—what guests—what visiters? We know that your means of housekeeping are not so profuse as usual, so the catalogue cannot be burdensome to your memory."

"Far from it," replied the knight, with unusual command of temper; "my daughter, and, latterly my son, have been my guests; and I have had these females, and one Joceline Joliffe, to attend upon us."

"I do not ask after the regular members of your household, but after those who have been within your gates, either as guests, or as malignant fugitives taking shelter?"

"There may have been more of both kinds, sir, than I, if it please your valour, am able to answer for," replied the knight.—"I remember my kinsman Everard was here one morning—Also, I bethink me, a follower of his, called Wildrake."

"Did you not also receive a young cavalier, called Louis Garnegey?" said Cromwell.

"I remember no such name, were I to hang for it," said the knight.

"Kerneguy, or some such word," said the General; "we will not quarrel for a sound."

"A Scotch lad, called Louis Kerneguy, was a guest of mine," said Sir Henry; "and left me this morning for Dorsetshire."

"So late!" exclaimed Cromwell, stamping with his foot—"How fate contrives to baffle us, even when she seems most favourable!—What direction did he take, old man?" continued Cromwell—"what horse did he ride—who went with him?"

"My son went with him," replied the knight; "he brought him here as the son of a Scottish lord.—I pray you, sir, to be finished with these questions; for although I owe thee, as Will Shakspeare says,

'Respect for thy great place, and let the devil
Be sometimes honour'd for his burning throne,'—

yet I feel my patience wearing thin."

Cromwell here whispered to the corporal, who in turn uttered orders to two soldiers, who left the room. "Place the knight aside; we will now examine the servant damsel," said the General.—"Dost thou know," said he to Phœbe, "of the presence of one Louis Kerneguy, calling himself a Scotch page, who came here a few days since?"

"Surely, sir," she replied, "I cannot easily forget him; and I warrant no well-looking wench that comes in his way will be like to forget him either."

"Aha," said Cromwell, "sayst thou so? truly I believe the woman will prove the truer witness—When did he leave this house?"

"Nay, I know nothing of his movements, not I," said Phœbe; "I am only glad to keep out of his way. But if he have actually gone hence, I am sure he was here some two hours since, for he crossed me in the lower passage, between the hall and the kitchen."

"How did you know it was he?" demanded Cromwell.

"By a rude enough token," said Phœbe.—"La, sir you do ask such questions!" she added, hanging down her head.

Humgudgeon here interfered, taking upon himself the freedom of a coadjutor. "Verily," he said, "if what the damsel is called to speak upon hath aught unseemly, I crave your Excellency's permission to withdraw, not desiring that my nightly meditations may be disturbed with tales of such a nature."

"Nay, your honour," said Phœbe, "I scorn the old man's words, in the way of seemliness or unseemliness either. Master Louis did but snatch a kiss, that is the truth of it, if it must be told."

Here Humgudgeon groaned deeply, while his Excellency avoided laughing with some difficulty. "Thou hast given excellent tokens, Phœbe," he said; "and if they be true, as I think they seem to be, thou shalt not lack thy reward.—And here comes our spy from the stables."

"There are not the least signs," said the trooper, "that horses have been in the stables for a month—there is no litter in the stalls, no hay in the racks, the corn-binns are empty, and the mangers are full of cobwebs."

"Ay, ay," said the old knight, "I have seen when I kept twenty good horses in these stalls, with many a groom and stable-boy to attend them."

"In the mean while," said Cromwell, "their present state tells little for the truth of your own story, that there were horses to-day, on which this Kerneguy and your son fled from justice."

"I did not say that the horses were kept there," said the knight. "I have horses and stables elsewhere."

"Fie, fie, for shame, for shame!" said the General; "and a white-bearded man, I ask it once more, be a false witness?"

"Faith, sir," said Sir Henry Lee, "it is a thriving trade, and I wonder not that you who live on it are so severe in prosecuting interlopers. But it is the times, and those who rule the times, that make gray-beards deceivers."

"Thou art facetious, friend, as well as daring, in thy malignancy," said Cromwell; "but credit me, I will cry quittance with you ere I am done. Whereunto lead these doors?"

"To Bedrooms," answered the knight.

"Bedrooms! only to bedrooms?" said the Republican General, in a voice which indicated, such was the internal occupation of his thoughts, that he had not fully understood the answer.

"Lord, sir," said the knight, "why should you make it so strange? I say these doors lead to bedrooms—to places where honest men sleep, and rogues lie awake."

"You are running up a farther account, Sir Henry," said the General; "but we will balance it once and for all."

During the whole of the scene, Cromwell, whatever might be the internal uncertainty of his mind, maintained the most strict temperance in language and manner, just as if he had no further interest in what was passing, than as a military man employed in discharging the duty enjoined him by his superiors. But the restraint upon his passion was but

"The torrent's smoothness ere its dash below."*

The course of his resolution was hurried on even more forcibly, because no violence of expression attended or announced its current. He threw himself into a chair, with a countenance that indicated no indecision of mind, but a determination which awaited only the signal for action. Mean while the knight, as if resolved in nothing to forego the privileges of his rank and place, sat himself down in turn, and putting on his hat which lay on a table, regarded the General with a calm look of fearless indifference. The soldiers stood around, some holding the torches, which illuminated the apartment with a lurid and sombre glare of light, the others resting upon their weapons. Phœbe, with her hands folded, her eyes turned upwards till the pupils were scarce visible, and every shade of colour banished from her ruddy cheek, stood like one in immediate apprehension of the sentence of death being pronounced, and instant execution commanded.

Heavy steps were at last heard, and Pearson and some of the soldiers returned. This seemed to be what Cromwell waited for. He started up, and asked hastily, "Any news, Pearson? any prisoners—any malignants slain in thy defence?"

"None, so please your Excellency," answered the officer.

"And are thy sentinels all carefully placed, as Tomkins' scroll gave direction, and with fitting orders?"

"With the most deliberate care," said Pearson.

"Art thou very sure," said Cromwell, pulling him a little to one side, "that this is all well, and duly cared for? Bethink thee, that when we engage ourselves in the private communications, all will be lost should the party we look for have the means of dogging us by an escape into the more open rooms, and from thence perhaps into the forest."

"My Lord General," answered Pearson, "if placing the guards on the places pointed out in this scroll be sufficient, with the strictest orders, to stop, and, if necessary, to stab or shoot, whoever crosses their post, such orders are given to men who will not fail to execute them. If more is necessary, your Excellency has only to speak."

"No—no—no, Pearson," said the General, "thou hast done well.—This night over, and let it end but as we hope, thy reward shall not be awanting.—And now to business.—Sir Henry Lee, undo me the secret spring of yonder picture of your ancestor—Nay, spare yourself the trouble and guilt of falsehood or equivocation, and, I say, undo me that spring presently."

"When I acknowledge you for my master, and wear your livery, I may obey your commands," answered the knight; "even then I would need first to understand them."

"Wench," said Cromwell, addressing Phœbe, "go thou undo the spring—you could do it fast enough when you aimed at the gambols of the demons of Woodstock, and terrified even Mark Everard, who, I judged had more sense."

"Oh Lord, sir, what shall I do?" said Phœbe, looking to the knight; "they know all about it. What shall I do?"

"For thy life, hold out to the last, wench! Every minute is worth a million."

"Ha! heard you that, Pearson?" said Cromwell to the officer; then, stamping with his foot, he added, "Undo the spring, or I will else use levers and wrenching-irons—Or, ha!—another petard were well bestowed—Call the engineer!"

"Oh Lord, sir," cried Phœbe, "I shall never live another peter—I will open the spring."

"Do as thou wilt," said Sir Henry; "it shall profit them but little."

Whether from real agitation, or from a desire to gain time, Phœbe was some minutes ere she could get the spring to open; it was indeed secured with art, and the machinery on which it acted was concealed in the frame of the portrait. The whole, when fastened, appeared quite motionless, and betrayed, as when examined by Colonel Everard, no external mark of its being possible to remove it. It was now withdrawn, however, and showed a narrow recess, with steps which ascended on one side into the thickness of the wall. Cromwell was now like a greyhound slipped from the leash with the prey in full view.—"Up," he cried, "Pearson, thou art swifter than I—Up thou next, Corporal." With more agility than could have been expected from his person and years, which were past the meridian of life, and exclaiming, "Before, those with the torches!" he followed the party, like an eager huntsman in the rear of his hounds, to encourage at once and direct them, as they penetrated into the labyrinth described by Doctor Rochecliffe in the "Wonders of Woodstock."

* But mortal pleasure, what art thou in truth?
The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below,
CAMPBELL'S *Gertrude of Wyoming*.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The King, therefore, for his defence
Against the furious Queen,
At Woodstock builded such a bower,
As never yet was seen.
Most curiously that bower was built,
Of stone and timber strong;
An hundred and fifty doors
Did to this bower belong:
And they so cunningly contrived,
With turnings round about,
That none but with a clew of thread
Could enter in or out.

Ballad of Fair Rosamond.

THE tradition of the country, as well as some historical evidence, confirmed the opinion that there existed, within the old Royal Lodge at Woodstock, a labyrinth, or connected series of subterranean passages, built chiefly by Henry II., for the security of his mistress, Rosamond Clifford, from the jealousy of his Queen, the celebrated Eleanor. Doctor Rochecliffe, indeed, in one of those fits of contradiction with which antiquaries are sometimes seized, was bold enough to dispute the alleged purpose of the perplexed maze of rooms and passages, with which the walls of the ancient palace were perforated; but the fact was undeniable, that in raising the fabric some Norman architect had exerted the utmost of the complicated art which they have often shown elsewhere, in creating secret passages, and chambers of retreat and concealment. There were stairs, which were ascended merely, as it seemed, for the purpose of descending again—passages, which, after turning and winding for a considerable way, returned to the place where they set out—there were trapdoors and hatchways, panels and portcullises. Although Oliver was assisted by a sort of ground-plan, made out and transmitted by Joseph Tomkins, whose former employment in Doctor Rochecliffe's service had made him fully acquainted with the place, it was found imperfect; and, moreover, the most serious obstacles to their progress occurred in the shape of strong doors, party-walls, and iron gates—so that the party blundered on in the dark, uncertain whether they were not going farther from, rather than approaching, the extremity of the labyrinth. They were obliged to send for mechanics, with sledge-hammers and other instruments, to force one or two of those doors, which resisted all other means of undoing them. Labouring along in these dusky passages, where, from time to time, they were like to be choked by the dust which their acts of violence excited, the soldiers were obliged to be relieved oftener than once, and the bulky Corporal Grace-be-here himself puffed and blew like a grampus that has got into shoal water. Cromwell alone continued, with unabated zeal, to push on his researches—to encourage the soldiers, by the exhortations which they best understood, against fainting for lack of faith—and to secure, by sentinels at proper places, possession of the ground which they had already explored. His acute and observing eye detected with a sneering smile, the cordage and machinery by which the bed of poor Desborough had been inverted, and several remains of the various disguises as well as private modes of access, by which Desborough, Bletson, and Harrison, had been previously imposed upon. He pointed them out to Pearson, with no farther comment than was implied in the exclamation, "The simple fools!"

But his assistants began to lose heart and be discouraged, and required all his spirit to raise theirs. He then called their attention to voices which they seemed to hear before them, and urged these as evidence that they were moving on the track of some enemy of the Commonwealth, who, for the execution of his malignant plots, had retreated into these extraordinary fastnesses.

The spirits of the men became at last downcast notwithstanding all this encouragement. They spoke to each other in whispers, of the devils of Woodstock, who might be all the while decoying them forward to a room said to exist in the Palace, where the floor, revolving on an axis, precipitated those who entered into a bottomless abyss. Humgudgeon hinted, that he had *consulted the Scripture* that morning by way *of lot, and his fortune had* been to alight on the passage, "Eutychus fell down from the third loft." The energy and authority of Cromwell, however, and the refreshment of some food and strong waters, reconciled them to pursuing their task.

Nevertheless, with all their unwearied exertions, morning dawned on the search before they had reached Doctor Rochecliffe's sitting apartment, into which, after all, they obtained entrance by a mode much more difficult than that which the Doctor himself employed. But here their ingenuity was long at fault. From the miscellaneous articles that were strewed around, and the preparations made for food and lodging, it seemed they had gained the very citadel of the labyrinth; but though various passages opened from it, they all terminated in places with which they were already acquainted, or communicated with the other parts of the house, where their own sentinels assured them none had passed. Cromwell remained long in deep uncertainty. Mean time he directed Pearson to take charge of the ciphers, and more important papers which lay on the table. "Though there is little there," he said, "that I have not already known, by means of Trusty Tomkins—Honest Joseph—for an artful and thorough-paced agent, the like of thee is not left in England."

After a considerable pause, during which he sounded with the pommel of his sword almost every stone in the building, and every plank on the floor, the General gave orders to bring the old knight and Doctor Rochecliffe to the spot, trusting that he might work out of them some explanation of the secrets of this apartment.

"So please your Excellency, to let me to deal with them," said Pearson, who was a true soldier of fortune, and had been a bucanier in the West Indies, "I think that, by a whipcord twitched tight round their forehead, and twisted about with a pistol-but, I could make either the truth start from their lips, or the eyes from their head."

"Out upon thee, Pearson!" said Cromwell, with abhorrence; "we have no warrant for such cruelty, neither as Englishmen nor Christians. We may slay malignants as we crush noxious animals, but to torture them is a deadly sin; for it is written, 'He made them to be pitied of those who carried them captive.' Nay, I recall the order even for their examination, trusting that wisdom will be granted us without it, to discover their most secret devices."

There was a pause accordingly, during which an idea seized upon Cromwell's imagination—"Bring me hither," he said, "yonder stool;" and placing it beneath one of the windows, of which there were two so high in the wall as not to be accessible from the floor, he clambered up into the entrance of the window, which was six or seven feet deep, corresponding with the thickness of the wall. "Come up hither, Pearson," said the General; "but ere thou comest, double the guard at the foot of the turret called Love's Ladder, and bid them bring up the other petard—So now, come thou hither."

The inferior officer, however brave in the field, was one of those whom a great height strikes with giddiness and sickness. He shrunk back from the view of the precipice, on the verge of which Cromwell was standing with complete indifference, till the General, catching the hand of his follower, pulled him forward as far as he would advance. "I think," said the General, "I have found the clew, but by this light it is no easy one! See you, we stand in the portal near the top of Rosamond's Tower; and yon turret which rises opposite to our feet, is that which is called Love's Ladder, from which the drawbridge reached that admitted the profligate Norman tyrant to the bower of his mistress."

"True, my lord, but the drawbridge is gone," said Pearson.

"Ay, Pearson," replied the General; "but an active man might spring from the spot we stand upon to the battlements of yonder turret."

"I do not think so, my lord," said Pearson.

"What!" said Cromwell; "not if the avenger of blood were behind you, with his slaughter-weapon in his hand?"

"The fear of instant death might do much," answered Pearson; "but when I look at that sheer depth on either side, and at the empty chasm between us and yonder turret, which is, I warrant you, twelve feet distant, I confess the truth, nothing short of the most imminent danger should induce me to try. Pah—the thought makes my head grow giddy!—I tremble to see your Highness stand there, balancing yourself as if you meditated a spring into the empty air. I repeat, I would scarce stand so near the verge as does your Highness, for the rescue of my life."

"Ah, base and degenerate spirit!" said the General; "soul of mud and clay, wouldst thou not do it, and much more, for the possession of empire!—that is, peradventure," continued he, changing his tone as one who has said too much, "shouldst thou be called on to do this, that thereby becoming a great man in the tribes of Israel, thou mightest redeem the captivity of Jerusalem—ay, and it may be, work some great work for the afflicted people of this land?"

"Your Highness may feel such calls," said the officer; "but they are not for poor Gilbert Pearson, your faithful follower. You made a jest of me yesterday, when I tried to speak your language; and I am no more able to fulfil your designs, than to use your mode of speech."

"But, Pearson," said Cromwell, "thou hast thrice, yea, four times, called me your Highness."

"Did I, my lord? I was not sensible of it. I crave your pardon," said the officer.

"Nay," said Oliver, "there was no offence. I do indeed stand high, and I may perchance stand higher—though, alas, it were fitter for a simple soul like me to return to my plough and my husbandry. Nevertheless, I will not wrestle against the supreme will, should I be called on to do yet more in that worthy cause. For surely he who hath been to our British Israel as a shield of help, and a sword of excellency, making her enemies be found liars unto her, will not give over the flock to those foolish shepherds of Westminster, who shear the sheep and feed them not, and who are in very deed hirelings, not shepherds."

"I trust to see your Lordship quoit them all down stairs," answered Pearson. "But may I ask why we pursue this discourse even now, until we have secured the common enemy?"

"I will tarry no jot of time"—said the General; "fence the communication of Love's Ladder, as it is called, below, as I take it for almost certain, that the party whom we have driven from fastness to fastness during the night, has at length sprung to the top of yonder battlements from the place where we now stand. Finding the turret is guarded below, the place he has chosen for his security will prove a rat-trap, from whence there is no returning."

"There is a cask of gunpowder in this cabinet," said Pearson; "were it not better, my lord, to mine the tower, if he will not render himself, and send the whole turret with its contents one hundred feet into the air?"

"Ah, silly man," said Cromwell, striking him familiarly on the shoulder, "if thou hadst done this without telling me, it had been good service. But we will first summon the turret, and then think whether the petard will serve our turn—it is but mining at last.—Blow a summons there, down below."

The trumpets rang at his bidding, till the old walls echoed from every recess and vaulted archway. Cromwell, as if he cared not to look upon the person whom he expected to appear, drew back, like a necromancer afraid of the spectre which he has evoked.

"He has come to the battlement," said Pearson to his General.

"In what dress or appearance?" answered Cromwell from within the chamber.

"A gray riding-suit, passamented with silver, russet walking-boots, a cut band, a gray hat and plume, black hair."

"*It is he* it is he!" said Cromwell; "and another *crowning mercy is vouchsafed!*"

In the mean time, Pearson and young Lee exchanged defiance from their respective posts.

"Surrender," said the former, "or we blow you up in your fastness."

"I am come of too high a race to surrender to rebels," said Albert, assuming the air with which, in such a condition, a king might have spoken.

"I bear you to witness," cried Cromwell, exultingly, "he hath refused quarter. Of a surety, his blood be on his head.—One of you bring down the barrel of powder. As he loves to soar high, we will add what can be taken from the soldiers' bandoleers.—Come with me, Pearson; thou understandest this gear.—Corporal Grace-be-here, stand thou fast on the platform of the window, where Captain Pearson and I stood but even now, and bend the point of thy partisan against any who shall attempt to pass. Thou art as strong as a bull; and I will back thee against despair itself."

"But," said the corporal, mounting reluctantly "the place is as the pinnacle of the Temple; and it is written, that Eutychus fell down from the third loft and was taken up dead."

"Because he slept upon his post," answered Cromwell readily. "Beware thou of carelessness, and thy thy feet shall be kept from stumbling.—You four soldiers, remain here to support the corporal, if it be necessary; and you, as well as the corporal, will draw into the vaulted passage the minute the trumpets sound a retreat. It is as strong as a casemate and you may lie there safe from the effects of the mine. Thou, Zerubbabel Robins, I know, will be their lance-prisade."*

Robins bowed, and the General departed to join those who were without.

As he reached the door of the hall, the petard was heard to explode, and he saw that it had succeeded for the soldiers rushed, brandishing their swords and pistols, in at the postern of the turret, whose gate had been successfully forced. A thrill of exultation, but not unmingled with horror, shot across the veins of the ambitious soldier.

"Now—now!" he cried; "they are dealing with him!"

His expectations were deceived. Pearson and the others returned disappointed, and reported they had been stopt by a strong trapdoor of grated iron, extended over the narrow stair; and they could see there was an obstacle of the same kind some ten feet higher. To remove it by force, while a desperate and well armed man had the advantage of the steps above them, might cost many lives. "Which, lack-a-day, said the General, "it is our duty to be tender of. What dost thou advise, Gilbert Pearson?"

"We must use powder, my lord," answered Pearson, who saw his master was too modest to reserve to himself the whole merit of the proceeding—"The may be a chamber easily and conveniently formed under the foot of the stair. We have a sausage, I good luck, to form the train—and so"——

"Ah!" said Cromwell, "I know thou canst manage such gear well—But, Gilbert, I go to visit the posts and give them orders to retire to a safe distance when the retreat is sounded. You will allow them five minutes for this purpose."

"Three is enough for any knave of them all," said Pearson. "They will be lame indeed, that require more on such a service—I ask but one, though I fire the train myself."

"Take heed," said Cromwell, "that the poor soul be listened to, if he asks quarter. It may be, he may repent him of his hardheartedness, and call for mercy."

"And mercy he shall have"—answered Pearson "provided he calls loud enough to make me hear him; for the explosion of that damned petard has made me as deaf as the devil's dam."

"Hush, Gilbert, hush!" said Cromwell; "you offend in your language."

"Zooks, sir, I must speak either in your way, or my own," said Pearson, "unless I am to be dumb as well as deaf! Away with you, my lord, to visit the posts; and you will presently hear me make some noise in the world."

* "Lance-prisade," or "lance-brisade," a private appointed to a small command—a sort of temporary corporal.

Cromwell smiled gently ; his aid-de-camp's petulance, patted him on the shoulder, and called him a mad fellow, walked a little way, then turned back to whisper, "What thou dost, do quickly ;" then returned again towards the outer circle of guards, turning his head from time to time, as if to assure himself that the corporal, to whom he had intrusted the duty, still kept guard with his advanced weapon upon the terrific chasm between Rosamond's Tower and the corresponding turret. Seeing him standing on his post, the General muttered between his mustaches, "The fellow hath the strength and courage of a bear; and yonder is a post where one shall do more to keep back, than a hundred in making way." He cast a last look on the gigantic figure, who stood in that airy position, like some Gothic statue, the weapon half-levelled against the opposite turret, with the but rested against his right foot his steel cap and burnished corselet glittering in the rising sun.

Cromwell then passed on to give the necessary orders, that such sentinels as might be endangered at their present posts by the effect of the mine, should withdraw at the sound of the trumpet to the places which he pointed out to them. Never, on any occasion of his life, did he display more calmness and presence of mind. He was kind, nay, facetious with the soldiers, who adored him; and yet he resembled a volcano before the eruption commences—all peaceful and quiet without, while a hundred contradictory passions were raging in his bosom.

Corporal Humgudgeon, mean while, remained steady upon his post; yet, though as determined a soldier as ever fought among the redoubted regiment of Ironsides, and possessed of no small share of that exalted fanaticism which lent so keen an edge to the natural courage of those stern religionists, the veteran felt his present situation to be highly uncomfortable. Within a pike's length of him arose a turret, which was about to be dispersed in massive fragments through the air; and he felt small confidence in the length of time which might be allowed for his escape from such a dangerous vicinity. The duty of constant vigilance upon his post, was partly divided by this natural feeling, which induced him from time to time to bend his eyes on the miners below, instead of keeping them riveted on the opposite turret.

At length the interest of the scene arose to the uttermost. After entering and returning from the turret, and coming out again more than once, in the course of about twenty minutes Pearson issued, as it might be supposed, for the last time, carrying in his hand, and uncoiling, as he went along, the sausage, or linen bag, (so called from its appearance,) which, strongly sewed together, and crammed with gunpowder, was to serve as a train betwixt the mine to be sprung, and the point occupied by the engineer who was to give fire. He was in the act of finally adjusting it, when the attention of the corporal on the tower became irresistibly and exclusively riveted upon the preparations for the explosion. But while he watched the aide-de-camp drawing his pistol to give fire, and the trumpeter handling his instrument, as waiting the order to sound the retreat, fate rushed on the unhappy sentinel in a way he least expected.

Young, active, bold, and completely possessed of his presence of mind, Albert Lee, who had been from the loopholes a watchful observer of every measure which had been taken by his besiegers, had resolved to make one desperate effort for self-preservation.—While the head of the sentinel on the opposite platform was turned from him, and bent rather downwards, he suddenly sprung across the chasm, though the space on which he lighted was scarce wide enough for two persons, threw the surprised soldier from the precarious stand, and jumped himself down into his chamber. The gigantic trooper went sheer down twenty feet, struck against a projecting battlement, which launched the wretched man outwards, and then fell on the earth with such tremendous force, that the head, which first touched the ground, dinted a hole in the soil of six inches in depth, and was crushed like an eggshell.—Scarce knowing what had happened, yet startled and confounded at the descent of this heavy body, which *fell at no great distance from* him, Pearson snapt his pistol at the train, no previous warning given; the powder caught, and the mine exploded. Had it been strongly charged with powder, many of those without might have suffered, but the explosion was only powerful enough to blow out, in a lateral direction, a part of the wall just above the foundation, sufficient, however, to destroy the equipoise of the building.—Then amid a cloud of smoke, which began gradually to encircle the turret like a shroud, arising slowly from its base to its summit, it was seen to stagger and shake, by all who had courage to look steadily at a sight so dreadful. Slowly, at first, the building inclined outwards, then rushed precipitately to its base, and fell to the ground in huge fragments, the strength of its resistance showing the excellence of the masonwork. The engineer, so soon as he had fired the train, fled in such alarm that he well nigh ran against his General, who was advancing towards him, while a huge stone from the summit of the building, flying farther than the rest, lighted within a yard of them.

"Thou hast been over hasty, Pearson," said Cromwell, with the greatest composure possible—"hath no one fallen in that same tower of Siloa?"

"Some one fell," said Pearson, still in great agitation, "and yonder lies his body half-buried in the rubbish."

With a quick and resolute step, Cromwell approached the spot, and exclaimed, "Pearson, thou hast ruined me—the young man hath escaped.—This is our own sentinel—plague on the idiot! Let him rot beneath the ruins which crushed him!"

A cry now resounded from the platform of Rosamond's Tower, which appeared yet taller than formerly, deprived of the neighbouring turret, which emulated, though it did not attain to its height. "A prisoner, noble General—a prisoner—the fox whom we have chased all night is now in the snare—the Lord hath delivered him into the hand of his servants."

"Look you keep him in safe custody," exclaimed Cromwell, "and bring him presently down to the apartment from which the secret passages have their principal entrance."

"Your Excellency shall be obeyed."

The proceedings of Albert Lee, to which these exclamations related, had been unfortunate. He had dashed from the platform, as we have related, the gigantic strength of the soldier opposed to him, and had instantly jumped down into Rochecliffe's chamber. But the soldiers stationed there threw themselves upon him, and after a struggle, which was hopelessly maintained against such advantage of numbers, had thrown the young cavalier to the ground, two of them, drawn down by his strenuous exertions, falling across him. At the same moment a sharp and severe report was heard, which, like a clap of thunder in the immediate vicinity, shook all around them, till the strong and solid tower tottered like the mast of a stately vessel when about to part by the board. In a few seconds, this was followed by another sullen sound, at first low and deep, but augmenting like the roar of a cataract, as it descends, reeling, bellowing, and rushing, as if to astound both heaven and earth. So awful, indeed, was the sound of the neighbouring tower as it fell, that both the captive, and those who struggled with him, continued for a minute or two passive in each other's grasp.

Albert was the first who recovered consciousness and activity. He shook off those who lay above him, and made a desperate effort to gain his feet, in which he partly succeeded. But as he had to deal with men accustomed to every species of danger, and whose energies were recovered nearly as soon as his own, he was completely secured, and his arms held down. Loyal and faithful to his trust, and resolved to sustain to the last the character which he had assumed, he exclaimed, as his struggles were finally overpowered, "Rebel villains! would you slay your king?"

"Ha, heard you that!" cried one of the soldiers to the lance-prisade, who commanded the party. "Shall I not strike this son of a wicked father under the fifth rib, even as the tyrant of Moab was smitten by Ehud with a dagger of a cubit's length?"

But Robins answered, "Be it far from us, Merciful Strickalthrow, to slay in cold blood the captive of our bow and of our spear. Methinks, since the storm of Tredagh* we have shed enough of blood—therefore, on your lives do him no evil; but take from him his arms, and let us bring him before the chosen Instrument, even our General, that he may do with him what is meet in his eyes."

By this time the soldier, whose exultation had made him the first to communinate the intelligence from the battlements to Cromwell, returned, and brought commands corresponding to the orders of their temporary officer; and Albert Lee, disarmed and bound, was conducted as a captive into the apartment which derived its name from the victories of his ancestor, and placed in the presence of General Cromwell.

Running over in his mind the time which had elapsed since the departure of Charles, till the seige, if it may be termed so, had terminated in his own capture, Albert had every reason to hope that his Royal Master must have had time to accomplish his escape. Yet he determined to maintain to the last a deceit, which might for a time insure the King's safety. The difference betwixt them could not, he thought, be instantly discovered, begrimed as he was with dust and smoke, and with blood issuing from some scratches received in the scuffle.

In this evil plight, but bearing himself with such dignity as was adapted to the princely character, Albert was ushered into the apartment of Victor Lee, where, in his father's own chair, reclined the triumphant enemy of the cause to which the house of Lee had been hereditarily faithful.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A barren title hast thou bought too dear;
Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a King?
Henry IV. Part I.

OLIVER CROMWELL arose from his seat as the two veteran soldiers, Zerubbabel Robins and Merciful Strickalthrow, introduced into the apartment the prisoner, whom they held by the arms, and fixed his stern hazel eye on Albert long before he could give vent to the ideas which were swelling in his bosom. Exultation was the most predominant.

"Art not thou," he at length said, "that Egyptian, which, before these days, madest an uproar, and ledest out into the wilderness many thousand men, who were murderers?—Ha, youth! I have hunted thee from Stirling to Worcester,—from Worcester to Woodstock, and we have met at last!"

"I would," replied Albert, speaking in the character which he had assumed, "that we had met where I could have shown thee the difference betwixt a rightful King and an ambitious Usurper!"

"Go to, young man," said Cromwell; "say rather the difference between a judge raised up for the redemption of England, and the son of those Kings whom the Lord in his anger permitted to reign over her. But we will not waste useless words. God knows that it is not of our will that we are called to such high matters, being as humble in our thoughts as we are of ourselves; and in our unassisted nature frail and foolish; and unable to render a reason but for the better spirit within us, which is not of us.—Thou art weary, young man, and thy nature requires rest and refection, being doubtless dealt with delicately, as one who hath fed on the fat, and drank of the sweet, and who hath been clothed in purple and fine linen."

Here the General suddenly stopt, and then abruptly exclaimed—"But is this—Ah! whom have we here? These are not the locks of the swarthy lad Charles Stewart?—A cheat! a cheat!"

Albert hastily cast his eyes on a mirror which stood in the room, and perceived that a dark peruke, found among Doctor Rochecliffe's miscellaneous wardrobe, had been disordered in the scuffle with the soldiery, *and that his own light-brown hair was escaping from beneath it.*

"Who is this?" said Cromwell, stamping with fury—"Pluck the disguise from him!"

The soldiers did so; and bringing him at the same time towards the light, the deception could not be maintained for a moment longer, with any possibility of success. Cromwell came up to him with his teeth set, and grinding against each other as he spoke, his hands clenched, and trembling with emotion, and speaking with a voice low-pitched, bitterly and deeply emphatic, such as might have preceded a stab with his dagger.

"Thy name, young man?"

He was answered calmly and firmly, while the countenance of the speaker wore a cast of triumph, and even contempt,

"Albert Lee of Ditchley, a faithful subject of King Charles."

"I might have guessed it," said Cromwell.—"Ay, and to King Charles shalt thou go, as soon as it is noon on the dial.—Pearson," he continued, "let him be carried to the others; and let them be executed at twelve exactly."

"All, sir?" said Pearson, surprised; for Cromwell, though he at times made formidable examples, was, in general, by no means sanguinary.

"*All*"—repeated Cromwell, fixing his eye on young Lee.—"Yes, young sir, your conduct has devoted to death thy father, thy kinsman, and the stranger that was in thine household. Such wreck hast thou brought on thy father's house."

"My father, too—my aged father!" said Albert, looking upward, and endeavouring to raise his hands in the same direction, which was prevented by his bonds. "The Lord's will be done!"

"All this havoc can be saved, if," said the General, "thou wilt answer one question—Where is the young Charles Stewart, who was called King of Scotland?"

"Under Heaven's protection, and safe from thy power," was the firm and unhesitating answer of the young royalist.

"Away with him to prison!" said Cromwell; "and from thence to execution with the rest of them, as malignants taken in the fact. Let a court-martial sit on them presently."

"One word," said young Lee, as they led him from the room.

"Stop, stop," said Cromwell, with the agitation of renewed hope—"let him be heard."

"You love texts of Scripture," said Albert—"Let this be the subject of your next homily—'Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?'"

"Away with him," said the General; "let him die the death!—I have said it."

As Cromwell spoke these words, his aide-de-camp observed that he became unwontedly pale.

"Your Excellency is overtoiled in the public service," said Pearson; "a course of the stag in the evening will refresh you. The old knight hath a noble hound here, if we can but get him to hunt without his master, which may be hard, as he is faithful, and"——

"Hang him up!" said Cromwell.

"What—whom—hang the noble dog? Your Excellency was wont to love a good hound?"

"It matters not," said Cromwell; "let him be killed. Is it not written, that they slew in the valley of Achor, not only the accursed Achan, with his sons and his daughters, but also his oxen and his asses, and his sheep, and every live thing belonging unto him? And even thus shall we do to the malignant family of Lee, who have aided Sisera in his flight, when Israel might have been delivered out of his trouble for ever. But send out couriers and patrols—Follow, pursue, watch in every direction—Let my horse be ready at the door in five minutes, or bring me the first thou canst find."

It seemed to Pearson that this was something wildly spoken, and that the cold perspiration was standing upon the General's brow as he said it. He therefore again pressed the necessity of repose, and it would appear that nature seconded strongly the representation. Cromwell arose and made a step or two towards the door of the apartment, but stopped, staggered, and, after a pause, sat down in a chair

** Tredagh, or Drogheda, was taken by Cromwell in 1649, by storm and the governor and whole garrison put to the sword.*

"Truly, friend Pearson," he said, "this weary carcass of ours is an impediment to us, even in our most necessary business, and I am fitter to sleep than to watch, which is not my wont. Place guards, therefore, till we repose ourselves for an hour or two. Send out in every direction, and spare not for horses' flesh. Wake me if the court-martial should require instruction, and forget not to see the sentence punctually executed on the Lees, and those who were arrested with them."

As Cromwell spoke thus, he arose and half-opened a bedroom door, when Pearson again craved pardon for asking if he had rightly understood his Excellency, that all the prisoners were to be executed.

"Have I not said it?" answered Cromwell, displeasedly. "Is it because thou art a man of blood, and hast ever been, that thou dost affect these scruples, to show thyself tender-hearted at my expense? I tell thee, that if there lack one in the full tale of execution, thine own life shall pay the forfeit."

So saying, he entered the apartment, followed by the groom of his chamber, who attended upon Pearson's summons.

When his General had retired, Pearson remained in great perplexity what he ought to do; and that from no scruples of conscience, but from uncertainty whether he might not err either in postponing, or in too hastily and too literally executing, the instructions he had received.

In the mean time, Strickalthrow and Robins had returned, after lodging Albert in prison, to the room where Pearson was still musing on his General's commands. Both these men were adjutators in their army, and old soldiers, whom Cromwell was accustomed to treat with great familiarity; so that Robins had no hesitation to ask Captain Pearson, "Whether he meant to execute the commands of the General, even to the letter?"

Pearson shook his head with an air of doubt, but added, "There was no choice left."

"Be assured," said the old man, "that if thou dost his folly, thou wilt cause Israel to sin, and that the General will not be pleased with your service. Thou knowest, and none better than thou, that Oliver, although he be like unto David the son of Jesse, in faith, and wisdom, and courage, yet there are times when the evil spirit cometh upon him as it did upon Saul, and he uttereth commands which he will not thank any one for executing."

Pearson was too good a politician to assent directly to a proposition which he could not deny—he only shook his head once more, and said that it was easy for those to talk who were not responsible, but the soldier's duty was to obey his orders, and not to judge of them.

"Very righteous truth," said Merciful Strickalthrow, a grim old Scotchman; "I marvel where our brother Zerubbabel caught up this softness of heart?"

"Why, I do but wish," said Zerubbabel, "that four or five human creatures may draw the breath of God's air for a few hours more; there can be small harm done by delaying the execution,—and the General will have some time for reflection."

"Ay," said Captain Pearson, "but I in my service must be more pointedly obsequious, than thou in thy plainness art bound to be, friend Zerubbabel."

"Then shall the coarse frieze cassock of the private soldier help the golden gaberdine of the captain to bear out the blast," said Zerubbabel. "Ay, indeed, I can show you warrant why we be aidful to each other in doing acts of kindness and long-suffering, seeing the best of us are poor sinful creatures, who might suffer, being called to a brief accounting."

"Of a verity you surprise me, brother Zerubbabel," said Strickalthrow; "that thou, being an old and experienced soldier, whose head hath grown gray in battle, shouldst give such advice to a young officer. Is not the General's commission to take away the wicked from the land, and to root out the Amalekite, and the Jebusite, and the Perizzite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite? and are not these men justly to be compared to the five kings, who took shelter in the cave of Makedah, who were *delivered into the hands of* Joshua the son of Nun? and he caused his captains and his soldiers to come near and tread on their necks—and then he smote them, and he slew them, and then he hanged them on five trees, even till evening—And thou, Gilbert Pearson by name, be not withheld from the duty which is appointed to thee, but do even as has been commanded by him who is raised up to judge and to deliver Israel; for it is written, 'cursed is he who holdeth back his sword from the slaughter.'"

Thus wrangled the two military theologians, while Pearson, much more solicitous to anticipate the wishes of Oliver than to know the will of Heaven, listened to them with great indecision and perplexity.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

But let us now, like soldiers on the watch,
Put the soul's armour on, alike prepared
For all a soldier's warfare brings.—JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE reader will recollect, that when Rochecliffe and Joceline were made prisoners, the party which escorted them had two other captives in their train, namely, Colonel Everard, and the Rev. Nehemiah Holdenough. When Cromwell had obtained entrance into Woodstock, and commenced his search after the fugitive Prince, the prisoners were placed in what had been an old guardroom, and which was by its strength well calculated to serve for a prison, and a guard was placed over them by Pearson. No light was allowed, save that of a glimmering fire of charcoal. The prisoners remained separated from each other, Colonel Everard conversing with Nehemiah Holdenough, at a distance from Doctor Rochecliffe, Sir Henry Lee, and Joceline. The party was soon after augmented by Wildrake, who was brought down to the Lodge, and thrust in with so little ceremony, that, his arms being bound, he had very nearly fallen on his nose in the middle of the prison.

"I thank you, my good friends," he said, looking back to the door, which they who had pushed him in were securing—"*Point de ceremonie*—no apology for tumbling, so we light in good company.—Save ye, save ye, gentlemen all—What, *à la mort*, and nothing stirring to keep the sprits up, and make a night on't?—the last we shall have, I take it; for a make[a] to a million, but we trine to the nubbing cheatt to-morrow.—Patron—noble patron, how goes it? This was but a scurvy trick of Noll, so far as you were concerned; as for me, why I might have deserved something of the kind at his hand."

"Prithee, Wildrake, sit down," said Everard; "thou art drunk—disturb us not."

"Drunk? I drunk?" cried Wildrake, "I have been splicing the main-brace, as Jack says at Wapping—have been tasting Noll's brandy in a bumper to the King's health, and another to his Excellency's confusion, and another to the d——n of Parliament—and it may be one or two more, but all to devilish good toasts. But I'm not drunk."

"Prithee, friend, be not profane," said Nehemiah Holdenough.

"What, my little Presbyterian Parson, my slender Mass John? thou shalt say amen to this world instantly"—said Wildrake; "I have had a weary time in't for one.—Ha, noble Sir Henry, I kiss your hand—I tell thee, knight, the point of my Toledo was near Cromwell's heart last night, as ever a button on the breast of his doublet. Rat him, he wears secret armour—He a soldier! Had it not been for a cursed steel shirt, I would have spitted him like a lark. Ha, Doctor Rochecliffe?—thou knowest I can wield my weapon."

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "and you know I can use mine."

"I prithee be quiet, Master Wildrake," said Sir Henry.

"Nay, good knight," answered Wildrake, "be somewhat more cordial with a comrade in distress. This is a different scene from the Brentford storming party. The jade Fortune has been a very step-mother to me. I will sing you a song I made on my own ill-luck."

"At this moment, Captain Wildrake, we are not in

[a] A halfpenny. [1] Hang on the gallows.

a fitting mood for singing," said Sir Henry, civilly and gravely.

"Nay, it will aid your devotions—Egad, it sounds like a penitential psalm.

> When I was a young lad,
> My fortune was bad,
> If e'er I do well 'tis a wonder.
> I spent all my means
> Amid sharpers and queans,
> Then I got a commission to plunder.
> I have stockings, 'tis true,
> But the devil a shoe,
> I am forced to wear boots in all weather;
> Be d——n the boot sole,
> Curse on the spur-roll,
> Confounded be the upper leath r *

The door opened as Wildrake finished this stanza at the top of his voice, and in rushed a sentinel, who, greeting him by the title of a "blasphemous bellowing bull of Bashan," bestowed a severe blow, with his ramrod, on the shoulders of the songster, whose bonds permitted him no means of returning the compliment.

"Your humble servant again, sir," said Wildrake, shrugging his shoulders,— sorry I have no means of showing my gratitude. I am bound over to keep the peace, like Captain Bobadil—Ha, knight, did you hear my bones clatter? that blow came twanging'ly off—the fellow might inflict the bastinado, were it in presence of the Grand Seignior —he has no taste for music, knight—is no way moved by the 'concord of sweet sounds.' I will warrant him fit for treason, stratagem, and spoil— Eh?—all down in the mouth—well—I'll go to sleep to-night on a bench, as I've done many a night, and I will be ready to be hanged decently in the morning, which never happened to me before in all my life—

> When I was a young lad,
> My fortune was bad—

Pshaw! This is not the tune it goes to." Here he fell fast asleep, and sooner or later all his companions in misfortune followed his example.

The benches intended for the repose of the soldiers of the guard, afforded the prisoners convenience enough to lie down, though their slumbers, it may be believed, were neither sound nor undisturbed. But when daylight was but a little while broken, the explosion of gunpowder which took place, and the subsequent fall of the turret to which the mine was applied, would have awakened the Seven Sleepers, or Morpheus himself. The smoke, penetrating through the windows, left them at no loss for the cause of the din.

"There went my gunpowder," said Rochecliffe, "which has, I trust, blown up as many rebel villains as it might have been the means of destroying otherwise in a fair field. It must have caught fire by chance."

"By chance? no," said Sir Henry; "depend on it, my bold Albert has fired the train, and that in yonder blast Cromwell was flying toward the heaven whose battlements he will never reach—Ah, my brave boy! and perhaps thou art thyself sacrificed, like a youthful Samson among the rebellious Philistines!—But I will not be long behind thee, Albert."

Everard hastened to the door, hoping to obtain from the guard, to whom his name and rank might be known, some explanation of the noise, which seemed to announce some dreadful catastrophe.

But Nehemiah Holdenough, whose rest had been broken by the trumpet which gave signal for the explosion, appeared in the very acme of horror—"It is the trumpet of the Archangel!" he cried,—"it is the crushing of this world of elements—it is the summons to the Judgment-seat! The dead are obeying the call—they are with us—they are amongst us—they arise in their bodily frames—they come to summon us!"

As he spoke, his eyes were riveted upon Doctor Rochecliffe, who stood directly opposite to him. In *rising hastily, the* cap which he commonly wore, *according to a custom* then usual both among clergymen and gownmen of a civil profession, had escaped from his head, and carried with it the large silk patch which he probably wore for the purpose of disguise; for the cheek which was disclosed was unscarred, and the eye as good as that which was usually uncovered.

Colonel Everard returning from the door, endeavoured in vain to make Master Holdenough comprehend what he learned from the guard without, that the explosion had involved only the death of one of Cromwell's soldiers. The Presbyterian divine continued to stare wildly at him of the Episcopal persuasion."

But Doctor Rochecliffe heard and understood the news brought by Colonel Everard, and, relieved from the instant anxiety which had kept him stationary, he advanced towards the retiring Calvinist, extending his hand in the most friendly manner.

"Avoid thee—Avoid thee!" said Holdenough, "the living may not join hands with the dead."

"But I," said Rochecliffe, "am as much alive as you are."

"Thou alive!—thou! Joseph Albany, whom my own eyes saw precipitated from the battlements of Clidesthrow Castle?"

"Ay," answered the Doctor, "but you did not see me swim ashore on a marsh covered with sedges—*fugit ad salicca*—after a manner which I will explain to you another time."

Holdenough touched his hand with doubt and uncertainty. "Thou art indeed warm and alive," he said, "and yet after so many blows, and a fall so tremendous—thou can'st not be *my* Joseph Albany."

"I am Joseph Albany Rochecliffe," said the Doctor, "become so in virtue of my mother's little estate, which fines and confiscations have made an end of."

"And is it so indeed?" said Holdenough, "and have I recovered mine old chum?"

"Even so," replied Rochecliffe, "by the same token I appeared to you in the Mirror Chamber—Thou wert so bold, Nehemiah, that our whole scheme would have been shipwrecked, had I not appeared to thee in the shape of a departed friend. Yet, believe me, it went against my heart to do it."

"Ah, fie on thee, fie on thee," said Holdenough, throwing himself into his arms, and clasping him to his bosom, "thou wert ever a naughty wag. How couldst thou play me such a trick? Ah, Albany, dost thou remember Dr. Parefoy and Caius College?"

"Marry, do I," said the Doctor, thrusting his arm through the Presbyterian divine's, and guiding him to a seat apart from the other prisoners, who witnessed this scene with much surprise. "Remember Caius College?" said Rochecliffe, "ay, and the good ale we drank, and our parties to mother Huffcap's."

"Vanity of vanities," said Holdenough, smiling kindly at the same time, and still holding his recovered friend's arm enclosed and hand-locked in his. "But the breaking the Principal's orchard, so cleanly done," said the Doctor; "it was the first plot I ever framed, and much work I had to prevail on thee to go into it."

"Oh, name not that iniquity," said Nehemiah, "since I may well say, as the pious Master Baxter, that these boyish offences have had their punishment in later years, inasmuch as that inordinate appetite for fruit hath produced stomachic affections under which I yet labour."

"True, true, dear Nehemiah," said Rochecliffe, "but care not for them—a dram of brandy will correct it all. Mr. Baxter was,"—he was about to say, "an ass," but checked himself, and only filled up the sentence with "a good man, I dare say, but over scrupulous."

So they sat down together the best of friends, and for half an hour talked with mutual delight over old college stories. By degrees they got on the politics of the day; and though then they unclasped their hands, and there occurred between them such expressions as "Nay, my dear brother," and, "there I must needs differ," and, "on this point I crave leave to

* *Such a song, or something very like it, may be found in Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, among the wild slips of minstrelsy which are there collected.*

think;" yet a hue and cry against the Independents and other sectarists being started, they followed like brethren in full halloo, and it was hard to guess which was most forward. Unhappily, in the course of this amicable intercourse, something was mentioned about the bishopric of Titus, which at once involved them in the doctrinal question of Church Government. Then, alas! the floodgates were opened, and they showered on each other Greek and Hebrew texts, while their eyes kindled, their cheeks glowed, their hands became clenched, and they looked more like fierce polemics about to rend each other's eyes out, than Christian divines.

Roger Wildrake, by making himself an auditor of the debate, contrived to augment its violence. He took, of course, a most decided part in a question, the merits of which were totally unknown to him. Somewhat overawed by Holdenough's ready oratory and learning, the cavalier watched with a face of anxiety the countenance of Doctor Rochecliffe; but when he saw the proud eye and steady bearing of the Episcopal champion, and heard him answer Greek with Greek, and Hebrew with Hebrew, Wildrake backed his arguments as he closed them, with a stout rap upon the bench, and an exulting laugh in the face of the antagonist. It was with some difficulty that Sir Henry and Colonel Everard, having at length and reluctantly interfered, prevailed on the two alienated friends to adjourn their dispute, removing at the same time to a distance, and regarding each other with looks in which old friendship appeared to have totally given way to mutual animosity.

But while they sat lowering on each other, and longing to renew a contest in which each claimed the victory, Pearson entered the prison, and in a low and troubled voice, desired the persons whom it contained to prepare for instant death.

Sir Henry Lee received the doom with the stern composure which he had hitherto displayed. Colonel Everard attempted the interposition of a strong and resentful appeal to the Parliament, against the judgment of the court-martial and the General. But Pearson declined to receive or transmit any such remonstrance, and with a dejected look and melancholy presage, renewed his exhortation to them to prepare for the hour of noon, and withdrew from his prison.

The operation of this intelligence on the two clerical disputants was more remarkable. They gazed for a moment on each other with eyes in which repentant kindness and a feeling of generous shame quenched every lingering feeling of resentment, and joining in the mutual exclamation—"My brother—my brother, I have sinned, I have sinned, in offending thee!" they rushed into each other's arms, shed tears as they demanded each other's forgiveness, and, like two warriors, who sacrifice a personal quarrel to discharge their duty against the common enemy, they recalled nobler ideas of their sacred character, and, assuming the part which best became them on an occasion so melancholy, began to exhort those around them to meet the doom that had been announced, with the firmness and dignity which Christianity alone can give.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

> Most gracious prince, good Canaying cried
> Leave vengeance to our God,
> And lay the iron rule aside,
> Be thine the olive rod.
>
> *Ballad of Sir Charles Bawdin.*

The hour appointed for execution had been long past, and it was about five in the evening, when the Protector summoned Pearson to his presence. He went with fear and reluctance, uncertain how he might be received. After remaining about a quarter of an hour, the aide-de-camp returned to Victor Lee's parlour, where he found the old soldier, Zerubbabel Robins, in attendance for his return.

"How is Oliver?" said the old man, anxiously.

"Why, well," answered Pearson, "and hath asked no questions of the execution, but many concerning the reports we have been able to make regarding the flight of the young man, and is much moved at thinking he must now be beyond pursuit. Also I gave him certain papers belonging to the malignant Doctor Rochecliffe."

"Then will I venture upon him," said the adjutator; "so give me a napkin that I may look like a sewer, and fetch up the food which I directed should be in readiness."

Two troopers attended accordingly with a ration of beef, such as was distributed to the private soldiers, and dressed after their fashion—a pewter pot of ale, a trencher with salt, black pepper, and a loaf of ammunition bread. "Come with me," he said to Pearson, "and fear not—Noll loves an innocent jest." He boldly entered the General's sleeping apartment, and said aloud, "Arise, thou that art called to be a judge in Israel—let there be no more folding of the hands to sleep. Lo, I come as a sign to thee; wherefore arise, eat, drink, and let thy heart be glad within thee, for thou shalt eat with joy the food of him that laboureth in the trenches, seeing that since thou wert commander over the host, the poor sentinel hath had such provisions as I have now placed for thine own refreshment."

"Truly, brother Zerubbabel," said Cromwell, accustomed to such starts of enthusiasm among his followers, "we would wish that it were so; neither is it our desire to sleep soft, nor feed more highly, than the meanest that ranks under our banners. Verily, thou hast chosen well for my refreshment, and the smell of the food is savoury in my nostrils."

He arose from the bed, on which he had lain down half dressed, and wrapping his cloak around him, sat down by the bedside, and partook heartily of the plain food which was prepared for him. While he was eating, Cromwell commanded Pearson to finish his report—"You need not desist for the presence of a worthy soldier, whose spirit is as my spirit."

"Nay, but," interrupted Robins, "you are to know that Gilbert Pearson hath not fully executed thy commands, touching a part of those malignants, all of whom should have died at noon."

"What execution—what malignants?" said Cromwell, laying down his knife and fork.

"Those in the prison here at Woodstock," answered Zerubbabel, "whom your Excellency commanded should be executed at noon, as taken in the fact of rebellion against the Commonwealth."

"Wretch!" said Cromwell, starting up and addressing Pearson, "thou hast not touched Mark Everard, in whom there was no guilt, for he was deceived by him who passed between us—neither hast thou put forth thy hand on the pragmatic Presbyterian minister, to have all those of their classes cry sacrilege, and alienate them from us for ever?"

"If your Excellency wish them to live, they live—their life and death are in the power of a word," said Pearson.

"Enfranchise them; I must gain the Presbyterian interest over to us if I can."

"Rochecliffe, the arch-plotter," said Pearson, "I thought to have executed, but"——

"Barbarous man," said Cromwell, "alike ungrateful and impolitic—wouldst thou have destroyed our decoy-duck? This doctor is but like a well, a shallow one indeed, but something deeper than the springs which discharge their secret tribute into his keeping; then come I with a pump, and suck it all up to the open air. Enlarge him, and let him have money if he wants it. I know his haunts; he can go no where but our eye will be upon him.—But you look at each other darkly, as if you had more to say than you durst. I trust you have not done to death Sir Henry Lee?"

"No. Yet the man," replied Pearson, "is a confirmed malignant, and"——

"Ay, but he is also a noble relic of the ancient English Gentleman," said the General. "I would I knew how to win the favour of that race! But we, Pearson, whose royal robes are the armour which we wear on our bodies, and whose leading-staves are our sceptres, are too newly set up to draw the reverence of the proud malignants, who cannot brook to submit to

less than royal lineage. Yet what can they see in the longest kingly line in Europe, save that it runs back to a successful soldier? I grudge that one man should be honoured and followed, because he is the descendant of a victorious commander, while less honour and allegiance is paid to another, who, in personal qualities, and, in success, might emulate the founder of his rival's dynasty. Well, Sir Henry Lee lives, and shall live for me. His son, indeed, hath deserved the death which he has doubtless sustained."

"My lord," stammered Pearson, "since your Excellency has found I am right in suspending your order in so many instances, I trust you will not blame me in this also—I thought it best to await more special orders."

"Thou art in a mighty merciful humour this morning, Pearson," said Cromwell, not entirely satisfied.

"If your Excellency please, the halter is ready, and so is the provost-marshal."

"Nay, if such a bloody fellow as thou hast spared him, it would ill become me to destroy him," said the General. "But then, here is among Rochecliffe's papers the engagement of twenty desperadoes to take us off—some example ought to be made."

"My lord," said Zerubbabel, "consider now how often this young man, Albert Lee, hath been near you, nay, probably, quite close to your Excellency, in these dark passages, which he knew, and we did not. Had he been of an assassin's nature, it would have cost him but a pistol-shot, and the light of Israel was extinguished. Nay, in the unavoidable confusion which must have ensued, the sentinels quitting their posts, he might have had a fair chance of escape."

"Enough, Zerubbabel; he lives," said the General. "He shall remain in custody for some time, however, and be then banished from England. The other two are safe, of course; for you would not dream of considering such paltry fellows as fit victims for my revenge."

"One fellow, the under-keeper, called Joliffe, deserves death, however," said Pearson, "since he has frankly admitted that he slew honest Joseph Tomkins."

"He deserves a reward for saving us a labour," said Cromwell; "that Tomkins was a most double-hearted villain. I have found evidence among these papers here, that if we had lost the fight at Worcester, we should have had reason to regret that we had ever trusted Master Tomkins—it was only our success which anticipated his treachery—write us down debtor, not creditor, to Joceline, an you call him so, and to his quartorstaff."

"There remains the sacrilegious and graceless cavalier who attempted your Excellency's life last night," said Pearson.

"Nay," said the General, "that were stooping too low for revenge. His sword had no more power than had he thrusted with a tobacco-pipe. Eagles stoop not at mallards, or wild-drakes either."

"Yet, sir," said Pearson, "the fellow should be punished as a libeller. The quantity of foul and pestilential abuse which we found in his pockets makes me loath he should go altogether free—Please to look at them, sir."

"A most vile hand," said Oliver, as he looked at a sheet or two of our friend Wildrake's poetical miscellanies—"The very handwriting seems to be drunk, and the very poetry not sober—What have we here?

> 'When I was a young lad,
> My fortune was bad—
> If e'er I do well, 'tis a wonder'—

Why what trash is this?—and then again—

> 'Now a plague on the poll
> Of old politic Noll!
> We will drink till we bring
> In triumph back the King.'

In truth, if it could be done that way, this poet would be a stout champion. Give the poor knave *five pieces, Pearson*, and bid him go sell his ballads. *If he come within* twenty miles of our person, though, *we will have him flogged* till the blood runs down to *his heels.*

"*There remains* only one sentenced person," said Pearson, "a noble wolf-hound, finer than any your Excellency saw in Ireland. He belongs to the old knight Sir Henry Lee. Should your Excellency not desire to keep the fine creature yourself, might I presume to beg that I might have leave?"

"No, Pearson," said Cromwell; "the old man, so faithful himself, shall not be deprived of his faithful dog.—I would I had any creature, were it but a dog, that followed me because it loved me, not for what it could make of me."

"Your Excellency is unjust to your faithful soldiers," said Zerubbabel, bluntly, "who follow you like dogs, fight for you like dogs, and have the grave of a dog on the spot where they happen to fall."

"How now, old grumbler," said the General, "what means this change of note?"

"Corporal Humgudgeon's remains are left to moulder under the ruins of yonder tower, and Tomkins is thrust into a hole in a thicket like a beast."

"True, true," said Cromwell, "they shall be removed to the churchyard, and every soldier shall attend with cockades of sea-green and blue riband—Every one of the non-commissioned officers and adjutators shall have a mourning scarf; we ourselves will lead the procession, and there shall be a proper dole of wine, burnt brandy, and rosemary. See that it is done, Pearson. After the funeral, Woodstock shall be dismantled and destroyed, that its recesses may not again afford shelter to rebels and malignants."

The commands of the General were punctually obeyed, and when the other prisoners were dismissed, Albert Lee remained for some time in custody. He went abroad after his liberation, entered in King Charles's Guards, where he was promoted by that monarch. But his fate, as we shall see hereafter, only allowed him a short though bright career.

We return to the liberation of the other prisoners from Woodstock. The two divines, completely reconciled to each other, retreated arm in arm to the parsonage-house, formerly the residence of Doctor Rochecliffe, but which he now visited as the guest of his successor, Nehemiah Holdenough. The Presbyterian had no sooner installed his friend under his roof, than he urged upon him an offer to partake it and the income annexed to it, as his own. Dr. Rochecliffe was much affected, but wisely rejected the generous offer, considering the difference of their tenets on Church government, which each entertained as religiously as his creed. Another debate, though a light one, on the subject of the office of Bishops in the Primitive Church, confirmed him in his resolution. They parted the next day, and their friendship remained undisturbed by controversy till Mr. Holdenough's death, in 1658; a harmony which might be in some degree owing to their never meeting again after their imprisonment. Doctor Rochecliffe was restored to his living after the Restoration, and ascended from thence to high clerical preferment.

The inferior personages of the grand jail-delivery at Woodstock Lodge easily found themselves temporary accommodations in the town among old acquaintance; but no one ventured to entertain the old knight, understood to be so much under the displeasure of the ruling powers; and even the innkeeper of the George, who had been one of his tenants, scarce dared to admit him to the common privileges of a traveller who has food and lodging for his money. Everard attended him unrequested, unpermitted, but also unforbidden. The heart of the old man had been turned once more towards him when he learned how he had behaved at the memorable rencontre at the King's Oak, and saw that he was an object of the enmity, rather than the favour of Cromwell. But there was another secret feeling which tended to reconcile him to his nephew—the consciousness that Everard shared with him the deep anxiety which he experienced on account of his daughter, who had not yet returned from her doubtful and perilous expedition. He felt that he himself would perhaps be unable to discover where Alice had taken refuge during the late events, or to obtain her deliverance if she was taken into custody. He wished Everard to offer him his services in making a search for her, but shame prevented him proposing

the request; and Everard, who could not suspect the altered state of his uncle's mind, was afraid to make the proposal of assistance, or even to name the name of Alice.

The sun had already set—they sat looking each other in the face in silence, when the trampling of horses was heard—there was knocking at the door—there was a light step on the stair, and Alice, the subject of their anxiety, stood before them. She threw herself joyfully into her father's arms, who glanced his eye heedfully round the room, as he said in a whisper, "Is all safe?"

"Safe and out of danger, as I trust," replied Alice—"I have a token for you."

Her eye then rested on Everard—she blushed, was embarrassed, and silent.

"You need not fear your Presbyterian cousin," said the knight, with a good-humoured smile, "he has himself proved a confessor at least for loyalty, and ran the risk of being a martyr."

She pulled from her bosom the royal rescript, written on a small and soiled piece of paper, and tied round with a worsted thread instead of a seal. Such as it was, Sir Henry ere he opened it pressed the little packet with Oriental veneration to his lips, to his heart, to his forehead; and it was not before a tear had dropt on it that he found courage to open and read the billet. It was in these words:—

"LOYAL OUR MUCH ESTEEMED FRIEND, AND OUR TRUSTY SUBJECT,

"It having become known to us that a purpose of marriage has been entertained betwixt Mrs. Alice Lee, your only daughter, and Markham Everard, Esq. of Eversly Chase, her kinsman, and by affinity your nephew: And being assured that this match would be highly agreeable to you, had it not been for certain respects to our service, which induced you to refuse your consent thereto—We do therefore acquaint you, that, far from our affairs suffering by such an alliance, we do exhort, and, so far as we may, require you to consent to the same, as you would wish to do us good pleasure, and greatly to advance our affairs. Leaving to you, nevertheless, as becometh a Christian King, the full exercise of your own discretion concerning other obstacles to such an alliance, which may exist, independent of those connected with our service. Witness our hand, together with our thankful recollections of your good services to our late Royal Father as well as ourselves, "C. R."

Long and steadily did Sir Henry gaze on the letter, so that it might almost seem as if he were getting it by heart. He then placed it carefully in his pocket-book, and asked Alice the account of her adventures of the preceding night. They were briefly told. Their midnight walk through the Chase had been speedily and safely accomplished. Nor had the King once made the slightest relapse into the naughty Louis Kerneguy. When she had seen Charles and his attendant set off, she had taken some repose in the cottage where they parted. With the morning came news that Woodstock was occupied by soldiers, so that return thither might have led to danger, suspicion, and inquiry. Alice therefore did not attempt it, but went to a house in the neighbourhood, inhabited by a lady of established loyalty, whose husband had been major of Sir Henry Lee's regiment, and had fallen at the battle of Naseby. Mrs. Aylmer was a sensible woman, and indeed the necessities of the singular times had sharpened every one's faculties for stratagem and intrigue. She sent a faithful servant to scout about the mansion at Woodstock, who no sooner saw the prisoners dismissed and in safety, and ascertained the knight's destination for the evening, than he carried the news to his mistress, and by her orders attended Alice on horseback to join her father.

There was seldom, perhaps, an evening meal made in such absolute silence as by this embarrassed party, each occupied with their own thoughts, and at a loss how to fathom those of the others. At length the hour came when Alice felt herself at liberty to retire to repose after a day so fatiguing. Everard handed her to the door of her apartment, and was then himself about to take leave, when, to his surprise, his uncle asked him to return, pointed to a chair, and giving him the King's letter to read, fixed his looks on him steadily during the perusal; determined that if he could discover aught short of the utmost delight in the reading, the commands of the King himself should be disobeyed, rather than Alice should be sacrificed to one who received not her hand as the greatest blessing earth had to bestow. But the features of Everard indicated joyful hope, even beyond what the father could have anticipated, yet mingled with surprise; and when he raised his eye to the knight's with timidity and doubt, a smile was on Sir Henry's countenance as he broke silence. "The King," he said, "had he no other subject in England, should dispose at will of those of the house of Lee. But methinks the family of Everard have not been so devoted of late to the crown as to comply with a mandate inviting its heir to marry the daughter of a beggar."

"The daughter of Sir Henry Lee," said Everard, kneeling to his uncle, and perforce kissing his hand, "would grace the house of a Duke."

"The girl is well enough," said the knight proudly; "for myself, my poverty shall neither shame nor encroach on my friends. Some few pieces I have by Doctor Rochecliffe's kindness, and Joceline and I will strike out something."

"Nay, my dear uncle, you are richer than you think for," said Everard. "That part of your estate, which my father redeemed for payment of a moderate composition, is still your own, and held by trustees in your name, myself being one of them. You are only our debtor for an advance of moneys, for which, if it will content you, we will count with you like usurers. My father is incapable of profiting by making a bargain on his own account for the estate of a distressed friend; and all this you would have learned long since, but that you would not—I mean, time did not serve for explanation—I mean"——

"You mean I was too hot to hear reason, Mark, and I believe it is very true. But I think we understand each other *now*. To-morrow I go with my family to Kingston, where is an old house I may still call mine. Come hither at thy leisure, Mark,—or thy best speed, as thou wilt—but come with thy father's consent."

"With my father in person," said Everard, "if you will permit."

"Be that," answered the knight, "as he and you will—I think Joceline will scarce shut the door in thy face, or Bevis growl as he did after poor Louis Kerneguy.—Nay, no more raptures, but good-night, Mark, good-night; and if thou art not tired with the fatigue of yesterday—why, if you appear here at seven in the morning, I think we must bear with your company on the Kingston road."

Once more Everard pressed the knight's hand, caressed Bevis, who received his kindness graciously, and went home to dreams of happiness, which were realized, as far as this motley world permits, within a few months afterwards.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

—My life was of a piece,
Spent in your service—dying at your feet.
Don Sebastian.

YEARS rush by us like the wind. We see not whence the eddy comes, nor whitherward it is tending, and we seem ourselves to witness their flight without a sense that we are changed; and yet Time is beguiling man of his strength, as the winds rob the woods of their foliage.

After the marriage of Alice and Markham Everard, the old knight resided near them, in an ancient manor-house, belonging to the redeemed portion of his estate, where Joceline and Phœbe, now man and wife, with one or two domestics, regulated the affairs of his household. When he tired of Shakspeare and solitude, he was ever a welcome guest at his son-in-law's, where he went the more frequently that Markham had given up all concern in public affairs, that

approving of the forcible dismissal of the Parliament, and submitting to Cromwell's subsequent domination, rather as that which was the lesser evil, than as to a government which he regarded as legal. Cromwell seemed ever willing to show himself his friend; but Everard, resenting highly the proposal to deliver up the King, which he considered as an insult to his honour, never answered such advances, and became, on the contrary, of the opinion, which was now generally prevalent in the nation, that a settled government could not be obtained without the recall of the banished family. There is no doubt that the personal kindness which he had received from Charles, rendered him the more readily disposed to such a measure. He was peremptory, however, in declining all engagements during Oliver's life, whose power he considered as too firmly fixed to be shaken by any plots which could be formed against it.

Mean time, Wildrake continued to be Everard's protected dependent as before, though sometimes the connexion tended not a little to his inconvenience. That respectable person, indeed, while he remained stationary in his patron's house, or that of the old knight, discharged many little duties in the family, and won Alice's heart by his attention to the children, teaching the boys, of whom they had three, to ride, fence, toss the pike, and many similar exercises; and, above all, filling up a great blank in her father's existence, with whom he played at chess and backgammon, or read Shakspeare, or was clerk to prayers when any sequestrated divine ventured to read the service of the Church. Or he found game for him while the old gentleman continued to go a-sporting; and, especially, he talked over the storming of Brentford, and the battles of Edgehill, Banbury, Roundway-down, and others, themes which the aged cavalier delighted in, but which he could not so well enter upon with Colonel Everard, who had gained his laurels in the Parliament service.

The assistance which he received from Wildrake's society became more necessary, after Sir Henry was deprived of his gallant and only son, who was slain in the fatal battle of Dunkirk, where, unhappily, English colours were displayed on both the contending sides, the French being then allied with Oliver, who sent to their aid a body of auxiliaries, and the troops of the banished King fighting in behalf of the Spaniards. Sir Henry received the melancholy news like an old man, that is, with more external composure than could have been anticipated. He dwelt for weeks and months on the lines forwarded by the indefatigable Doctor Rochecliffe, superscribed in small letters, c. a., and subscribed Louis Kerneguy, in which the writer conjured him to endure this inestimable loss with the greater firmness, that he had still left one son, (intimating himself,) who would always regard him as a father.

But in spite of this balsam, sorrow acting imperceptibly, and sucking the blood like a vampire, seemed gradually drying up the springs of life; and, without any fostered illness, or outward complaint, the old man's strength and vigour gradually abated, and the ministry of Wildrake proved daily more indispensable.

It was not, however, always to be had. The cavalier was one of those happy persons whom a strong constitution, an unreflecting mind, and exuberant spirits, enable to play through their whole lives the part of a schoolboy—happy for the moment, and careless of consequences.

Once or twice every year, when he had collected a few pieces, the Cavaliero Wildrake made a start to London, where, as he described it, he went on the ramble, drank as much wine as he could come by, and led a *skeldering* life, to use his own phrase, among roystering cavaliers like himself, till by some rash speech, or wild action, he got into the Marshalsea, the Fleet, or some other prison, from which he was to be delivered at the expense of interest, money, and sometimes a little reputation.

At length Cromwell died, his son resigned the government, and the various changes which followed induced Everard, as well as many others, to adopt more active measures in the King's behalf. Everard even remitted considerable sums for his service, but with the utmost caution, and corresponding with no intermediate agent, but with the Chancellor himself, to whom he communicated much useful information upon public affairs. With all his prudence he was very nearly engaged in the ineffectual rising of Booth and Middleton in the west, and with great difficulty escaped from the fatal consequences of that ill-timed attempt. After this, although the estate of the kingdom was trebly unsettled, yet no card seemed to turn up favourable to the royal cause, until the movement of General Monk from Scotland. Even then, it was when at the point of complete success, that the fortunes of Charles seemed at a lower ebb than ever, especially when intelligence arrived at the little Court which he then kept in Brussels, that Monk, on arriving in London, had put himself under the orders of the Parliament.

It was at this time, and in the evening, while the King, Buckingham, Wilmot, and some other gallants of his wandering Court were engaged in a convival party, that the Chancellor (Clarendon) suddenly craved audience, and entering with less ceremony than he would have done at another time, announced extraordinary news. For the messenger, he said, he could say nothing, saving that he appeared to have drunk much, and slept little; but that he had brought a sure token of credence from a man for whose faith he would venture his life. The King demanded to see the messenger himself.

The man entered, with something the manners of a gentleman, and more those of a rakehelly debauchee—his eyes swelled and inflamed—his gait disordered and stumbling, partly through lack of sleep, partly through the means he had taken to support his fatigue. He staggered without ceremony to the head of the table, seized the King's hand, which he mumbled like a piece of gingerbread; while Charles, who began to recollect him from his mode of salutation, was not very much pleased that their meeting should have taken place before so many witnesses.

"I bring good news," said the uncouth messenger, "glorious news!—the King shall enjoy his own again!—My feet are beautiful on the mountains. Gad, I have lived with Presbyterians till I have caught their language—but we are all one man's children now—all your Majesty's poor babes. The Rump is all ruined in London—Bonfires flaming, music playing, rumps roasting, healths drinking, London in a blaze of light from the Strand to Rotherhithe—tankards clattering"——

"We can guess at that," said the Duke of Buckingham.

"My old friend Mark Everard sent me off with the news—I'm a villain if I've slept since. Your Majesty recollects me, I am sure. Your Majesty remembers, sa—sa—at the King's Oak, at Woodstock?—

> 'O, we'll dance and sing and play,
> For 'twill be a joyous day
> When the King shall enjoy his own again.'"

"Master Wildrake, I remember you well," said the King. "I trust the good news is certain?"

"Certain! your Majesty; did I not hear the bells?—did I not see the bonfires?—did I not drink your Majesty's health so often, that my legs would scarce carry me to the wharf? It is as certain as that I am poor Roger Wildrake of Squattlesea-mere, Lincoln."

The Duke of Buckingham here whispered to the King, "I have always suspected your Majesty kept odd company during the escape from Worcester, but this seems a rare sample."

"Why, pretty much like yourself, and other company I have kept here so many years—as stout a heart, as empty a head," said Charles—"as much lace, though somewhat tarnished, as much brass on the brow, and nearly as much copper in the pocket."

"I would your Majesty would intrust this messenger of good news with me, to get the truth out of him," said Buckingham.

"Thank your Grace," replied the King; "but he has a will as well as yourself, and such seldom agree. My Lord Chancellor hath wisdom, and to that we must trust ourselves.—Master Wildrake, you will go with my Lord Chancellor; when will being on a repeat

your tidings; mean time, I assure you that you shall be no loser for being the first messenger of good news." So saying, he gave a signal to the Chancellor to take away Wildrake, whom he judged, in the present humour, to be not unlikely to communicate some former passages at Woodstock, which might rather entertain than edify the wits of his court.

Corroboration of the joyful intelligence soon arrived, and Wildrake was presented with a handsome gratuity and small pension, which, by the King's special desire, had no duty whatever attached to it.

Shortly afterwards, all England was engaged in chorusing his favourite ditty—

"O, the twenty-ninth of May,
It was a glorious day,
When the King did enjoy his own again."

On that memorable day, the King prepared to make a progress from Rochester to London, with a reception on the part of his subjects so unanimously cordial, as made him say gayly, it must have been his own fault to stay so long away from a country where his arrival gave so much joy. On horseback, betwixt his brothers, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, the Restored Monarch trode slowly over roads strewn with flowers—by conduits running wine, under triumphal arches, and through streets hung with tapestry. There were the citizens in various bands, some arrayed in coats of black velvet, with gold chains; some in military suits of cloth of gold, or cloth of silver, followed by all those craftsmen, who, having hooted the father from Whitehall, had now come to shout the son into possession of his ancestral palace. On his progress through Blackheath, he passed that army, which, so long formidable to England herself, as well as to Europe, had been the means of restoring the Monarchy, which their own hands had destroyed. As the King passed the last files of this formidable host, he came to an open part of the heath, where many persons of quality, with others of inferior rank, had stationed themselves to gratulate him as he passed towards the capital.

There was one group, however, which attracted peculiar attention from those around, on account of the respect shown to the party by the soldiers who kept the ground, and who, whether Cavaliers or Roundheads, seemed to contest emulously which should contribute most to their accommodation; for both the elder and younger gentlemen of the party had been distinguished in the Civil War.

It was a family group, of which the principal figure was an old man seated in a chair, having a complacent smile on his face, and a tear swelling to his eye, as he saw the banners wave on in interminable succession, and heard the multitude shouting the long protracted acclamation, "God save King Charles!" His cheek was ashy pale, and his long beard bleached like the thistle down; his blue eye was cloudless, yet it was obvious that its vision was failing. His motions were feeble, and he spoke little, except when he answered the prattle of his grandchildren, or asked a question of his daughter, who sat beside him, matured in matronly beauty, or of Colonel Everard, who stood behind. There, too, the stout yeoman, Joseline Joliffe, still in his silvan dress, leaned, like a second Benaiah, on the quarterstaff that had done the King good service in its day, and his wife, a buxom matron as she had been a pretty maiden, laughed at her own consequence; and ever and anon joined her shrill notes to the stentorian halloo which her husband added to the general exclamation.

Three fine boys and two pretty girls prattled around their grandfather, who made them such answers as suited their age, and repeatedly passed his withered hand over the fair locks of the little darlings, while Alice, assisted by Wildrake, (blazing in a splendid dress, and his eyes washed with only a single cup of canary,) took off the children's attention from time to time, lest they should weary their grandfather. We must not omit one other remarkable figure in the group—a gigantic dog which bore the signs of being at the extremity of canine life, being perhaps fifteen or sixteen *years old*. *But though* exhibiting the ruin *only of his former appearance*, his eyes dim, his joints stiff, his head slouched down, and his gallant carriage and graceful motions exchanged for a stiff, rheumatic, hobbling gait, the noble hound had lost none of his instinctive fondness for his master. To lie by Sir Henry's feet in the summer or by the fire in winter, to raise his head to look on him, to lick his withered hand or his shrivelled cheek from time to time, seemed now all that Bevis lived for.

Three or four livery-servants attended to protect this group from the thronging multitude; but it needed not. The high respectability and unpretending simplicity of their appearance gave them, even in the eyes of the coarsest of the people, an air of patriarchal dignity, which commanded general regard; and they sat upon the bank which they had chosen for their station by the wayside, as undisturbed as if they had been in their own park.

And now the distant clarions announced the Royal Presence. Onward came pursuivant and trumpet—onward came plumes and cloth of gold, and waving standards displayed, and swords gleaming to the sun; and at length, heading a group of the noblest in England, and supported by his royal brothers on either side, onward came King Charles. He had already halted more than once, in kindness perhaps as well as policy, to exchange a word with persons whom he recognised among the spectators, and the shouts of the bystanders applauded a courtesy which seemed so well timed. But when he had gazed an instant on the party we have described, it was impossible, if even Alice had been too much changed to be recognised, not instantly to know Bevis and his venerable master. The Monarch sprung from his horse, and walked instantly up to the old knight, amid thundering acclamations which arose from the multitudes around, when they saw Charles with his own hand oppose the feeble attempts of the old man to rise to do him homage. Gently replacing him on his seat—"Bless," he said, "father—bless your son, who has returned in safety, as you blessed him when he departed in danger."

"May God bless—and preserve"—muttered the old man, overcome by his feelings; and the King, to give him a few moments' repose, turned to Alice—

"And you," he said, "my fair guide, how have you been employed since our perilous night-walk? But I need not ask," glancing round—"in the service of King and Kingdom, bringing up subjects as loyal as their ancestors.—A fair lineage, by my faith, and a beautiful sight to the eye of an English King!—Colonel Everard, we shall see you, I trust, at Whitehall? Here he nodded to Wildrake. "And thou, Joceline, thou canst hold thy quarter-staff with one hand, sure? —Thrust forward the other palm."

Looking down in sheer bashfulness, Joceline, like a bull about to push, extended to the King, over his lady's shoulder, a hand as broad and hard as a wooden trencher, which the King filled with gold coins. "Buy a headgear for my friend Phœbe with some of these," said Charles; "she too has been doing her duty to Old England."

The King then turned once more to the knight, who seemed making an effort to speak. He took his aged hand in both his own, and stooped his head towards him to catch his accents, while the old man, detaining him with the other hand, said something faltering, of which Charles could only catch the quotation—

"Unthread the rude eye of rebellion,
And welcome home again discarded faith."

Extricating himself, therefore, as gently as possible, from a scene which began to grow painfully embarrassing, the good-natured King said, speaking with unusual distinctness to insure the old man's comprehending him, "This is something too public a place for all we have to say. But if you come not soon to see King Charles at Whitehall, he will send down Louis Kerneguy to visit you, that you may see how rational that mischievous lad is become since his travels."

So saying, he once more pressed affectionately the old man's hand, bowed to Alice and all around, and withdrew; Sir Henry Lee listening with a smile, which showed he comprehended the gracious testimony

of what had been said. The old man leaned back on his seat, and muttered the *Nunc dimittas*.

"Excuse me for having made you wait, my lords," said the king as he mounted his horse; "Indeed, had it not been for these good folks, you might have waited for me long enough to little purpose.—Move on, sirs."

The array moved on accordingly; the sound of trumpets and drums again rose amid the acclamations, which had been silent while the King stopped; while the effect of the whole procession resuming its motion, was so splendidly dazzling, that even Alice's anxiety about her father's health was for a moment suspended, while her eye followed the long line of varied brilliancy that proceeded over the heath. When she looked again at Sir Henry, she was startled to see that his cheek, which had gained some colour during his conversation with the King, had relapsed into earthy paleness; that his eyes were closed, and opened not again; and that his features expressed, amid their quietude, a rigidity which is not that of sleep. They ran to his assistance, but it was too late. The light that burned so low in the socket, had leaped up, and expired, in one exhilarating flash.

The rest must be conceived. I have only to add that his faithful dog did not survive him many days; and that the image of Bevis lies carved at his master's feet, on the tomb which was erected to the Memory of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley.*

* It may interest some readers to know, that Bevis, the gallant hound, one of the handsomest and most active of the ancient Highland deer-hounds, had his prototype in a dog called Maida, the gift of the late Chief of Glengarry to the author. A beautiful sketch of him was made by Edwin Landseer, and afterwards engraved. I cannot suppress the avowal of some personal vanity when I mention, that a friend, going through Munich, picked up a common snuff-box, such as are sold for one franc, on which was displayed the form of this veteran favourite, simply marked as Der lieblung hund von Walter Scott. Mr. Landseer's painting is at Blair-Adam, the property of my venerable friend, the Right Honourable Lord Chief Commissioner Adam.

THE END OF WOODSTOCK.

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